

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.S.B. 1483
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Education
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Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The community schools model is a comprehensive school improvement plan with demonstrated success nationally and in Texas for supporting struggling schools through a combination of wraparound services, community partnerships, and high-achieving academics.

Although community schools are operational in Texas, currently there is no definition or uniform set of practices and standards for schools wishing to become a community school. Additionally, while community schools aim at improving failing schools, this model is not officially an option currently in place in lieu of reconstitution.

C.S.S.B. 1483 outlines the community school model in statute and allows a school to transition into a community school rather than undergo reconstitution.

C.S.S.B. 1483 amends current law relating to Texas community schools.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 1 (Section 29.558, Education Code) of this bill.

Rulemaking authority previously granted to the State Board of Education is rescinded in SECTION 6 (Section 7.102(c)(17), Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 29, Education Code, by adding Subchapter N, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER N. TEXAS COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Sec. 29.551. DEFINITION. Defines "community-based organization."

Sec. 29.552. TEXAS COMMUNITY SCHOOL. (a) Provides that a Texas community school is a public elementary, middle, junior high, or high school that partners with one or more community-based organizations to coordinate academic, social, and health services to reduce barriers to learning and improve the quality of education for students in the community.

(b) Authorizes a Texas community school to offer a variety of programs and services, including:

- (1) early childhood education;
- (2) after-school and summer school academic and enrichment programs;
- (3) college and career preparation;
- (4) service learning opportunities, such as internships and community service programs;
- (5) leadership and mentoring programs;

(6) activities to encourage community and parent engagement in students' education;

(7) health and social services for students and their families; and

(8) parenting classes.

Sec. 29.553. TRANSITION TO TEXAS COMMUNITY SCHOOL. (a) Authorizes a public elementary, middle, junior high, or high school to transition to a Texas community school if the school:

(1) establishes a school community partnership team to function as the campus-level planning and decision-making committee required under Section 11.251 (Planning and Decision-Making Process), composed of the members required under Section 11.251 and additional community representatives;

(2) conducts a comprehensive on-site needs assessment using the guidelines and procedures described by Section 39.106(b) (requiring the team to use all of the guidelines and procedures relevant to each area of insufficient performance in conducting a targeted on-site needs assessment and a comprehensive on-site needs assessment);

(3) establishes a partnership with a lead community-based organization, such as Communities In Schools, a social service provider, or an education or youth services organization, that has experience in developing and implementing a community school plan;

(4) develops a community school plan that satisfies the requirements for a campus improvement plan under Section 11.253 (Campus Planning and Site-Based Decision-Making); and

(5) gains approval for the community school plan from:

(A) at least 75 percent of campus faculty and staff and 75 percent of parents of students enrolled at the school; and

(B) the board of trustees of the school district in which the school is located.

(b) Requires a school that transitions to a Texas community school under Subsection (a) to hire a new employee or designate a school district employee or an employee of a community-based organization with experience in developing and implementing a community school plan as the community school coordinator for the school. Provides that the coordinator's duties include:

(1) recruiting community partners and building community support for the school;

(2) coordinating:

(A) the school community partnership team's planning and training activities;

(B) planning and evaluation efforts between the school and community partners;

(C) academic and student and family support programs; and

(D) after-school, summer, and enrichment programs for students;

(3) encouraging community and parent engagement in the school;

(4) seeking available resources for implementing community school programs and services;

(5) conducting an annual needs assessment of the school in coordination with the school community partnership team;

(6) acting as a liaison between the school, other community schools, the school district, and community partners; and

(7) developing a plan for sustaining the community school plan.

(c) Authorizes the school to seek assistance from other community schools or from regional education service centers, or technical assistance providers in developing or implementing a community school plan.

(d) Provides that, for purposes of Subsection (c), a technical assistance provider is a public or private entity that has experience in developing and implementing a community school plan and that provides certain services as set forth.

Sec. 29.554. **COMMUNITY AND DISTRICT OVERSIGHT.** Requires a school that transitions to a community school to:

(1) hold a community meeting at least twice each year to:

(A) inform community stakeholders about the school's progress in implementing the community school plan; and

(B) seek community input regarding any improvements or changes that could be made to the plan; and

(2) report annually to the board of trustees of the school district in which the school is located regarding the school's progress in implementing the plan.

Sec. 29.555. **LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS.** (a) Provides that a school community partnership team formed by a school with performance below any standard under Section 39.054(e) (functions as the campus intervention team for purposes of Section 39.106 (Campus Intervention Team Duties).

(b) Requires a low-performing school transitioning to a Texas community school to receive district-level support to assist the school in developing and implementing the community school plan. Requires the support to continue for at least two school years after the school successfully meets the standards under Section 39.054(e).

Sec. 29.556. **FUNDING.** Authorizes a Texas community school or a school transitioning to a Texas community school to seek and accept gifts, grants, donations, and funds from federal and state agencies and private sources for purposes related to the school's function as a Texas community school.

Sec. 29.557. **RECOGNITION AS TEXAS COMMUNITY SCHOOL.** (a) Requires a school that transitions to a Texas community school to be recognized by the state as a Texas community school.

(b) Requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to develop methods for recognizing a school as a Texas community school.

Sec. 29.558. RULES. Authorizes the commissioner of education (commissioner) to adopt rules as necessary to implement this subchapter.

SECTION 2. Amends Sections 39.106(c) and (f), Education Code, as follows:

(c) Requires the campus intervention team, with the involvement and advice of the school community partnership team, if applicable, to recommend actions relating to any area of insufficient performance on completing the on-site needs assessment under this section, including:

(1)-(6) Makes no changes to these subdivisions;

(7) Makes a nonsubstantive change;

(8) transition to a Texas community school under Subchapter N, Chapter 29; or

(9) Creates this subdivision from existing text. Makes no further change to this subdivision.

(f) Authorizes the commissioner, notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter, if the commissioner determines that a campus for which an intervention is ordered under Subsection (a) is not fully implementing the campus intervention team's recommendations or targeted improvement plan or updated plan, to:

(1) Creates this subdivision from existing text; or

(2) approve the campus's transition to a Texas community school under Subchapter N, Chapter 29, on request from the principal of the campus.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 39.107, Education Code, by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsections (a-2) and (s), as follows:

(a) Requires the commissioner, subject to Subsection (a-2), to order the reconstitution of the campus after a campus has been identified as unacceptable for two consecutive school years. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

(a-2) Authorizes a campus to elect to transition to a Texas community school under Subchapter N, Chapter 29, instead of reconstitution under this section if the campus:

(1) notifies the commissioner of the campus's election not later than two weeks after the date on which the commissioner orders reconstitution under Subsection (a); and

(2) satisfies the requirements of transitioning to a Texas community school under Subchapter N, Chapter 29, not later than six months after the date on which the commissioner orders reconstitution under Subsection (a).

(s) Prohibits the commissioner from ordering the closure of a campus under this section without giving the campus the opportunity to transition to a Texas community school under Subchapter N, Chapter 29, and at least two years to implement the campus's community school plan.

SECTION 4. Transfers Section 29.259, Education Code, to Subchapter Z, Chapter 29, Education Code, and redesignates it as Section 29.923, Education Code.

SECTION 5. Amends Section 42.003(a), Education Code, to change a reference to Section 29.259 to Section 29.923.

SECTION 6. (a) Repealer: the heading to Subchapter H (Community), Chapter 29, Education Code.

(b) Repealers: Sections 7.021(b)(8) (requiring TEA to carry out duties under the Texas Advanced Placement Incentive Program under Subchapter C, Chapter 28), 7.102(c)(17) (requiring the State Board of Education to adopt rules relating to community education development projects as required under Section 29.257), 29.251 (Definitions), 29.252 (Agency Role in Community Education), 29.255 (State Funding), 29.256 (Reimbursement for Community Education Services), and 29.257 (Community Education Development Projects), Education Code.

SECTION 7. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.