

**SUBJECT:** Providing funding for accessible playgrounds for children with disabilities

**COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 9 ayes — Dutton, Lozano, Allen, Allison, Bernal, M. González, Huberty, Meza, Talarico

4 nays — K. Bell, Buckley, K. King, VanDeaver

**WITNESSES:** For — Adrian Johnson, Hearne ISD; Amy Litzinger; (*Registered, but did not testify*: Andrea Chevalier, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Julia Grizzard, Bexar County Education Coalition; Jennifer Toon, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities; Steven Aleman, Disability Rights Texas; Lisa Flores, Easterseals Central Texas; Vanessa Beltran, Girls Empowerment Network; Ender Reed, Harris County Commissioners Court; Alison Fernandez and Micaela Williams, Spark Change Project; Grover Campbell, TASB; Kristin Mcguire, TCASE; Christine Broughal, Texans for Special Education Reform; Dena Donaldson, Texas AFT; Barry Haenisch, Texas Association of Community Schools; Casey McCreary, Texas Association of School Administrators; Amanda Afifi, Texas Association of School Psychologists; Aaron Gregg, Texas Association of the Deaf; Paige Williams, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Mark Terry, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association; Troy Alexander, Texas Medical Association; Dan Finch, Texas Medical Association; Starlee Coleman, Texas Public Charter Schools Association; Carrie Griffith, Texas State Teachers Association; Ashley Harris, United Ways of Texas; Amiee Kellogg; Thomas Parkinson)

Against — None

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

**BACKGROUND:** Some have suggested that too few playgrounds are accessible for children with disabilities and recommend that funding be distributed to school

districts to provide inclusive and accessible playgrounds.

**DIGEST:** HB 24 would require the commissioner of education to distribute funds, from funds appropriated for the purpose or any other available funds, to each school district to provide at least one playground in the district that was inclusive and accessible for students with disabilities.

The bill would apply beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

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, 2021.

**NOTES:** According to the Legislative Budget Board, the bill would have a negative impact of \$212.6 million in general revenue related funds through fiscal 2023.