

By: Zaffirini

S.B. No. 2248

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to public school students placed in foster care.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 25, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 25.007 to read as follows:

Sec. 25.007. TRANSITION ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS IN FOSTER CARE. (a) The legislature finds that:

(1) students in foster care are faced with numerous transitions during their formative years; and

(2) students in foster care who move from one school to another during the high school years are faced with special challenges to learning and future achievement.

(b) In recognition of the challenges faced by students in foster care, the agency shall assist the transition of foster care students from one school to another by:

(1) ensuring that school records for a student in foster care are transferred to the student's new school not later than the 14th day after the date the student begins enrollment at the school;

(2) developing systems to ease transition of a student in foster care during the first two weeks of enrollment at a new school;

(3) developing procedures for awarding credit for course work, including electives, completed by a student in foster

1 care while enrolled at another school;

2 (4) promoting practices that facilitate access by a  
3 student in foster care to extracurricular programs, summer  
4 programs, credit transfer services, electronic courses provided  
5 under Chapter 30A, and after-school tutoring programs at minimum or  
6 no cost;

7 (5) establishing procedures to lessen the adverse  
8 impact of the movement of a student in foster care to a new school  
9 after the end of the student's junior year of high school;

10 (6) encouraging or maintaining partnerships between  
11 the Department of Family and Protective Services, foster parents,  
12 and affected school districts;

13 (7) encouraging school districts and open-enrollment  
14 charter schools to provide services for a student in foster care in  
15 transition when applying for admission to postsecondary study and  
16 when seeking sources of funding for postsecondary study;

17 (8) requiring school districts, campuses, and  
18 open-enrollment charter schools to accept a referral for special  
19 education services made for a student in foster care by a school  
20 previously attended by the student; and

21 (9) providing other assistance as identified by the  
22 agency.

23 SECTION 2. Section 30A.002(b), Education Code, is amended  
24 to read as follows:

25 (b) A student is eligible to enroll full-time in courses  
26 provided through the state virtual school network only if:

27 (1) the student was enrolled in a public school in this

1 state in the preceding school year; [~~or~~]

2 (2) the student:

3 (A) is a dependent of a member of the United  
4 States military;

5 (B) was previously enrolled in high school in  
6 this state; and

7 (C) does not reside in this state due to a  
8 military deployment or transfer; or

9 (3) the student has been placed in foster care.

10 SECTION 3. This Act applies beginning with the 2009-2010  
11 school year.

12 SECTION 4. 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, 2009.