

SUBJECT: Studying methods to evaluate the performance of certain deaf students

COMMITTEE: Public Education — favorable, without amendment

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

0 nays

2 absent — Dutton, Sanford

SENATE VOTE: On final passage, April 17 — 31-0

WITNESSES: For — Steven Aleman, Disability Rights Texas; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Chris Masey, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities; Lisa Dawn-Fisher, Texas State Teachers Association; Dale Webb)

Against — None

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

BACKGROUND: Some have noted that students who travel outside of a school district to attend classes primarily at a regional day school program for the deaf located within the district's physical boundaries are included in the accountability ratings of that district. Concerned parties have suggested that because most of these districts do not have authority over the instruction, curriculum, and assessment of these students, a study could be conducted about the accountability system in regards to the evaluation of these students.

DIGEST: SB 54 would require the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to conduct a study on appropriate methods and standards to evaluate the performance of a student who spends at least 50 percent of the instructional day participating in a regional day school program for the deaf and whose parent did not reside in the school district providing program services.

TEA would be required by September 1, 2020, to provide a report on the study and recommendations to the standing committees of the Legislature that have jurisdiction over public education.

TEA would not be required to implement the bill if the Legislature did not appropriate money specifically for that purpose but could implement the bill using other appropriations available for that purpose.

This 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, SB 54 would have a negative impact of \$250,000 through fiscal 2020-21.