

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 233  
By: Farrar  
Public Education  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

School social workers can play a significant role in assessing student needs by consulting with students and families to address social, emotional, and developmental issues that affect academic performance. Based on such an assessment, a social worker can facilitate a student's access to resources, such as state and federal agencies, as well as community-based organizations. Interested parties contend that because the role of a school social worker is not sufficiently defined in current law and, in part, because school administrators may lack awareness of the impact that social workers can have in an academic setting, social workers are generally not sought out for employment by schools. C.S.H.B. 233 seeks to clarify the role of social workers in schools.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 233 amends the Education Code to authorize a social worker to provide social work services to students and families in a school or school district and to require a social worker to collaborate with school administrators and other school professionals in order to enhance students' learning environments. The bill defines "social work services" as services specialized to assist students and families and designed to alleviate barriers to learning; connect the home, the community, and the school; promote advocacy; strengthen relationships; and assist with basic and psychosocial needs. The bill applies beginning with the 2015–2016 school year.

### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2015.

### **COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.H.B. 233 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following comparison is organized and formatted in a manner that indicates the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

INTRODUCED

SECTION 1. Subchapter Z, Chapter 33, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 33.905 to read as follows:

Sec. 33.905. SOCIAL WORK SERVICES.

(a) Social work services are specialized to assist students and families and are designed to alleviate barriers; link home, school, and community; promote advocacy; strengthen relationships; and assist with basic, psychosocial, and academic needs.

(b) School social workers provide social work services to students and families in a school or district.

(c) A social worker employed by a school district shall collaborate with school administrators and other school professionals in order to enhance students' learning environments.

SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2015-2016 school year.

SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2015.

HOUSE COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE

SECTION 1. Subchapter Z, Chapter 33, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 33.905 to read as follows:

Sec. 33.905. SOCIAL WORK SERVICES.

(a) In this section, "social work services" means services specialized to assist students and families and designed to alleviate barriers to learning, connect the home, the community, and the school, promote advocacy, strengthen relationships, and assist with basic and psychosocial needs.

(b) A social worker may provide social work services to students and families in a school or district.

(c) A social worker shall collaborate with school administrators and other school professionals in order to enhance students' learning environments.

SECTION 2. Same as introduced version.

SECTION 3. Same as introduced version.