86R2711 EAS-D

By:  Minjarez H.B. No. 45

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to creating a mentor program for foster youth.

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

SECTION 1.  Subchapter B, Chapter 264, Family Code, is amended by adding Section 264.1214 to read as follows:

Sec. 264.1214.  FOSTER YOUTH MENTORING PROGRAM. (a) The department shall work with community-based organizations to establish a mentor program to serve foster youth age 14 or older. The mentor program must:

(1)  match foster youth in a one-on-one mentor relationship with an adult volunteer;

(2)  focus on building healthy peer networks, increasing self-confidence, and improving optimism about the future; and

(3)  assist foster youth in developing life skills in conjunction with the experiential life-skills training program.

(b)  The department shall:

(1)  recruit volunteers, including former foster youth, to serve as mentors; and

(2)  require volunteer mentors to serve at least eight hours each month for at least one year.

(c)  A person who volunteers as a mentor is subject to state and national criminal background checks in accordance with Sections 411.087 and 411.114, Government Code.

(d)  The department shall provide annual evidence-based intervention training for all volunteers.

(e)  The commissioner may adopt rules to implement this section.

SECTION 2.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.