

- SUBJECT:** Alternative assessments for students in special education programs
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 11 ayes — Aycock, Allen, J. Davis, Deshotel, Dutton, Farney, Huberty, K. King, Ratliff, J. Rodriguez, Villarreal
0 nays
- SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, April 23 — 31-0
- WITNESSES:** For — Lindsay Gustafson, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Heather Merritt (*Registered, but did not testify*: Chris Borreca, Thompson and Horton LLP; Harley Eckhart, Texas Elementary Principals and Supervisors Association; Monty Exter, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Dwight Harris, Texas AFT; Janna Lilly, Texas Council of Administrators of Special Education; Casey McCreary, Texas Association of School Administrators; Jeff Miller, Disability Rights Texas; Bob Popinski, Texas School Alliance; Julie Shields, Texas Association of School Boards; Rona Statman, The Arc of Texas)
Against — None
On — (*Registered but did not testify*: David Anderson, Gloria Zyskowski, Texas Education Agency)
- BACKGROUND:** Education Code, sec. 39.023(b) requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to develop appropriate criterion-referenced alternative assessment instruments to be administered to students in a special education program that would provide an appropriate measure of student achievement, as determined by the student's admission, review, and dismissal committee.
- DIGEST:** SB 1309 would require the TEA to redevelop special education assessment instruments for significantly cognitively disabled students in a manner consistent with federal law.
The assessment instrument could not require a teacher to prepare tasks or

materials for a student who would be administered such an assessment.

The redeveloped assessments would have to be administered no later than the 2014-2015 school year.

This bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2013.

NOTES:

The Legislative Budget Board estimates that SB 1309 would cost \$1.1 million in general revenue to redevelop the alternative assessment in fiscal 2014.