

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 786
By: Meza
Corrections
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The Windham School District is the correctional education system responsible for providing educational programming and opportunities to eligible students who are incarcerated in the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ). In recent years, concerns have been raised regarding the rates of dyslexia and illiteracy among inmates in TDCJ facilities. C.S.H.B. 786 seeks to examine the prevalence of dyslexia and illiteracy among certain students in the Windham School District and identify potential solutions to help students by requiring a study and report with data and recommendations.

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

C.S.H.B. 786 requires the Windham School District, not later than September 1, 2024, to identify each student enrolled in the district who is younger than 22 years of age and has dyslexia or is illiterate. The bill requires the district, not later than December 22, 2024, to prepare and submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the members of the legislature a written report on the following information concerning the incidence of dyslexia and illiteracy among those students:

- a summary of the district's findings, including statistical information; and
- legislative recommendations.

The bill's provisions expire on September 1, 2025.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2023.

COMPARISON OF INTRODUCED AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 786 may differ from the introduced in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

Whereas the introduced required the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) to identify and prepare a report regarding each inmate confined in a TDCJ facility who has dyslexia or is

illiterate, the substitute includes a requirement for the Windham School District instead to identify and prepare a report regarding each student enrolled in the district who is younger than 22 years of age and has dyslexia or is illiterate. The substitute does the following:

- changes the deadline to identify the applicable individuals who have dyslexia or are illiterate from not later than June 1, 2024, as in the introduced, to not later than September 1, 2024;
- changes the deadline for the report from not later than September 1, 2024, as in the introduced, to not later than December 22, 2024; and
- includes every member of the legislature among the report's recipients, whereas the introduced included each standing committee of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over TDCJ among those recipients.