

By: Allen, Thompson of Harris

H.B. No. 2623

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to requiring school districts and certain facilities to assist students in making the transition back to school after certain prolonged placements outside of school.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter Z, Chapter 25, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 25.903 to read as follows:

Sec. 25.903. ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENT TRANSITIONING BACK TO SCHOOL AFTER PROLONGED PLACEMENT OUTSIDE OF SCHOOL. (a) This section applies to the following facilities:

(1) a disciplinary alternative education program;

(2) a juvenile justice alternative education program;

(3) a residential program or facility operated by or under contract with the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, a juvenile board, or any other governmental entity;

(4) any residential treatment center; and

(5) a public or private hospital.

(b) Each school district and facility listed under Subsection (a) shall coordinate to assist a student enrolled in the district in making the transition back to school after being in the facility for a period equivalent to 30 instructional days or more during the school year. The assistance provided by the district and the facility must include development and implementation of a personalized transition service plan for each student who has been

absent from school as described by this subsection. The principal of the school the student attends following the absence shall designate one or more appropriate school employees, including at least one teacher, and an appropriate supervisor employed by the facility in which the student was placed shall designate one or more appropriate facility employees to coordinate in developing the plan. To the greatest extent practicable, the plan must be developed in consultation with the student and the student's parent or person standing in parental relation to the student. To the extent appropriate for a particular student, the plan must include:

(1) consideration of the best educational placement for the student;

(2) provision of counseling, behavioral management assistance, as available, or academic assistance by the school based on the student's academic, school reentry, and career and employment goals; and

(3) assistance concerning access to community mental health or substance abuse services, as available.

(c) As soon as practicable after a facility listed under Subsection (a) has determined the date of a student's release from the facility, the facility shall give to the school district in which the student intends to attend school following release written notice of that date and that the facility is prepared to begin coordinating with the district to develop the student's personalized transition service plan under Subsection (b). This subsection applies only to a student subject to compulsory attendance requirements under Section [25.085](#).

1 (d) The agency shall give annual written notice to each
2 facility listed under Subsection (a) of the facility's duty under
3 this section.

4 SECTION 2. This Act applies to absences from public school
5 beginning with the 2017-2018 school year.

6 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
7 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
8 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
9 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
10 Act takes effect September 1, 2017.