

- SUBJECT:** Allowing active or retired teachers to participate in a tutoring program
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 11 ayes — Dutton, Allen, Allison, K. Bell, Bernal, Buckley, M. González, Huberty, K. King, Talarico, VanDeaver
- 0 nays
- 2 absent — Lozano, Meza
- SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, April 23 — 31-0, on Local and Uncontested Calendar
- WITNESSES:** No public hearing.
- BACKGROUND:** It has been suggested that a statewide program for certified current or retired teachers to serve as supplemental tutors in public school districts would be a valuable resource that could help Texas schools make up for educational progress that was slowed by the COVID-19 pandemic.
- DIGEST:** SB 1356 would authorize a member of a nonprofit teacher organization to participate in a tutoring program to provide supplemental instruction to K-12 public school students on an individualized or small-group basis. To participate in the program, a person would have to:
- be an active or retired teacher;
 - apply for the position in a manner specified by the nonprofit organization;
 - designate in the application whether the person planned to provide tutoring for compensation, on a volunteer basis, or both, and in-person, online, or both; and
 - not be included in the registry of persons ineligible for employment by a public school under state law.

Each school district superintendent or person designated by the

superintendent would oversee the tutoring program within the district. If an active or retired teacher who had been approved for the tutoring program contacted a district to provide tutoring, the district would have to use the teacher's volunteer services or, depending on available funds, employ the teacher as a tutor, as applicable.

At least quarterly, each nonprofit organization participating in the program would have to provide to its members a program description and guidance on how to participate, and the contact information of the program overseer for the school district in which the member lived and adjacent districts.

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) would have to provide access to its registry of persons ineligible for public school employment to nonprofit organizations approved by the Education Commissioner for participation in the tutoring program.

SB 1356 would require the Teacher Retirement System of Texas (TRS) to regularly provide information in an electronic format to members and retirees regarding the tutoring program that included general information and a statement directing members and retirees who wanted to participate to contact their local school districts for further guidance. TRS could not withhold a monthly benefit payment from a retiree employed as a tutor under the bill's provisions. The bill would apply to a TRS retiree regardless of the person's date of retirement, but would apply only to the employment of a retiree that began on or after the bill's effective date.

SB 1356 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.