

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2655
By: Rosenthal
Public Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

Due to recent school shootings across the nation and in Texas, concerns have been raised regarding the preparedness of public school districts, law enforcement, and educators to keep students and teachers safe during an active shooter incident. C.S.H.B. 2655 seeks to address this issue by requiring districts to consider such incidents in their emergency planning and training.

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 rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 1 of this bill.

ANALYSIS

C.S.H.B. 2655 amends the Education Code to require a public school district to include a protocol for responding to an active shooter emergency in a district facility in the district's multihazard emergency operations plan. The protocol must provide for school drills and exercises to prepare for an active shooter emergency as part of the mandatory school drills and exercises to prepare district students and employees for responding to an emergency. The bill requires the commissioner of education to adopt rules providing the number and content of mandatory school drills required by the bill. The bill requires the commissioner, in adopting such rules, to consult with a public institution of higher education that provides active shooter response training.

C.S.H.B. 2655 requires a district peace officer or a school resource officer to complete an active shooter response training program approved by the Texas Commission on Law Enforcement (TCOLE). The bill requires a district peace officer or school resource officer who begins employment with or begins providing law enforcement at a district on a date occurring before September 1, 2019, to complete the required training not later than August 31, 2020.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2019.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE

While C.S.H.B. 2655 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute replaces a provision requiring a public school district to adopt a policy requiring a district peace officer or a school resource officer to complete an active shooter response training program approved by the commissioner of education with a provision requiring a district peace officer or school resource officer to instead complete a training program approved by TCOLE. The substitute includes a requirement for TCOLE to approve the training program as soon as practicable after the bill's effective date.