

**SUBJECT:** Removing certain requirements for observations of non-teacher candidates

**COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 8 ayes — Huberty, Allen, Bohac, Deshotel, Gooden, K. King, Koop, Meyer

1 nay — Bernal

2 absent — Dutton, VanDeaver

**SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, May 15 — 25-6 (Garcia, Menéndez, Perry, Rodríguez, Watson, Zaffirini)

**WITNESSES:** None

**BACKGROUND:** 19 TAC, part 7, §228.35 governs requirements for educator preparation programs (EPPs). An EPP must provide at least three formal observations of someone seeking certification as an educator other than a classroom teacher, such as a principal, superintendent, or counselor. In 2016, the State Board for Educator Certification proposed a rule requiring at least one of the formal observations to be conducted in person on the candidate's site.

Concerned parties suggest that allowing formal observations of certain educator candidates to be conducted online could reduce costs while providing flexibility for candidates wishing to be certified.

**DIGEST:** SB 1963 would prohibit State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) rules addressing ongoing educator preparation program support for candidates seeking to be certified as an educator other than a classroom teacher from requiring the program to conduct one or more formal observations in person on the candidate's site. SBEC rules would be required to allow each formal observation to occur on the candidate's site or through electronic transmission or other video- or technology-based method.

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, 2017.

NOTES:

A companion bill, HB 2775 by Phelan, was placed on the General State Calendar for May 10.