

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 681
By: Bell, Keith
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Over the last three years, public school districts and open-enrollment charter schools across the state have transitioned students and teachers into virtual learning environments due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The demand for virtual learning has continued as public education transitions into a collaborative and innovative 21st-century learning environment. Virtual learning is not for every student, but a large number of students have excelled in this environment. The State of Texas has made significant progress in virtual learning, and it would be a great disservice to see this progress go to waste. H.B. 681 provides for the repeal or removal of provisions setting an expiration date for certain provisions relating to a local remote learning program operated by a district or charter school.

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 this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 681 repeals Education Code provisions that set a September 1, 2023, expiration date for provisions relating to the following:

- the authority of a public school district or open-enrollment charter school that meets certain criteria to operate a local remote learning program;
- evaluating a full-time local remote learning program for purposes of public school system accountability;
- performance indicators for reporting purposes for students who spend at least half of their instructional time in virtual courses under a local remote learning program or receiving remote instruction;
- exclusion of certain students who received virtual or remote instruction for a majority of the instructional days during the preceding school year for average daily attendance calculation purposes;
- off-campus courses or programs counted for purposes of average daily attendance; and
- providing for the establishment of an asynchronous progression funding method to determine a district's entitlement under the foundation school program for a special-purpose district that existed before September 1, 2019.

The bill amends the Education Code to remove the September 1, 2023, expiration date for the provision allowing the satisfaction of teacher certification requirements through an internship that provides employment as a teacher for courses offered through a local remote learning program or the state virtual school network.

H.B. 681 repeals the following provisions of the Education Code:

- Section 29.9091(s);
- Section 39.0549(d);
- Section 39.301(c-2);
- Section 48.005(m-2);
- Section 48.0071(d); and
- Section 48.053(b-2).

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, August 31, 2023.