

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3008
By: Talarico
Public Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Recent reports rank Texas poorly on many public engagement measures, from volunteering to engaging with varying levels of government. It has been suggested that effective civics education is primarily offered in advantaged schools, resulting in less-advantaged students having fewer opportunities to debate issues or learn about civic processes. There have been calls for a dedicated funding stream consisting of both public and private contributions to ensure funding for student civic education projects and for teachers to obtain the professional development needed to learn the best practices of civics education. C.S.H.B. 3008 seeks to address this issue by creating a designated account in the general revenue fund for such projects and professional development that prioritizes schools with economically disadvantaged students.

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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 3008 amends the Education Code to establish the civic education project fund as an account in the general revenue fund administered by the commissioner of education consisting of gifts, grants, or donations to the fund and, beginning September 1, 2021, money appropriated, credited, or transferred to the fund by or at the direction of the legislature. The fund is established for the purposes of:

- providing public school students enrolled in the fourth or a higher grade who are economically disadvantaged, as determined by the commissioner, the opportunity to complete a civic education project, as defined by the bill; and
- supporting educator professional development to assist educators in preparing those students to successfully complete a civic education project.

C.S.H.B. 3008 restricts use of money in the fund to purposes as provided by the bill's provisions and authorizes the commissioner, in allocating money from the fund, to give priority to a public school district in which at least 40 percent of the students enrolled in the district on September 1 of the school year are economically disadvantaged, as determined by the commissioner. The bill authorizes the commissioner to adopt rules to implement the bill's provisions.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2019.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 3008 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute does not include a provision authorizing the use of the fund for the applicable purposes beginning with the 2020-2021 school year. The substitute makes the provision providing for the fund to include money appropriated, credited, or transferred to the fund by or at the direction of the legislature applicable beginning September 1, 2021.