

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1200
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Texas has a long history of being a pioneer in statewide student assessment and accountability. Since 1980, Texas has continuously captured key data for decision makers, communities, school leaders, parents, and students about Texas public school performance through universal assessments. Texas has also pioneered the use of these assessments to improve school performance and close the achievement gap.

Twenty years ago the assessment system was restricted to pencil and paper exams administered annually. While Texas has made significant progress under this system, the limits of Texas' current assessment and accountability system are apparent.

Today, there are examples of top-performing schools using adaptive, individualized, secure assessments to increase the quality and depth of student learning. Such performance data can provide parents, educators, and the public with real-time information about student progress.

Texas should seize the opportunity to once again lead the nation in student assessments by pioneering data-driven systems of state-wide assessments and public school accountability.

Key Points:

- S.B. 1200 creates the Texas Commission on Next Generation Assessment and Accountability (commission) to study, develop, and make recommendations for new systems of student assessment and public school accountability.
- Membership of the commission shall include 15 members with diverse representation, including a parent, an educator, a business community member, a civic community member, a leader in student assessment development and use, and a leader in research concerning student assessment and outcomes:
 - Seven appointed by the governor;
 - Four appointed by the speaker;
 - Four appointed by the lieutenant governor.
- The commission shall develop recommendations to address:
 - The purpose of a state accountability system and the role of student assessment;
 - Opportunities to assess students that provide actionable information for parents, educators, and the public in support of learning activities, recognize application of skills and knowledge, measure student educational growth towards mastery, and value critical thinking;
 - Alignment of state performance standards with college and career readiness standards requirements in collaboration with the Texas Workforce Commission and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board;

- Policy changes necessary to enable a student to progress through subject matter and grade levels upon demonstration of mastery.
- The commission shall prepare and deliver a report to the governor and legislature that recommends any statutory changes to improve systems of student assessment and school and district accountability by December 1, 2016.

As proposed, S.B. 1200 amends current law relating to the creation of a committee to recommend a new system for student assessment and public school accountability.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 39, Education Code, by adding Subchapter N, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER N. TEXAS COMMISSION ON NEXT GENERATION
ASSESSMENTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Sec. 39.501. DEFINITION. Defines "commission."

Sec. 39.502. TEXAS COMMISSION ON NEXT GENERATION ASSESSMENTS AND ACCOUNTABILITY. (a) Establishes the Texas Commission on Next Generation Assessments and Accountability (commission) to develop and make recommendations for new systems of student assessment and public school accountability.

(b) Provides that the commission is composed of:

- (1) seven members appointed by the governor;
- (2) four members appointed by the lieutenant governor; and
- (3) four members appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives.

(c) Requires that, in making appointments under this section, at least one person be appointed to represent each of the following groups:

- (1) a parent or person standing in parental relation to a student enrolled in the public school system;
- (2) an educator in the public school system;
- (3) a member of the business community;
- (4) a member of the civic community;
- (5) a leader in student assessment development and use; and
- (6) a leader in research concerning student assessment and education outcomes.

Sec. 39.503. PRESIDING OFFICER. Requires the governor to designate the presiding officer of the commission.

Sec. 39.504. COMPENSATION AND REIMBURSEMENT. Provides that a member of the commission is not entitled to compensation for service on the commission but is

entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing commission duties.

Sec. 39.505. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT AND FUNDING. (a) Requires staff members of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to provide administrative support for the commission.

(b) Requires that funding for the administrative and operational expenses of the commission be provided by appropriation to TEA for that purpose.

Sec. 39.506. RECOMMENDATIONS. Requires the commission to develop recommendations under this subchapter to address:

(1) the purpose of a state accountability system and the role of student assessment in that system;

(2) opportunities to assess students that:

(A) provide actionable information for a parent or person standing in parental relation to a student, an educator, and the public;

(B) support learning activities;

(C) recognize application of skills and knowledge;

(D) measure student educational growth toward mastery; and

(E) value critical thinking;

(3) alignment of state performance standards with college and career readiness requirements in collaboration with the Texas Workforce Commission and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board; and

(4) policy changes necessary to enable a student to progress through subject matter and grade levels on demonstration of mastery.

Sec. 39.507. REPORT. Requires the commission to prepare and deliver a report to the governor and the legislature that recommends statutory changes to improve systems of student assessment and public school accountability not later than December 1, 2016.

Sec. 39.508. PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION. (a) Authorizes the commission to hold public meetings as needed to fulfill its duties under this subchapter.

(b) Provides that the commission is subject to Chapters 551 (Open Meetings) and 552 (Public Information), Government Code.

Sec. 39.509. COMMISSION ABOLISHED; EXPIRATION OF SUBCHAPTER. (a) Provides that the commission is abolished January 1, 2017.

(b) Provides that this subchapter expires January 1, 2017.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.