

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 674
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Education
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Texas statute imposes more than 100 mandates on school districts, ranging from instructional education to human resources and many other topics in between. Though the precise fiscal impact of these mandates is difficult to estimate, it is significant. The administrative costs of compliance trickle down to taxpayers, requiring additional staff resources as well as piling burdens on classroom teachers.

Education Service Centers (ESCs) often fulfill an important function in assisting districts comply with state and federal mandates. Section 8.103, Education Code, requires the commissioner of education to conduct an annual evaluation of education service center performance, which includes a client satisfaction survey sent to school districts for their assessment.

These surveys, overseen by the Institute for Organizational Excellence at the University of Texas at Austin, report that local education agencies very highly rate ESCs for their “services to assist LEAs in complying with federal and state regulations and guidelines.”

H.B. 674 seeks to utilize the client satisfaction surveys to solicit more specific information on the particular mandates school districts find most burdensome and expensive. It accomplishes this by adding a new line of inquiry to the statutorily required client satisfaction surveys of ESC performance delivered to school superintendents each fall.

Not every mandate is necessarily improper or unnecessary. However, collecting broad input from stakeholders regarding the particular mandates they find most burdensome will provide better information to policymakers seeking to understand the serious compliance challenges encountered by school districts.

H.B. 674 amends current law relating to soliciting from school districts served by a regional education service center certain information in conjunction with the annual evaluation of the center.

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 Section 8.103, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 8.103. ANNUAL EVALUATION. (a) Creates this subsection from existing text and makes no further changes.

(b) Requires the commissioner of education, in conjunction with the review of client satisfaction conducted under Subsection (a)(3), to solicit from each school district served by a regional education service center information regarding:

(1) the reliance of the district on the center for assistance in complying with state education laws and rules; and

(2) the specific state education laws or rules with which compliance is the most burdensome and expensive.

(c) Prohibits the information solicited under Subsection (b) from being considered in the annual evaluation of a regional education service center.

SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.