86R2559 MM-D

By:  White H.B. No. 507

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a task force to coordinate and make recommendations on parent engagement and education programs provided by state agencies.

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

SECTION 1.  Chapter 531, Government Code, is amended by adding Subchapter L-1 to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER L-1. TASK FORCE ON PARENT ENGAGEMENT AND EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Sec. 531.431.  DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "task force," unless the context requires otherwise, means the task force on parent engagement and education programs established under Section 531.432.

Sec. 531.432.  ESTABLISHMENT OF TASK FORCE. The task force on parent engagement and education programs is established to:

(1)  enhance coordination of parent engagement and evidence-based parent education programs across state agencies; and

(2)  develop comprehensive, statewide best practices for engaging parents as their children's first and best teachers.

Sec. 531.433.  COMPOSITION OF TASK FORCE. The task force is composed of 11 members as follows:

(1)  the executive commissioner;

(2)  the commissioner of the Department of Family and Protective Services;

(3)  the executive director of the Texas Workforce Commission;

(4)  the commissioner of the Texas Education Agency;

(5)  the executive director of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice;

(6)  the executive director of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department;

(7)  one representative of the Hurricane Harvey Task Force on School Mental Health Supports appointed by the governor or, if the task force described by this subdivision does not exist, one person appointed by the governor who has experience in the mental health field;

(8)  one representative of a county juvenile board or juvenile probation department appointed by the presiding officer of the task force;

(9)  one representative of a faith-based organization appointed by the presiding officer of the task force;

(10)  one person appointed by the presiding officer of the task force who has experienced challenges meant to be addressed by a parent engagement or education program; and

(11)  one representative of the law enforcement community appointed by the presiding officer of the task force.

Sec. 531.434.  PRESIDING OFFICER. The executive commissioner shall serve as presiding officer.

Sec. 531.435. VACANCY. A vacancy for an appointed member of the task force shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

Sec. 531.436.  MEETINGS. The task force shall meet at least quarterly at the call of the presiding officer. The task force shall meet at other times as determined by the presiding officer.

Sec. 531.437.  DUTIES. The task force shall:

(1)  receive reports and testimony from individuals, state and local governmental agencies, community-based organizations, and other public and private organizations regarding parent engagement and evidence-based parent education programs;

(2)  identify parent engagement and evidence-based parent education programs that are being implemented in this state and describe opportunities for improved coordination among those programs to:

(A)  maximize the programs' effectiveness and funding; and

(B)  align program outcomes; and

(3)  develop policy and other recommendations for:

(A)  expanding access to parent engagement and evidence-based parent education programs;

(B)  establishing comprehensive statewide best practice guidelines for those programs; and

(C)  establishing methods for using existing administrative and program data to identify and target program services to:

(i)  appropriate parents in this state;

(ii)  communities with the greatest need for the program services; and

(iii)  families exhibiting high levels of risk factors, which include a preterm birth, poverty, having low parent educational attainment, having one or more teenage parents, having poor maternal health, and having parent unemployment or underemployment.

Sec. 531.438.  REPORT. (a) The task force shall prepare a report that includes:

(1)  a description of the activities of the task force;

(2)  the findings and recommendations of the task force, including recommendations described by Section 531.437(3); and

(3)  proposed legislation or recommendations or information on any other relevant matter that the task force considers appropriate.

(b)  Not later than December 1, 2020, the task force shall submit the report prepared under this section to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the presiding officers of the standing committees of the senate and house of representatives having primary jurisdiction over issues relating to parent engagement and education.

Sec. 531.439.  RESPONSIBILITY OF COMMISSION. The commission shall provide reasonably necessary administrative and technical support to the task force.

Sec. 531.440.  COMPENSATION; REIMBURSEMENT. Appointed members of the task force serve without compensation and may not be reimbursed for travel or other expenses incurred while conducting the business of the task force.

Sec. 531.441.  APPLICABILITY OF OTHER LAW. Chapter 2110 does not apply to the task force.

Sec. 531.442.  GIFTS, GRANTS, AND DONATIONS. The commission may accept on behalf of the task force a gift, grant, or donation from any source to carry out the purposes of this subchapter.

Sec. 531.443.  EXPIRATION. The task force is abolished and this subchapter expires September 1, 2021.

SECTION 2.  As soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, the governor and the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission shall appoint the members of the task force on parent engagement and education programs as required by Section 531.433, Government Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3.  This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2019.