

By: Rodriguez of Travis, Ratliff,
N. Gonzalez of El Paso, Alvarado,
Lucio III

H.B. No. 617

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT
2 relating to transition and employment services for public school
3 students enrolled in special education programs.

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

5 SECTION 1. Section 29.011, Education Code, is amended to
6 read as follows:

7 Sec. 29.011. TRANSITION PLANNING. (a) The commissioner
8 shall by rule adopt procedures for compliance with federal
9 requirements relating to transition services for students who are
10 enrolled in special education programs under this subchapter. The
11 procedures must specify the manner in which a student's admission,
12 review, and dismissal committee must consider, and if appropriate,
13 address the following issues in the student's individualized
14 education program:

15 (1) appropriate student involvement in the student's
16 transition to life outside the public school system;

17 (2) if the student is younger than 18 years of age,
18 appropriate parental involvement in the student's transition;

19 (3) if the student is at least 18 years of age,
20 appropriate parental involvement in the student's transition, if
21 the parent is invited to participate by the student or the school
22 district in which the student is enrolled;

23 (4) any postsecondary education options;

24 (5) a functional vocational evaluation;

1 (6) employment goals and objectives;

2 (7) if the student is at least 18 years of age, the
3 availability of age-appropriate instructional environments;

4 (8) independent living goals and objectives; and

5 (9) appropriate circumstances for referring a student
6 or the student's parents to a governmental agency for services.

7 (b) The commissioner shall require each school district or
8 shared services arrangement to designate at least one employee to
9 serve as the district's or shared services arrangement's designee
10 on transition and employment services for students enrolled in
11 special education programs under this subchapter. The commissioner
12 shall develop minimum training guidelines for a district's or
13 shared services arrangement's designee. An individual designated
14 under this subsection must provide information and resources about
15 effective transition planning and services and interagency
16 coordination to ensure that local school staff communicate and
17 collaborate with:

18 (1) students enrolled in special education programs
19 under this subchapter and the parents of those students; and

20 (2) as appropriate, local and regional staff of the:

21 (A) Health and Human Services Commission;

22 (B) Department of Aging and Disability Services;

23 (C) Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative
24 Services;

25 (D) Department of State Health Services; and

26 (E) Department of Family and Protective
27 Services.

1 SECTION 2. Subchapter A, Chapter 29, Education Code, is
2 amended by adding Section 29.0112 to read as follows:

3 Sec. 29.0112. TRANSITION AND EMPLOYMENT GUIDE. (a) The
4 agency, with assistance from the Health and Human Services
5 Commission, shall develop a transition and employment guide for
6 students enrolled in special education programs and their parents
7 to provide information on statewide services and programs that
8 assist in the transition to life outside the public school system.
9 The agency may contract with a private entity to prepare the guide.

10 (b) The transition and employment guide must contain
11 information specific to this state regarding:

- 12 (1) transition services;
- 13 (2) employment and supported employment services;
- 14 (3) social security programs;
- 15 (4) community and long-term services and support;
- 16 (5) postsecondary educational programs and services;
- 17 (6) information sharing with health and human services
18 agencies and providers;
- 19 (7) guardianship and alternatives to guardianship;
- 20 (8) self-advocacy, person-directed planning, and
21 self-determination; and
- 22 (9) contact information for all relevant state
23 agencies.

24 (c) The transition and employment guide must be produced in
25 an electronic format and posted on the agency's website in a manner
26 that permits the guide to be easily identified and accessed.

27 (d) The agency must update the transition and employment

1 guide posted on the agency's website at least once every two years.

2 (e) A school district shall:

3 (1) post the transition and employment guide on the
4 district's website if the district maintains a website; and

5 (2) provide written information and, if necessary,
6 assistance to a parent regarding how to access the electronic
7 version of the guide at:

8 (A) the first meeting of the student's admission,
9 review, and dismissal committee at which transition is discussed;

10 or

11 (B) the first committee meeting that occurs after
12 the date the guide becomes available, if a student has already had
13 an admission, review, and dismissal committee meeting discussing
14 transition.

15 SECTION 3. The Texas Education Agency, with assistance from
16 the Health and Human Services Commission, shall complete
17 development of the guide required by Section 29.0112, Education
18 Code, as added by this Act, not later than September 1, 2014. A
19 school district shall comply with Section 29.0112(e), Education
20 Code, as added by this Act, beginning on the date the guide is
21 available.

22 SECTION 4. Except as otherwise provided by this Act, this
23 Act applies beginning with the 2013-2014 school year.

24 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
25 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
26 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
27 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this

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1 Act takes effect September 1, 2013.