

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 629
By: Fallon
Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

S.B. 629 requires school districts ranked within the Top 50 in student enrollment to post and maintain certain school financial information at all times. The financial information must be available in a searchable electronic format posted on the district's website for viewing and downloading at all times. The school district must also post its annual financial report on its website. This bill would simply increase the transparency of school district financial data.

As proposed, S.B. 629 amends current law relating to the availability of certain school district financial information on certain districts' Internet websites.

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 Chapter 44, Education Code, by adding Subchapter D, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER D. FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE

Sec. 44.101. APPLICABILITY. Provides that this chapter applies only to a school district that is ranked among the 50 highest in student enrollment, as determined by the commissioner of education (commissioner).

Sec. 44.102. FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE. (a) Requires a school district to maintain on the district's Internet website an electronic database of district finances. Requires the database to include:

(1) for the immediately preceding fiscal year:

(A) total expenditures as a dollar amount and a dollar amount per student in average daily attendance;

(B) total revenue as a dollar amount and a dollar amount per student in average daily attendance;

(C) total revenue from property taxes as a dollar amount and a dollar amount per student in average daily attendance; and

(D) the total number of full-time equivalent positions for the district;

(2) a graphical representation of the district's operating and debt service funds, including:

(A) the total budgeted allocation and per student in average daily attendance allocation for the current school year, separated by each

applicable assigned function code and each applicable assigned object code determined by the commissioner as a major object code; and

(B) the actual revenues and expenditures for each of four preceding fiscal years, separated by each applicable assigned function code and each applicable assigned object code determined by the commissioner as a major object code;

(3) the district's annual financial report for the preceding five fiscal years;

(4) in a searchable electronic format:

(A) the transaction register for each district checking account, including each check written from a district checking account the transaction amount, the name of the payee, the date the check was issued, and a statement of the purpose of the expenditure for which the check was written; and

(B) a board financial report, updated at least quarterly, comparing revenues and expenditures with the adopted and amended budget, and revenues and expenditures from the preceding fiscal year;

(5) a visualization chart depicting district financial data trends for the preceding five fiscal years that shows for each fiscal year total expenditures per student in average daily attendance, total revenue per student in average daily attendance, and the district property tax rate expressed in dollars per \$100 valuation;

(6) contact information for the district and members of the board of trustees of the district; and

(7) a link to a web page maintained by the district that provides instructions for submitting a request for information under Chapter 552 (Public Information), Government Code.

(b) Requires the district's annual financial report for the current fiscal year to be posted not later than the first anniversary of the end of the fiscal year.

(c) Requires a school district to:

(1) update the electronic checking account transaction register at least once each month, not later than the 30th day after the closing date of the most recent monthly statement for the checking account;

(2) maintain each transaction or listing in the electronic account transaction register on the district's Internet website until at least the third anniversary of the date of the transaction or listing; and

(3) for each fiscal year that transactions and listings are included in the electronic checking account transaction register, group together the transactions and listings by fiscal year.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2020.