

1-1 By: Zaffirini S.B. No. 55  
 1-2 (In the Senate - Filed November 14, 2022; February 15, 2023,  
 1-3 read first time and referred to Subcommittee on Higher Education;  
 1-4 April 17, 2023, reported favorably from Committee on Education by  
 1-5 the following vote: Yeas 11, Nays 0; April 17, 2023, sent to  
 1-6 printer.)

1-7 COMMITTEE VOTE

	Yea	Nay	Absent	PNV
1-8				
1-9	X			
1-10	X			
1-11	X			
1-12			X	
1-13	X			
1-14			X	
1-15	X			
1-16	X			
1-17	X			
1-18	X			
1-19	X			
1-20	X			
1-21	X			

1-22 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
 1-23 AN ACT

1-24 relating to a study and report by the Texas Higher Education  
 1-25 Coordinating Board regarding best practices for assisting students  
 1-26 with autism spectrum disorder.

1-27 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

1-28 SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, is  
 1-29 amended by adding Section 61.06694 to read as follows:

1-30 Sec. 61.06694. STUDY AND REPORT ON ASSISTING STUDENTS WITH  
 1-31 AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER. (a) The board, with the assistance of  
 1-32 the advisory council on postsecondary education for persons with  
 1-33 intellectual and developmental disabilities established under  
 1-34 Section 61.06641, shall conduct a study to determine best practices  
 1-35 for assisting students with autism spectrum disorder who are  
 1-36 enrolled at institutions of higher education.

1-37 (b) The study must:

1-38 (1) identify and track:

1-39 (A) the number of students with autism spectrum  
 1-40 disorder who graduate from secondary schools in this state;

1-41 (B) the number of students with autism spectrum  
 1-42 disorder who are enrolled at institutions of higher education;

1-43 (C) the student financial assistance available  
 1-44 to students with autism spectrum disorder who enroll at  
 1-45 institutions of higher education; and

1-46 (D) the graduation rates of students with autism  
 1-47 spectrum disorder who enroll at institutions of higher education;  
 1-48 and

1-49 (2) identify and examine best practices and program  
 1-50 modules from public and private institutions of higher education  
 1-51 outside this state that have achieved successful results in working  
 1-52 with students with autism spectrum disorder.

1-53 (c) In conducting the study, the board:

1-54 (1) shall collaborate with the Texas Education Agency  
 1-55 regarding specialized programs offered by elementary or secondary  
 1-56 schools for students with autism spectrum disorder to determine how  
 1-57 those programs could be replicated at or extended to postsecondary  
 1-58 institutions; and

1-59 (2) may not request, require, or use personally  
 1-60 identifiable student information.

1-61 (d) Not later than December 1, 2025, the board shall submit

2-1 to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house  
2-2 of representatives, and the commissioner of education a written  
2-3 report that includes the study's findings and any recommendations  
2-4 for legislative or other action.

2-5 (e) This section expires January 1, 2026.

2-6 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
2-7 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
2-8 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
2-9 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
2-10 Act takes effect September 1, 2023.

2-11 \* \* \* \* \*