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By:  Parker H.B. No. 3718

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a trauma-informed care policy for school districts and open-enrollment charter schools and training regarding the policy for district and school employees.

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

SECTION 1.  Section 11.252(a), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a)  Each school district shall have a district improvement plan that is developed, evaluated, and revised annually, in accordance with district policy, by the superintendent with the assistance of the district-level committee established under Section 11.251. The purpose of the district improvement plan is to guide district and campus staff in the improvement of student performance for all student groups in order to attain state standards in respect to the achievement indicators adopted under Section 39.053(c). The district improvement plan must include provisions for:

(1)  a comprehensive needs assessment addressing district student performance on the achievement indicators, and other appropriate measures of performance, that are disaggregated by all student groups served by the district, including categories of ethnicity, socioeconomic status, sex, and populations served by special programs, including students in special education programs under Subchapter A, Chapter 29;

(2)  measurable district performance objectives for all appropriate achievement indicators for all student populations, including students in special education programs under Subchapter A, Chapter 29, and other measures of student performance that may be identified through the comprehensive needs assessment;

(3)  strategies for improvement of student performance that include:

(A)  instructional methods for addressing the needs of student groups not achieving their full potential;

(B)  methods for addressing the needs of students for special programs, including:

(i)  suicide prevention programs, in accordance with Subchapter O-1, Chapter 161, Health and Safety Code, which includes a parental or guardian notification procedure;

(ii)  conflict resolution programs;

(iii)  violence prevention programs; and

(iv)  dyslexia treatment programs;

(C)  dropout reduction;

(D)  integration of technology in instructional and administrative programs;

(E)  discipline management;

(F)  staff development for professional staff of the district;

(G)  career education to assist students in developing the knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for a broad range of career opportunities; and

(H)  accelerated education;

(4)  strategies for providing to middle school, junior high school, and high school students, those students' teachers and school counselors, and those students' parents information about:

(A)  higher education admissions and financial aid opportunities;

(B)  the TEXAS grant program and the Teach for Texas grant program established under Chapter 56;

(C)  the need for students to make informed curriculum choices to be prepared for success beyond high school; and

(D)  sources of information on higher education admissions and financial aid;

(5)  resources needed to implement identified strategies;

(6)  staff responsible for ensuring the accomplishment of each strategy;

(7)  timelines for ongoing monitoring of the implementation of each improvement strategy;

(8)  formative evaluation criteria for determining periodically whether strategies are resulting in intended improvement of student performance; [~~and~~]

(9)  the policy under Section 38.0041 addressing sexual abuse and other maltreatment of children; and

(10)  the trauma-informed care policy under Section 38.036.

SECTION 2.  Sections 21.054(d) and (d-2), Education Code, are amended to read as follows:

(d)  Continuing education requirements for a classroom teacher must provide that not more than 25 percent of the training required every five years include instruction regarding:

(1)  collecting and analyzing information that will improve effectiveness in the classroom;

(2)  recognizing early warning indicators that a student may be at risk of dropping out of school;

(3)  digital learning, digital teaching, and integrating technology into classroom instruction;

(4)  educating diverse student populations, including:

(A)  students with disabilities, including mental health disorders;

(B)  students who are educationally disadvantaged;

(C)  students of limited English proficiency; and

(D)  students at risk of dropping out of school; [~~and~~]

(5)  understanding appropriate relationships, boundaries, and communications between educators and students; and[~~.~~]

(6)  [~~(d-2) Continuing education requirements for a classroom teacher may include instruction regarding~~] how grief and trauma affect student learning and behavior and how evidence-based, grief-informed, and trauma-informed strategies support the academic success of students affected by grief and trauma.

(d-2)  The instruction required under Subsection (d)(6) must be:

(1)  a training program that complies with Section 38.036(c)(1)(A); and

(2)  approved by the commissioner.

SECTION 3.  Subchapter A, Chapter 38, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 38.036 to read as follows:

Sec. 38.036.  TRAUMA-INFORMED CARE POLICY. (a) Each school district and open-enrollment charter school shall adopt and implement a policy requiring the integration of trauma-informed practices in each school environment.

(b)  A policy required by this section must address:

(1)  using resources developed by the agency, methods for:

(A)  increasing staff and parent awareness of trauma-informed care; and

(B)  implementation of trauma-informed practices and care by district and campus staff; and

(2)  available counseling options for students affected by trauma or toxic stress.

(c)  The methods under Subsection (b)(1) for increasing awareness and implementation of trauma-informed care must include training as provided by this subsection. The training:

(1)  must be provided:

(A)  through an evidence-based, evidence-informed, or promising practices training program that addresses the effects of trauma and is approved by the agency; and

(B)  as part of any new employee orientation for all new school district and open-enrollment charter school educators or coaches; and

(2)  may be provided to existing school district and open-enrollment charter school educators or coaches on a schedule recommended by commissioner rule.

(d)  For any training provided under Subsection (c), each school district and open-enrollment charter school shall maintain records that include the name of each district or charter school staff member who participated in the training.

(e)  If a school district or open-enrollment charter school determines that the district or charter school does not have sufficient resources to provide the training required under Subsection (c), the district or charter school shall make reasonable efforts to collaborate with a community organization to provide training that meets the requirements of Subsection (c) at no cost to the district or charter school.

(f)  The commissioner shall adopt rules as necessary to administer this section.

SECTION 4.  This Act applies beginning with the 2019-2020 school year.

SECTION 5.  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.