

- SUBJECT:** Establishing a bilingual special education certification for teachers
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 12 ayes — Dutton, Allen, Allison, K. Bell, Bernal, Buckley, M. González, Huberty, K. King, Meza, Talarico, VanDeaver
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — Lozano
- WITNESSES:** For — Chloe Latham Sikes, Intercultural Development Research Association; David Feigen, Texans Care for Children; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Andrea Chevalier, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Jason Sabo, Children at Risk; Jennifer Toon, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities; Steven Aleman, Disability Rights Texas; Chandra Villanueva, Every Texan; Vanessa Beltran and Sarah Miller-Fellows, Girls Empowerment Network; Fatima Menendez, MALDEF; Taylor Sims, Project Lead the Way; Hillary Lilly, San Antonio ISD; Grover Campbell, TASB; Kristin McGuire, TCASE; Dena Donaldson, Texas AFT; Kimberly Kofron, Texas Association for the Education of Young Children; Barry Haenisch, Texas Association of Community Schools; Mark Terry, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association; Linda Litzinger, Texas Parent to Parent; Carrie Griffith, Texas State Teachers Association; Ashley Ford, The Arc of Texas; Jonathan Feinstein, The Education Trust in Texas; Molly Weiner, United Ways of Texas; Annemarie Donnelly; Thomas Parkinson)
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Eric Marin, Jessica McLoughlin and Matt Montano, Texas Education Agency)
- BACKGROUND:** Education Code sec. 21.031 requires the State Board for Educator Certification to regulate and oversee all aspects of the certification, continuing education, and standards of conduct of all public school

educators. In proposing rules, the board is required to ensure that all candidates for certification or renewal of certification demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to improve the performance of the diverse student population of this state.

Some have noted that educators wanting to teach special education to students learning English must pursue two discrete certificates, a requirement that provides little or no benefit for educators or students.

DIGEST:

HB 2256 would require the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) to establish a bilingual special education certificate to ensure there were teachers with special training in providing instruction to students of limited English proficiency with disabilities.

To be eligible for a bilingual special education certificate, a person would have to:

- satisfactorily complete the coursework for that certificate in an educator preparation program, including a skills-based course of instruction on teaching students of limited English proficiency with disabilities;
- perform satisfactorily on a bilingual special education certificate examination prescribed by SBEC; and
- satisfy any other requirements prescribed by SBEC.

The bill would establish requirements for the skills-based course of instruction in providing instruction to students of limited English proficiency with disabilities, which would include:

- the foundations of bilingual, multicultural, and second language special education;
- providing culturally responsive individualized education programs for students of limited English proficiency with disabilities;
- providing assessment for equity and inclusion of students whose primary language was not English with and without disabilities;
- developing teaching methods to recognize the intellectual,

developmental, and emotional needs of students in dual language and transitional bilingual education settings;

- teaching fundamental academic skills, including reading, writing, and mathematics, to students who had difficulty performing ordinary classwork in English; and
- creating dynamic and collaborative partnerships with families and school professionals.

SBEC would be required to propose rules establishing and prescribing an examination for a bilingual special education certificate and to put in place standards to govern the approval and renewal of approval of educator preparation programs for bilingual special education certification.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.