

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 1200
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Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

According to interested parties, Texas has a long history of being a pioneer in statewide student assessment and accountability and has made steady, significant improvements to its assessment system. Despite this progress, the parties suggest, the limits of Texas' current assessment and accountability system are apparent. Given examples of top-performing schools using adaptive, individualized, secure assessments to increase the quality and depth of student learning, the parties continue, Texas should seize the opportunity to once again lead the nation in student assessments by pioneering data-driven systems of statewide assessments and public school accountability. S.B. 1200 seeks to create a commission to recommend such a system.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

S.B. 1200 amends the Education Code to establish the Texas Commission on Next Generation Assessments and Accountability to develop and make recommendations for new systems of student assessment and public school accountability. The bill sets out the composition of the 15-member commission as follows: four members appointed by the governor, three members appointed by the lieutenant governor, three members appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives, the chair of the senate committee on education or a representative designated by the chair, the chair of the senate committee on higher education or a representative designated by the chair, the chair of the house of representatives committee on public education or a representative designated by the chair, the chair of the house of representatives committee on higher education or a representative designated by the chair, and a member of the State Board of Education (SBOE), as designated by the SBOE chair. The bill requires the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives, in making their appointments, to coordinate to ensure that the commission includes certain specified representatives and provides for the designation of the presiding officer by the governor and for member compensation and reimbursement. The bill requires staff members of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to provide administrative support for the commission and requires funding for the commission's administrative and operational expenses to be provided by appropriation to TEA for that purpose.

S.B. 1200 requires the commission to develop recommendations to address the purpose of a state accountability system and the role of student assessment in that system; opportunities to assess

students that provide actionable information for a parent or person standing in parental relation to a student, an educator, and the public, that support learning activities, that recognize application of skills and knowledge, that measure student educational growth toward mastery, and that value critical thinking; alignment of state performance standards with college and career readiness requirements in collaboration with the Texas Workforce Commission and Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board; policy changes necessary to enable a student to progress through subject matter and grade levels on demonstration of mastery; and policy changes necessary to establish a student assessment and public school accountability system that meets state goals, is community based, promotes parent and community involvement, and reflects the unique needs of each community.

S.B. 1200 requires the commission, not later than September 1, 2016, 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. The bill requires the commission, in preparing the report, to consider the recommendations of the Texas High Performance Schools Consortium, including recommendations related to innovative, next-generation learning standards and assessment and accountability systems. The bill authorizes the commission to hold public meetings as needed to fulfill its duties. The bill subjects the commission to state public information law and state open meetings law. The bill's provisions expire and the commission is abolished on January 1, 2017.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.