

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 589
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Education
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As Filed

DIGEST AND PURPOSE

Currently, Texas lacks clarifying language regarding the need for assessment of students who are visually impaired or deaf or hard of hearing. As proposed, S.B. 589 allows the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Texas School for the Deaf to conduct and make reasonable charges for assessments of students in local school districts and other education entities. This bill defines the nature of these schools' role in providing statewide services.

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 Section 30.021, Education Code, by amending Subsections (a) and (c) and adding Subsection (g), as follows:

- (a) Provides that the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (school) is a state agency established to serve as special school in the continuum of statewide placements for students who are 21 years of age or younger on September 1 of any school year and who have a visual impairment and who may have one or more other disabilities. Requires the school to provide comprehensive educational services to students who require specialized or intensive education or related services or related to the visual impairment. Prohibits the school from servicing certain students.
- (c) Requires the school to provide short-term programs, including summer programs, to enable and prepare visually impaired students to benefit from other educational programs and independent functioning. Deletes text referencing student exchange programs and the requirement to consider information from sources throughout the state.
- (g) Authorizes the school, at the request of a school district or other public or private educational entity, to conduct an assessment of a student served by the district or other educational entity. Authorizes the school to charge a reasonable fee to the district or other educational entity for conducting the assessment.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 30.051, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 30.051. PURPOSE OF TEXAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF. (a) Provides that the Texas School for the Deaf (school) is a state agency established to serve as a special school in the continuum of statewide placements for students who are 21 years of age or younger on September 1 of any school and who are deaf or hard of hearing and who may have one or more other disabilities. Requires the school to provide short-term programs, including summer programs, to enable students who are deaf or hard of hearing to develop skills so that they can

benefit from educational programs offered by the school districts in which the students reside, and to prepare students who are deaf or hard of hearing for independent functioning as adults. Deletes text regarding other services required to be offered by the school. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(b) Adds a specific list of services to the existing mandate that the school serve as primary statewide resource center promoting excellence in education for students who are deaf or hard of hearing through research, training, and demonstration projects.

(c) Authorizes the school, at the request of a school district or other public or private educational entity, to conduct an assessment of a student served by the district or other educational entity. Authorizes the school to charge a reasonable fee to the district or other educational entity for conducting the assessment. Deletes text requiring the school to work in partnership with certain entities to provide programs to better serve the deaf and hard of hearing.

(d) Adds compensatory skills and remedial academic skills to the list of needs for which the school may conduct a cooperative program with other agencies. Makes a nonsubstantive change

(e) Prohibits the school from serving students whose needs are appropriately addressed in a home or hospital setting, or in a residential treatment facility.

SECTION 3. Provides that this Act applies at the beginning of the 2003-2004 school year.

SECTION 4. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2003.