

By: Middleton, et al. S.B. No. 763  
(Hefner, Buckley, Burrows, Harris of Anderson, et al.)

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to allowing public schools to employ or accept as volunteers chaplains to provide support, services, and programs for students.

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

SECTION 1. Subtitle D, Title 2, Education Code, is amended by adding Chapter 23 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 23. SCHOOL CHAPLAINS

Sec. 23.001. SCHOOL CHAPLAINS. A school district or an open-enrollment charter school may employ or accept as a volunteer a chaplain to provide support, services, and programs for students as assigned by the board of trustees of the district or the governing body of the school. A chaplain employed or volunteering under this chapter is not required to be certified by the State Board for Educator Certification.

SECTION 2. Section 48.115(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) Funds allocated under this section must be used to improve school safety and security, including costs associated with:

(1) securing school facilities, including:

(A) improvements to school infrastructure;

(B) the use or installation of physical barriers;

and

- 1 (C) the purchase and maintenance of:
- 2 (i) security cameras or other security
- 3 equipment; and
- 4 (ii) technology, including communications
- 5 systems or devices, that facilitates communication and information
- 6 sharing between students, school personnel, and first responders in
- 7 an emergency;
- 8 (2) providing security for the district, including:
- 9 (A) employing school district peace officers,
- 10 private security officers, and school marshals; and
- 11 (B) collaborating with local law enforcement
- 12 agencies, such as entering into a memorandum of understanding for
- 13 the assignment of school resource officers to schools in the
- 14 district;
- 15 (3) school safety and security training and planning,
- 16 including:
- 17 (A) active shooter and emergency response
- 18 training;
- 19 (B) prevention and treatment programs relating
- 20 to addressing adverse childhood experiences; and
- 21 (C) the prevention, identification, and
- 22 management of emergencies and threats, using evidence-based,
- 23 effective prevention practices and including:
- 24 (i) providing licensed counselors, social
- 25 workers, chaplains, and individuals trained in restorative
- 26 discipline and restorative justice practices;
- 27 (ii) providing mental health personnel and

1 support, including chaplains;

2 (iii) providing behavioral health  
3 services, including services provided by chaplains;

4 (iv) establishing threat reporting  
5 systems; and

6 (v) developing and implementing programs  
7 focused on restorative justice practices, culturally relevant  
8 instruction, and providing mental health support, including  
9 support provided by chaplains; and

10 (4) providing programs related to suicide prevention,  
11 intervention, and postvention, including programs provided by  
12 chaplains.

13 SECTION 3. Each board of trustees of a school district and  
14 each governing body of an open-enrollment charter school shall take  
15 a record vote not later than six months after the effective date of  
16 this Act on whether to adopt a policy authorizing a campus of the  
17 district or school to employ or accept as a volunteer a chaplain  
18 under Chapter 23, Education Code, as added by this Act.

19 SECTION 4. This Act applies beginning with the 2023-2024  
20 school year.

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