

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to an attendance policy adopted by public schools to prevent truancy.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 25, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 25.0916 to read as follows:

Sec. 25.0916. ATTENDANCE POLICY. (a) In this section, "parent" includes a person standing in parental relation.

(b) The board of trustees of each school district and the governing body of each open-enrollment charter school shall adopt and implement an attendance policy to:

(1) inform students and parents regarding the importance of regular attendance; and

(2) provide appropriate supports to students who fail to regularly attend school.

(c) An attendance policy adopted under this section must:

(1) describe the benefits of regular attendance;

(2) describe the consequences of failing to regularly attend school, including the negative effects on:

(A) a student's academic progress; and

(B) a student and the student's family as a result of referral to a truancy court for truant conduct under Section 65.003(a), Family Code;

(3) provide for a parent of a student enrolled in the

1 district or school to elect to receive notifications of the
2 student's absence from school for a day or part of a day, regardless
3 of whether the student's absence is excused or unexcused, through:

4 (A) e-mail or text message, if the district or
5 school has the capability to send notifications through those
6 methods; or

7 (B) first class mail, if the district or school
8 does not have the capability to send notifications as provided by
9 Paragraph (A);

10 (4) provide for a meeting between a parent of a student
11 enrolled in the district or school and a school counselor,
12 principal, or appropriate administrator when the student becomes at
13 risk for engaging in truant conduct under Section 65.003, Family
14 Code, as provided by the policy, to discuss the student's behavior
15 and any conditions at the student's home that may be contributing to
16 the student's failure to attend school;

17 (5) if a parent of a student enrolled in the district
18 or school fails to attend a meeting described by Subdivision (4),
19 authorize the school attendance officer to make a home visit or
20 otherwise contact the parent in the manner described by Section
21 25.091 to investigate the student's behavior and living conditions
22 and report the attendance officer's findings to the district or
23 school; and

24 (6) establish guidelines to identify a student in need
25 of additional support and to refer the student to in-school or
26 out-of-school services aimed at addressing the student's failure to
27 regularly attend school.

1 (d) At the beginning of each school year, each school
2 district or open-enrollment charter school shall provide a copy of
3 the attendance policy adopted under this section to the parent of
4 each student enrolled in the district or school.

5 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2023-2024
6 school year.

7 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
8 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
9 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
10 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
11 Act takes effect September 1, 2023.