

SUBJECT: Providing requirements for meetings of open-enrollment charter schools

COMMITTEE: Public Education — favorable, without amendment

VOTE: 11 ayes — Huberty, Bernal, Allen, Bohac, Deshotel, Dutton, Gooden, K. King, Koop, Meyer, VanDeaver

WITNESSES: For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Jim Arnold, Amsterdam and Partners; Mark Wiggins, Association of Texas Professional Educators; Guy Sconzo, Fast Growth School Coalition; Grace Chimene, League of Women Voters of Texas; Ted Melina Raab, Texas AFT (American Federation of Teachers); Michael Schneider, Texas Association of Broadcasters; Barry Haenisch, Texas Association of Community Schools; Daniel Gonzalez and Julia Parenteau, Texas Association of Realtors; Amy Beneski, Texas Association of School Administrators; Dax Gonzalez, Texas Association of School Boards; Lindsay Gustafson, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Donnis Baggett, Texas Press Association; Ellen Arnold, Texas PTA; Curtis Culwell, Texas School Alliance)

Against — None

BACKGROUND: Government Code, sec. 551.128 sets the requirements for an online broadcast of an open meeting.

Concerned parties note that holding open meetings of open-enrollment charter schools far away from those charter school campuses makes it difficult for parents and other stakeholders to attend.

DIGEST: HB 2649 would require the governing body of a charter holder and the governing body of an open-enrollment charter school to:

- hold each open meeting in the county in which the charter school was located; or
- broadcast over the internet and make available online an archived video and audio recording of each open meeting.

Open meetings broadcast online and their archives would have to comply with the requirements provided in Government Code, sec. 551.128.

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, and would apply to an open meeting held on or after that date.