

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
81R1186 CAE-D

S.B. 1075
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, according to Section 25.087 (Excused Absences), Education Code, a school district is required to excuse a student from attending school for the following purposes: documented medical appointments, school-related absences approved by the school board (e.g. field trips), mentorship absences approved by the school district as part of the Advanced/Distinguished Achievement graduation plan, diagnostic testing for a Medicaid-eligible student, religious observance, required court appearance, or attendance at the funeral of a deceased veteran for the purpose of sounding "Taps." The absences listed allow for the school district to receive average daily attendance funding despite the student being absent from school. Additionally, the Education Code allows a teacher, principal, or superintendent of the school, at his or her discretion, to issue an excused absence for any other reason. However, absences issued at the discretion of a teacher, principal, or superintendent do not allow the district to receive average daily attendance funding.

As proposed, S.B. 1075 requires a student to receive an excused absence for deployment of a parent who is on active duty, a member of the reserves, or a member of the National Guard. This bill applies in the following situations: departure for deployment to a combat zone, mid-deployment leave from a combat zone, or return from deployment to a combat zone. Adding the above reasons to require this excused absence allows school districts to receive average daily attendance funding for students who are absent because of the deployment of a parent to a combat zone. This legislation leaves to the discretion of the local school district how long a student may be absent for this purpose.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 25.087, Education Code, by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsections (b-1) and (e), as follows:

(b) Requires that a school district excuse a student from attending school for certain reasons, including spending time with the student's parent, if the parent has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or is returning from deployment to a combat zone as a member of the armed forces of the United States, a reserve component of the armed forces of the United States, or the state military forces.

(b-1) Requires the board of trustees of each independent school district to establish criteria for determining the number of days a student is authorized to receive an excused absence for the purpose described by Subsection (b)(1)(c) (relating to requiring a school district to excuse a student from attending school for spending time with the student's parent if the parent has been called to duty).

(e) Defines "combat zone."

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.