

SUBJECT: Creating the Next Generation Commission on Digital Learning

COMMITTEE: Public Education — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 11 ayes — Huberty, Bernal, Allen, Ashby, K. Bell, M. González, K. King, Meyer, Sanford, Talarico, VanDeaver

0 nays

2 absent — Allison, Dutton

WITNESSES: For — Jennifer Bergland, Texas Computer Education Association;
(*Registered, but did not testify:* Casey McCreary, Texas Association of School Administrators; Drew Scheberle, The Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce; John Kelso)

Against — None

On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Eric Marin and Monica Martinez, Texas Education Agency)

DIGEST: HB 4186 would establish the Next Generation Commission on Digital Learning to develop and make recommendations for a framework that would incorporate digital teaching and learning in public schools.

Recommendations. The commission would develop recommendations to:

- provide a funding proposal to present to the Legislature for digital teaching and learning that included funding to improve student outcomes and to provide high-quality professional learning for educators;
- develop a framework for effective statewide deployment of digital teaching and learning materials; and
- develop and implement strategies that assisted school districts in the adoption and implementation of such materials.

Makeup, administration, and funding. The commission would include 15 members who would be appointed by or would themselves be state government officials, as specified in the bill. The governor would designate a presiding officer.

The commission could hold public meetings as needed to fulfill its duties and would be subject to open meetings and public information laws.

Commission members would not be entitled to compensation for service on the commission except for reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing commission duties. Texas Education Agency staff would provide administrative support for the commission, and funding for administrative and operational expenses would be provided by appropriation to the agency for that purpose.

Report. By September 1, 2020, the commission would be required to prepare and deliver a report to the governor and Legislature that recommended statutory changes to develop a framework to incorporate digital teaching and learning in public schools. The commission would be abolished January 1, 2021.

The bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2019.

NOTES:

According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have a negative impact of about \$412,000 to general revenue related funds through fiscal 2020-21.