

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
85R7350 GCB-D

S.B. 1688
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Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Interested parties contend that as mental health disease numbers continue to increase among all age populations throughout the state, especially among teenage population, it would greatly benefit Texas to strengthen its resolve to better address these mental health concerns and challenges that impact students.

One way to strengthen the state's resolve is to have increased coordinated attention at the state level that builds on existing resources in order to maximize the likelihood of children with mental illness to successfully complete their education. Concerned stakeholders contend that a mental health division in the Texas Education Agency (TEA) can be the catalyst that can undertake these sensitive and critical issues.

S.B. 1688 establishes a mental health division within TEA. This division would develop and administer a plan to identify, leverage, and align existing agency resources to promote the academic success of students with mental health concerns or those who are at risk of having a mental illness. The division will promote local and statewide school-community partnerships by creating an interagency collaboration to better address these needs.

As proposed, S.B. 1688 amends current law relating to the establishment of the student mental health division within the Texas Education Agency.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 1 (Section 7.043, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 7, Education Code, by adding Section 7.043, as follows:

Sec. 7.043. STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH DIVISION. Authorizes the commissioner of education (commissioner), by rule, to establish the student mental health division within the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to:

- (1) develop and administer a plan to identify, leverage, and align existing TEA resources to promote the academic success of students with mental illness or students who are at risk of having mental illness, including students who are in special education programs under Subchapter A (Special Education Program), Chapter 29 (Educational Programs); and
- (2) promote strong local and statewide school-community partnerships by coordinating with other relevant state agencies, including the Health and Human Services Commission, the Department of State Health Services, the Department of Family and Protective Services, the Texas Workforce Commission, and the Texas Juvenile Justice Department.

SECTION 2. Requires the commissioner, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, to adopt rules establishing the student mental health division within TEA, as required by Section 7.043, Education Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2017.