

By: Hancock

H.B. No. 1540

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to excused absences in public schools.

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

SECTION 1. Section 25.087, Education Code, is amended by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsection (c) to read as follows:

(b) A school district shall excuse a student from attending school for the purpose of:

(1) observing religious holy days, including traveling for that purpose;

(2) attending an appointment with a ~~[. A school district shall excuse a student for temporary absence resulting from]~~ health care professional [professionals] if the [that] student commences classes or returns to school on the same day of the appointment; or

(3) visiting the State Capitol or a state or national park with the student's family, provided that:

(A) a district is not required to excuse more than two days for this purpose during each school year; and

(B) the student must submit a brief essay that describes the student's experiences while visiting the State Capitol or park and summarizes the historical, scientific, or other academic subject area information learned by the student during the visit.

1 (c) A student whose absence is excused under Subsection (b)
2 ~~[this subsection]~~ may not be penalized for that absence and shall be
3 counted as if the student attended school for purposes of
4 calculating the average daily attendance of students in the school
5 district. A student whose absence is excused under Subsection (b)
6 ~~[this subsection]~~ shall be allowed a reasonable time to make up
7 school work missed on those days. If the student satisfactorily
8 completes the school work, the day of absence shall be counted as a
9 day of compulsory attendance.

10 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2007-2008
11 school year.

12 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
13 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
14 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
15 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
16 Act takes effect September 1, 2007.