

- SUBJECT:** Revising school curriculum, limiting instructional material adoptions
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 12 ayes — Huberty, Bernal, Allen, Allison, Ashby, K. Bell, Dutton, K. King, Meyer, Sanford, Talarico, VanDeaver
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — M. González
- WITNESSES:** For — Randy Willis, Granger ISD, Texas Rural Education Association; Kristi Hassett, Lewisville ISD; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Jennifer Rodriguez, Apple Inc.; Wayne Schaper, Instructional Material Coordinators' Association of Texas (IMCAT); Betsy Singleton, League of Women Voters of Texas; David Edmonson, TechNet; Ted Raab, Texas American Federation of Teachers (Texas AFT); Barry Haenisch, Texas Association of Community Schools; Mike Meroney, Texas Association of Manufacturers (TAM); Michael Lee, Texas Association of Rural Schools; Casey McCreary, Texas Association of School Administrators; Dominic Giarratani, Texas Association of School Boards; Paige Williams, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Jennifer Bergland, Texas Computer Education Association; Kristin McGuire, Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education; Mark Terry, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association (TEPSA); Buck Gilcrease, Texas School Alliance; Lisa Dawn-Fisher, Texas State Teachers Association)
- Against — Nicole Hudgens, Texas Values Action; Lynette Lucas; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Cindy Asmussen; Amy Hedtke)
- On — Paul Gray, Texas Council of Teachers of Mathematics; Monica Martinez, Texas Education Agency; Pat Hardy
- BACKGROUND:** The State Board of Education (SBOE) is required by Education Code ch. 28 subch. A to develop the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and curriculum necessary to prepare all students to read, write, compute,

problem solve, think critically, apply technology, and communicate across all subject areas. The TEKS also must prepare and enable all students for postsecondary success.

Education Code sec. 31.022 requires SBOE to adopt a review and adoption cycle for instructional materials. SBOE issues a proclamation to call for new instructional materials based on its adoption cycle.

**DIGEST:** CSHB 663 would require the State Board of Education (SBOE) to narrow the curriculum and limit the projected cost of new instructional materials proclamations to 75 percent of the total amount available for the instructional materials and technology allotment during that biennium.

**Curriculum review.** The bill would require SBOE to review and, as necessary, revise and narrow the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for the required foundation curriculum for English language arts, math, science, and social studies. The scope of the TEKS for each subject and grade level of the curriculum would have to be narrower in scope and require less time for a student to demonstrate mastery than the TEKS adopted as of January 1, 2019.

SBOE would be required to consider, for each subject and grade level, the time a teacher would require to provide comprehensive instruction on a particular student expectation and the time a typical student would require to master the expectation. SBOE also would be required to determine whether the TEKS of a subject could be comprehensively taught within the required instruction time of a school year, not including the amount of time for required testing.

Other duties for SBOE would include determining whether college and career readiness standards had been appropriately integrated in the TEKS for each subject and grade level and whether a required state exam adequately assessed a particular student expectation.

SBOE would have to ensure that any revision of the TEKS performed before September 1, 2022, did not result in a need for the adoption of new

instructional materials. That requirement would expire September 1, 2023.

SBOE would be required to adopt a schedule for continuing the required review and revision for each subject and grade level.

**Instructional materials proclamations.** The bill would only permit SBOE to issue proclamations for instructional materials in which the total projected cost was 75 percent or less of the total amount used to fund the instructional materials and technology allotment for that biennium.

Following the adoption of revised TEKS for any subject, SBOE would have to determine whether a proclamation was necessary based on the significance of the changes. If the board determined a proclamation was necessary, it would issue:

- a full call for instructional materials aligned to all of the TEKS for the subject and grade level;
- a supplemental call for materials aligned to new or expanded TEKS for the subject and grade level;
- a call for new information demonstrating alignment of current materials to the revised TEKS; or
- any combination of the above.

In determining the disbursement of money to the available school fund and the amount of that disbursement that would be distributed to schools through the instructional materials and technology allotment, SBOE would have to consider the cost of all instructional materials and technology requirements for that state fiscal biennium. SBOE would be required to amend any proclamation to conform to that cost requirement as well as the general appropriations act for the year of implementation.

The bill would repeal the requirement that a district or charter school that selects instructional materials not on the instructional materials list use the material for a certain period of time. It also would repeal the authorization for a district or charter school to cancel a subscription for instructional materials before the end of the state contract period under certain

conditions.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.

**SUPPORTERS  
SAY:**

CSHB 663 would address a widespread concern that the scope of the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) is too broad to be reasonably taught within the school year. By narrowing the curriculum, the bill would allow more classroom time for students to develop a depth of understanding through projects, group discussions, and activities that use critical thinking skills. Since the TEKS and STAAR tests are linked, the bill would reduce the stress of state-mandated tests on students and teachers.

It is necessary to require that the State Board of Education (SBOE) and the Texas Education Agency narrow the curriculum because over the past four years, since SB 313 by Seliger, a similar bill, was vetoed in 2015, the current number of standards and how those standards are assessed have not been adequately addressed. For instance, the number of standards in some subjects actually increased after recent SBOE reviews.

The bill would provide districts with flexibility to use 25 percent of their instructional materials and technology allotment to meet local needs for technology. Too often, districts must spend most of their allotment on textbooks when technology products might better support their students.

**OPPONENTS  
SAY:**

A similar bill enacted by the 84th Legislature in 2015 was vetoed by the governor because it could have restricted the ability of State Board of Education (SBOE) to address the needs of Texas classrooms. SBOE should be allowed to continue following its own timeline for streamlining the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS), realizing that it takes time to approve instructional materials and train teachers on the new standards.

Narrowing standards may sound positive, but a recent SBOE review of social studies standards resulted in controversial changes proposed for the history curriculum presented to Texas students. Requiring that SBOE

further narrow the curriculum could result in students not being educated about important subjects.