

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 4313
By: Dominguez
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Concerns have been raised about limitations on Texas students' access to adaptive sports, particularly regarding the lack of a statewide league structure that could provide more opportunities for competitive events to students with disabilities, whose participation in such activities is often limited to discretionary local programs offered by some, but not all, public school districts. H.B. 4313 seeks to address this gap by requiring the University Interscholastic League to establish an adaptive sports program.

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 University Interscholastic League in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 4313 amends the Education Code to require the University Interscholastic League (UIL) to ensure students with disabilities have an opportunity to participate in team athletic activities by establishing an adaptive sports program. The bill sets out guidance, information, and input the UIL is required to consider and incorporate as appropriate in establishing the program. The bill requires the UIL, in establishing the program and to the greatest extent possible, to require students who participate in the program to be subject to the same rules and requirements as students who participate in other athletic programs offered by the UIL and to require team sports provided through the program to be organized similarly to other athletic programs offered by the UIL.

H.B. 4313 authorizes the UIL, in addition to using funds appropriated for the purpose, to seek and accept gifts, grants, or donations of money from public and private sources for the purpose of establishing or expanding the program. The bill requires the UIL to adopt rules as necessary to establish, maintain, and expand the program. The bill requires the rules to establish eligibility requirements for participation in each team sport offered through the program, identify best practices for public school districts to incorporate adaptive sports, and require that team sports offered through the program be available to students at middle schools, junior high schools, and high schools in Texas.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.