

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 2431
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Education
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Building upon a proven framework, S.B. 2431 creates the Next Generation Commission on Digital Learning (commission) to lay out a roadmap for Texas to become the nation's leader on digital learning. Digital learning technologies will empower Texas' students to grasp concepts more quickly and fully, to connect theory and application more adeptly, and to engage in learning more readily, while also improving instructional techniques, leveraging instructor time, and facilitating the widespread sharing of knowledge. Doing so will ensure the next generation of Texans will continue to lead the nation and the world.

The structure of the commission will include members appointed by state leaders, legislators from the relevant house and senate committees and representation from the State Board of Education. Those members appointed by the leadership will include educators, industry leaders and other stakeholders in the field of digital learning. All of which will ensure an experienced, diverse and dedicated commission prepared to find the most innovative and fiscally responsible ways to make digital learning work for Texas.

Prior to the start of the 87th Legislature, the commission will prepare a report that provides recommendations for;

- a funding proposal for implementing digital learning strategies in elementary and secondary schools,
- strategies to provide high quality education that will improve student outcomes and educator quality using digital learning tools and techniques,
- a framework for an effective statewide deployment of digital teaching and materials in Texas schools, and
- strategies that will empower districts in the effective adoption and implementation of digital teaching and learning materials.

Upon completion of its report but prior to its expiration, the commission will serve as a resource to the legislature and state agencies in the implementation of the framework created through its exhaustive study and investigation into digital teaching and learning.

As proposed, S.B. 2431 amends current law relating to the creation of a committee to recommend a framework to incorporate digital teaching and learning in public schools.

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 Chapter 39, Education Code, by adding Subchapter O, as follows;

SUBCHAPTER O. NEXT GENERATION COMMISSION ON DIGITAL LEARNING

Sec. 39.601. DEFINITION. Defines "commission" for purposes of this subchapter.

Sec. 39.062. NEXT GENERATION COMMISSION ON DIGITAL LEARNING. (a) Provides that the Next Generation Commission on Digital Learning (commission) is established to develop and make recommendations for establishing a framework for the incorporation of digital teaching and learning in public schools.

(b) Provides that the commission is composed of 15 members, consisting of the following:

- (1) four members appointed by the governor;
- (2) three members appointed by the lieutenant governor;
- (3) three members appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;
- (4) the chair of the senate committee on education, or a representative designated by the chair;
- (5) the chair of the senate committee on higher education, or a representative designated by the chair;
- (6) the chair of the house of representatives public education committee, or a representative designated by the chair;
- (7) the chair of the house of representatives committee on higher education, or a representative designated by the chair; and
- (8) a member of the State Board of Education (SBOE), as designated by the chair of SBOE.

(c) Requires the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker of the house of representatives, in making appointments under Subsections (b)(1), (2), and (3), to coordinate to ensure that the commission includes at least one of each of the following representatives:

- (1) a parent of or person standing in parental relation to a student enrolled in the public school system;
- (2) an educator in the public school system;
- (3) an educator in a school district that is a participant in the Texas High Performance Schools Consortium under Section 7.0561;
- (4) a member of the business community;
- (5) a member of the civic community;
- (6) a leader in digital teaching and learning; and
- (7) a leader in researching the impact of digital teaching and learning on student performance.

Sec. 39.603. PRESIDING OFFICER. Requires the governor to designate the presiding officer of the commission.

Sec. 39.604. COMPENSATION AND REIMBURSEMENT. Provides that a member of the commission is not entitled to compensation for service on the commission but is

entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing commission duties.

Sec. 39.605. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT AND FUNDING. (a) Requires staff members of the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to provide administrative support for the commission.

(b) Requires funding for the administrative and operational expenses of the commission to be provided by appropriation to TEA for that purpose.

Sec. 39.606. RECOMMENDATIONS. Requires the commission to develop recommendations under this subchapter to:

(1) provide a funding proposal to present to the legislature for digital teaching and learning in elementary and secondary schools that includes funding to:

(A) improve student outcomes through the use of digital teaching and learning technology; and

(B) provide high-quality professional learning for educators to improve student outcomes through the use of digital teaching and learning technology;

(2) develop a framework for effective statewide deployment of digital teaching and learning materials in elementary and secondary schools; and

(3) develop and implement strategies that assist school districts in the adoption and implementation of digital teaching and learning materials.

Sec. 39.607. REPORT. Requires the commission, not later than September 1, 2020, to prepare and deliver a report to the governor and the legislature that recommends statutory changes to develop a framework to incorporate digital teaching and learning in public schools.

Sec. 39.608. PUBLIC MEETINGS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION. (a) Authorizes the commission to hold public meetings as needed to fulfill its duties under this subchapter.

(b) Provides that the commission is subject to Chapters 551 (Open Meetings) and 552 (Public Information), Government Code.

Sec. 39.609. COMMISSION ABOLISHED; EXPIRATION OF SUBCHAPTER. (a) Provides that the commission is abolished January 1, 2021.

(b) Provides that this subchapter expires January 1, 2021.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or on the 91st day after the last day of the legislative session.