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H.B. No. 2976

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1  
2 relating to an elective course on firearms safety for public high  
3 school students and the designation of August as Firearm Safety  
4 Awareness Month.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

6 SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 28, Education Code, is  
7 amended by adding Section 28.0121 to read as follows:

8 Sec. 28.0121. FIREARMS SAFETY ELECTIVE COURSE. (a) A  
9 school district or open-enrollment charter school that offers a  
10 high school program may offer to students in high school an elective  
11 course on firearms safety based on the curriculum guidelines  
12 developed under Subsection (c). The course must meet the  
13 requirements for a one-half elective credit under Section 28.025.

14 (b) A school district or open-enrollment charter school may  
15 not allow a student to enroll in an elective course offered by the  
16 district or school under Subsection (a) unless the district or  
17 school first obtains the written consent of the parent or person  
18 standing in parental relation to the student.

19 (c) The State Board of Education shall develop curriculum  
20 guidelines for the elective course on firearms safety. The  
21 curriculum guidelines must:

22 (1) focus on accident prevention;

23 (2) promote the safety and protection of students;

24 (3) emphasize how students should respond when

1 encountering a firearm; and

2 (4) include the information contained in the firearms  
3 safety portion of a hunter education course under Section 62.014,  
4 Parks and Wildlife Code.

5 (d) The State Board of Education shall develop a virtual  
6 course on firearms safety that meets the requirements of an  
7 elective course under Subsection (a) for a school district or  
8 open-enrollment charter school to offer to high school students.

9 (e) The State Board of Education shall make the virtual  
10 course on firearms safety developed under Subsection (d) available  
11 to:

12 (1) the agency;

13 (2) the Parks and Wildlife Department; and

14 (3) the Department of Public Safety.

15 (f) Each entity described by Subsection (e) shall make the  
16 virtual course on firearms safety available to the public free of  
17 charge through the entity's Internet website.

18 SECTION 2. Subchapter D, Chapter 662, Government Code, is  
19 amended by adding Section 662.116 to read as follows:

20 Sec. 662.116. FIREARM SAFETY AWARENESS MONTH. (a) August  
21 is Firearm Safety Awareness Month to increase awareness of firearm  
22 safety and encourage community residents and leaders to discuss the  
23 safe and responsible ownership, storage, and use of firearms for  
24 recreational and defensive purposes and to promote voluntary and  
25 collaborative methods that improve public safety.

26 (b) Firearm Safety Awareness Month may be regularly  
27 observed through appropriate activities and programs in

1 communities to increase awareness of and instruction on the  
2 responsible use of firearms. A firearms accident prevention  
3 program may include animated videos, activity books, and other  
4 instructional materials for community residents of all ages.

5 SECTION 3. As soon as practicable after the effective date  
6 of this Act, the State Board of Education shall:

7 (1) develop the curriculum guidelines required under  
8 Section 28.0121(c), Education Code, as added by this Act; and

9 (2) develop the virtual course on firearms safety  
10 required under Section 28.0121(d), Education Code, as added by this  
11 Act.

12 SECTION 4. Section 28.0121, Education Code, as added by  
13 this Act, applies beginning with the 2024-2025 school year.

14 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
15 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
16 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
17 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
18 Act takes effect September 1, 2023.