

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1556
By: Seliger
Education
7/25/2013
Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, the Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC) reviews school districts' safety plans and provides some safety information and training.

S.B. 1556 creates the School Safety Task Force, comprised of entities with expertise in relevant areas to determine best practices. The task force brings together experts in school safety, emergency management, rapid response training, and multi-hazard emergencies, headed by the chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management, to study multi-hazard school safety practices and report its findings, including recommendations for any necessary statutory changes, to the legislature before September 1, 2014, and every subsequent even-numbered year.

S.B. 1556 amends current law relating to the establishment of a school safety certification program and the School Safety Task Force.

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 Subchapter D, Chapter 37, Education Code, by adding Sections 37.1081 and 37.1082, as follows:

Sec. 37.1081. SCHOOL SAFETY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM. (a) Requires the Texas School Safety Center, in consultation with the School Safety Task Force established under Section 37.1082, to develop a school safety certification program.

(b) Requires the Texas School Safety Center to award a school safety certificate to a school district that:

(1) has adopted and implemented a multihazard emergency operations plan as required under Section 37.108 (Multihazard Emergency Operations Plan; Safety and Security Audit) and that includes in that plan:

(A) measures for security of facilities and grounds;

(B) measures for communication with parents and the media in the event of an emergency; and

(C) an outline of safety training for school employees;

(2) demonstrates to the center with current written self-audit processes that the district conducts at least one drill per year for each of the following types of drills:

(A) a school lockdown drill;

- (B) an evacuation drill;
- (C) a weather-related emergency drill;
- (D) a reverse evacuation drill; and
- (E) a shelter-in-place drill;

(3) is in compliance with Sections 37.108(b) (relating to requiring each school district or public junior college district, at least once every three years, to conduct a safety and security audit of the district's facilities; and requiring a district, to the extent possible, to follow safety and security audit procedures developed by the Texas School Safety Center or a comparable public or private entity) and (c) (relating to requiring a school district or public junior college district to report the results of the safety and security audit conducted under Subsection (b) to the district's board of trustees and, in the manner required by the Texas School Safety Center, to the Texas School Safety Center); and

(4) meets any other eligibility criteria as recommended by the School Safety Task Force.

(c) Provides that the certification program is abolished and this section expires September 1, 2017.

Sec. 37.1082. SCHOOL SAFETY TASK FORCE. (a) Establishes the School Safety Task Force to study, on an ongoing basis, best practices for school multihazard emergency operations planning, and based on those studies, make recommendations to the legislature, the Texas School Safety Center, and the governor's office of homeland security.

(b) Provides that the task force is composed of:

- (1) the chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management, or the chief's designee;
- (2) the training director of the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training Center at Texas State University--San Marcos, or the training director's designee;
- (3) the chairperson of the Texas School Safety Center, or the chairperson's designee; and
- (4) the agency director of the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service, or the agency director's designee.

(c) Requires the chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management, or the chief's designee, to serve as the presiding officer of the task force.

(d) Provides that a member of the task force is not entitled to compensation for service on the task force but is entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing task force duties.

(e) Requires the task force, in performing the task force's duties under this section for schools, to consult with and consider recommendations from school district and school personnel, including school safety personnel and educators, and from first responders, emergency managers, local officials, representatives of appropriate nonprofit organizations, and other interested parties with knowledge and experience concerning school emergency operations planning.

(f) Requires the task force, not later than September 1 of each even-numbered year, to prepare and submit to the legislature a report concerning the results of the task force's most recent study, including any recommendations for statutory changes the task force considers necessary or appropriate to improve school multihazard emergency operations.

(g) Provides that the task force is abolished and this section expires September 1, 2017.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 46.0081, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 46.0081. SECURITY CRITERIA IN DESIGN OF INSTRUCTIONAL FACILITIES. Requires a school district that constructs a new instructional facility or conducts a major renovation of an existing instructional facility using funds allotted to the district under this subchapter to consider, in the design of the instructional facility, appropriate security criteria, rather than security criteria developed by the Texas School Safety Center under Section 37.2051 (Security Criteria for Instructional Facilities).

SECTION 3. Repealer: Section 37.2051 (Security Criteria for Instructional Facilities), Education Code.

SECTION 4. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2013.