

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 2310
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Education K-16
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Texas Education Agency (TEA), Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), and Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) have separate but vital responsibilities in supporting early childhood services for children with disabilities. Each agency serves a specific need; TEA oversees the public pre-kindergarten and Early Childhood Special Education programs, TWC oversees the Child Care Services Program and the state's child care quality rating and improvement program, Texas Rising Star, and HHSC oversees the Early Childhood Intervention program for infants and toddlers with disabilities, as well as Child Care Regulation (CCR), which establishes and enforces minimum child care licensing standards. With these programs split between three agencies, information and resources can slip through the cracks and children and families are left out.

H.B. 2310 will bring agency leaders from TEA, TWC, and HHSC together to create a strategic plan to collaboratively improve the early learning environments and outcomes for children with disabilities and delays in their childcare and pre-kindergarten programs and report their findings to the legislature.

H.B. 2310 amends current law relating to developing a strategic plan for the improvement and expansion of early learning and educational opportunities for young children with disabilities.

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 Subchapter A, Chapter 29, Education Code, by adding Section 29.0091, as follows:

Sec. 29.0091. STRATEGIC PLAN TO IMPROVE AND EXPAND EARLY LEARNING AND EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES. (a) Requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA), in collaboration with the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), to develop and implement a strategic plan to improve early learning and educational opportunities for young children with disabilities or developmental delays.

(b) Requires TEA, in developing the strategic plan, in coordination with HHSC and TWC, to:

(1) develop strategies for the inclusion of children with disabilities in early childhood education settings;

(2) consider topics and existing barriers relating to ensuring, and any changes to existing practices or policies necessary to ensure, more effective inclusion of children with disabilities in early learning programs, including in certain programs; and

(3) coordinate with, at a minimum, representatives of state, regional, and local agencies, the governor's Texas Early Learning Council, nonprofit organizations, and relevant social services providers.

(c) Requires that the strategic plan include certain elements.

(d) Provides that, not later than September 1 of the last state fiscal year in each four-year period covered by the most recent strategic plan:

(1) TEA is required to update the strategic plan for the subsequent four-year period;

(2) TEA is required to submit the updated strategic plan developed under Subdivision (1) to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives; and

(3) TEA, HHSC, and TWC are required to publish the updated strategic plan developed under Subdivision (1) on the agencies' respective Internet websites.

SECTION 2. Provides that, not later than September 1, 2026:

(1) TEA, HHSC, and TWC are required to publish the initial strategic plan required by Section 29.0091, Education Code, as added by this Act, on the agencies' respective Internet websites; and

(2) TEA is required to submit the initial strategic plan described by Subdivision (1) of this section to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2025.