BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
87R9586 BDP-D

S.B. 1590
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Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) exercises statutory oversight for the preparation of educators, which includes all candidates for certification being observed teaching in the classroom three times by a field supervisor. Educator preparation programs, both colleges of education and alternative certification programs, observe candidates both in-person and virtually.

To accommodate candidate observations during the COVID-19 pandemic, SBEC amended their rules to allow for virtual candidate observations. This action was (and is) within SBEC's rulemaking authority under Chapter 21, Texas Education Code.

S.B. 1590 bill specifically authorizes the current practice of candidate observations in a virtual setting. If SBEC had not amended their rules during COVID-19, the certified teacher pipeline would have been completely disrupted. This practice should be maintained by SBEC and this legislation provides clear legislative intent to do so.

As proposed, S.B. 1590 amends current law relating to rules by the State Board for Educator Certification regarding virtual observation options for field-based experiences and internships required for educator certification.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the State Board of Education on behalf of the State Board for Educator Certification is modified in SECTION 1 (Section 21.051, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 21.051(f). Education Code, as follows:

(f) Requires the State Board for Educator Certification to propose rules providing flexible options for persons for any field-based experience or internship required for certification, including options for candidate observations to occur in virtual settings that are equivalent in rigor to in-person options for observation.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2021.