

**LEGISLATIVE BUDGET BOARD**  
**Austin, Texas**

**FISCAL NOTE, 85TH LEGISLATIVE REGULAR SESSION**

**March 13, 2017**

**TO:** Honorable Dan Huberty, Chair, House Committee on Public Education

**FROM:** Ursula Parks, Director, Legislative Budget Board

**IN RE: HB729** by Bohac (Relating to instruction in positive character traits in public schools.),  
**As Introduced**

<p><b>No significant fiscal implication to the State is anticipated.</b></p>
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The bill would require the State Board of Education (SBOE) to integrate positive character traits into the Texas essential knowledge and skills (TEKS) for kindergarten through grade 12. The bill would require each school district and open-enrollment charter school to adopt a character education program that included the specified character traits. The district or charter school would be required to submit the adopted program to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) annually, in a manner determined by the commissioner.

The bill would require TEA to use a center for education research and district-reported data to annually designate a Character Plus School (CPS) that provided a character program that demonstrated a correlation between the adopted character education program and an increase in student attendance and a decrease in student disciplinary problems. The bill would not allow for the acceptance of federal funds to assist with implementing character education programs.

While the agency estimates there would be a cost associated with implementing the provisions of the bill, those costs are not anticipated to be significant.

The bill would take effect immediately if it receives a two-thirds vote in each house of the Legislature. Otherwise the bill would take effect September 1, 2017.

**Local Government Impact**

Local school districts and charter schools could see increased costs associated with curriculum and lesson plan development and submission of their character education programs to TEA. School districts and charter schools could also see increased costs associated with professional development and training. According to information provided by TEA, total local costs statewide are estimated to be \$24.8 million in the first year of the biennium and \$4.4 million in the second year of the biennium.

**Source Agencies:** 701 Texas Education Agency

**LBB Staff:** UP, THo, AM, AW