

By: Guillen

H.B. No. 3868

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to school safety.

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

SECTION 1. Section 37.212, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Section 37.212. INTERAGENCY COOPERATION. The center shall:

(1) promote cooperation between state agencies, institutions of higher education, and any local juvenile delinquency prevention councils to address discipline and safety issues in the state; and

(2) establish and develop criteria and minimum guidelines required for school districts to enter into memorandum of understanding and mutual aid agreements with local and regional authorities, including first responders.

SECTION 2. Section 7.009(a), Education Code is amended to read as follows:

(a) In coordination with the Legislative Budget Board, the agency shall establish an online clearinghouse of information relating to best practices of campuses and school districts regarding instruction, dropout prevention, public school finance, resource allocation, safety, transportation, and business practices. To the extent practicable, the agency shall ensure that information provided through the online clearinghouse is specific,

1 actionable information relating to the best practices of
2 high-performing and highly efficient campuses and school districts
3 rather than general guidelines relating to campus and school
4 district operation. The information must be accessible by
5 campuses, school districts, and interested members of the public.

6 SECTION 3. Section 34.012, Education Code: is amended to
7 read as follows:

8 Section 34.012. THREE-POINT SEAT BELT INSTRUCTION;
9 INFORMATION CLEARINGHOUSE. (a) In coordination with the
10 Clearinghouse established under Section 7.009, Education Code, the
11 State Board of Education shall develop and make available to each
12 school district a program of instruction in the proper use of a
13 three-point seat belt.

14 (b) The Clearinghouse [~~State Board of Education~~] shall
15 serve as a clearinghouse of best practices for school districts
16 seeking the most efficient and sensible information regarding
17 school bus safety, including possible compliance with Section
18 547.701, Transportation Code, using school buses originally
19 purchased without seat belts.

20 SECTION 4. Section 37.202, Education Code is amended to
21 read as follows:

22 Section 37.202. PURPOSE. The purpose of the center is to
23 serve as:

24 (1) a central location for school safety information,
25 including research, training, and technical assistance related to
26 successful school safety programs; [~~and~~]

27 (2) a resource for the prevention of youth violence

1 and the promotion of safety in the state; and

2 (3) provide school safety recommendations to the Texas
3 Education Agency and State Board of Education.

4 SECTION 5. Section 547.701, Transportation Code, is amended
5 to read as follows:

6 Section 537.701. ADDITIONAL EQUIPMENT REQUIREMENTS FOR
7 SCHOOL BUSES. (a) A school bus shall be equipped with:

8 (1) a convex mirror or other device that reflects to
9 the school bus operator a clear view of the area immediately in
10 front of the vehicle that would otherwise be hidden from view; ~~and~~

11 (2) signal lamps that:

12 (A) are mounted as high and as widely spaced
13 laterally as practicable;

14 (B) display four alternately flashing red
15 lights, two located on the front at the same level and two located
16 on the rear at the same level; and

17 (C) emit a light visible at a distance of 500 feet
18 in normal sunlight; and

19 (3) movable stop arms:

20 (A) that conform to regulations adopted under
21 Section 34.002, Education Code; and

22 (B) that may be operated only when the bus is
23 stopped to load or unload students.

24 (b) A school bus may be equipped with:

25 (1) rooftop warning lamps:

26 (A) that conform to and are placed on the bus in
27 accordance with specifications adopted under Section 34.002,

1 Education Code; and

2 (B) that are operated under rules adopted by the
3 school district; and

4 (2) a safety device recommended by the Texas School
5 Safety Center [~~movable stop arms~~;

6 [~~(A) that conform to regulations adopted under~~
7 ~~Section 34.002, Education Code, and~~

8 [~~(B) that may be operated only when the bus is~~
9 ~~stopped to load or unload students]~~.

10 (c) When a school bus is being stopped or is stopped on a
11 highway to permit students to board or exit the bus, the operator of
12 the bus shall activate all flashing warning signal lights and other
13 equipment on the bus designed to warn other drivers that the bus is
14 stopping to load or unload children. A person may not operate such a
15 light or other equipment except when the bus is being stopped or is
16 stopped on a highway to permit students to board or exit the bus.

17 (d) The exterior of a school bus may not bear advertising or
18 another paid announcement directed at the public if the advertising
19 or announcement distracts from the effectiveness of required safety
20 warning equipment. The department shall adopt rules to implement
21 this subsection. A school bus that violates this section or rules
22 adopted under this section shall be placed out of service until it
23 complies.

24 SECTION 6. EFFECTIVE DATE. This Act takes effect
25 immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members
26 elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas
27 Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for

1 immediate effect, the Act takes effect September 1, 2009.