

By: Lucio

S.B. No. 2214

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of a nutrition education task force.

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

SECTION 1. The legislature finds that:

(1) providing nutrition education in public schools is an important means to improve the health and extend the lives of inhabitants of this state;

(2) poor eating habits and lack of physical activity increase the likelihood of poor educational outcomes, which has a direct impact on the future of this state;

(3) nutrition education is offered in most public schools traditionally as part of the curriculum for health classes, but the proportion of student participation at each grade level is unknown;

(4) nutrition education offered in public schools can be improved and further coordinated:

(A) across different subject areas in the existing curriculum for all grade levels; and

(B) through school meal programs;

(5) this state and students enrolled in public schools in this state would greatly benefit if this state became an innovative leader in nutrition education;

(6) improving the health of the inhabitants of this state would reduce the consequences of poor nutrition, including

1 associated illnesses such as obesity, diabetes, and related social  
2 anxiety mental illnesses; and

3 (7) to address illnesses associated with poor  
4 nutrition, this state should focus on increasing awareness of  
5 nutrition in public schools.

6 SECTION 2. Subchapter A, Chapter 28, Education Code, is  
7 amended by adding Section 28.0046 to read as follows:

8 Sec. 28.0046. NUTRITION EDUCATION TASK FORCE. (a) The  
9 nutrition education task force is established to develop policy  
10 recommendations regarding nutrition education in public schools,  
11 including measures for:

12 (1) increasing awareness of students in kindergarten  
13 through 12th grade regarding good nutrition;

14 (2) assisting students in developing healthy eating  
15 habits; and

16 (3) addressing illnesses developed from poor  
17 nutrition, including obesity and diabetes.

18 (b) The task force is composed of:

19 (1) the commissioner of education or the  
20 commissioner's designee;

21 (2) the executive commissioner of the Health and Human  
22 Services Commission or the executive commissioner's designee;

23 (3) the commissioner of agriculture or the  
24 commissioner's designee;

25 (4) experts in nutrition appointed jointly by the  
26 commissioner of education, the executive commissioner of the Health  
27 and Human Services Commission, and the commissioner of agriculture;

1 and

2 (5) any other health or education experts appointed  
3 jointly as determined appropriate by the commissioner of education,  
4 the executive commissioner of the Health and Human Services  
5 Commission, and the commissioner of agriculture.

6 (c) The commissioner of education, or the commissioner's  
7 designee, shall serve as the presiding officer of the task force.

8 (d) A member of the task force may not receive compensation  
9 for serving on the task force.

10 (e) The task force must:

11 (1) identify and study the development of an  
12 age-appropriate curriculum for nutrition education in public  
13 schools that:

14 (A) increases student knowledge of appropriate  
15 nutrition; and

16 (B) provides proven strategies that influence  
17 student motivation, including strategies that:

18 (i) teach positive nutrition skills;

19 (ii) encourage healthy eating behaviors;

20 (iii) mitigate unhealthy attitudes; and

21 (iv) provide students the necessary tools  
22 to accomplish nutritional goals;

23 (2) assess existing nutrition education curriculum,  
24 resources, and initiatives in public schools that address illnesses  
25 caused by poor nutrition, including obesity and diabetes;

26 (3) develop recommendations, initiatives, and reforms  
27 that can be implemented to improve the success of nutrition

1 education, resources, and materials designed to assist teachers in  
2 preparing nutrition education lessons;

3 (4) work with appropriate state and federal officials  
4 to develop reforms that:

5 (A) increase the effectiveness of public school  
6 meal programs; and

7 (B) encourage an active role in nutrition  
8 education, including providing:

9 (i) nutrient information for school meals;

10 (ii) nutrition education in the classroom;

11 and

12 (iii) other educational activities,  
13 primarily in kindergarten through fifth grade, to increase  
14 awareness of nutrition benefits;

15 (5) develop recommendations relating to increasing  
16 the effectiveness of nutrition coordinators, including:

17 (A) reporting information regarding:

18 (i) the number of schools that have a  
19 nutrition coordinator; and

20 (ii) the role of the nutrition coordinator  
21 in integrating a nutrition curriculum;

22 (B) developing requirements for placing a  
23 nutrition coordinator on each public school campus;

24 (C) coordinating a nutrition curriculum that  
25 provides a coherent sequence of nutrition lessons for kindergarten  
26 through 12th grade; and

27 (D) integrating nutrition lessons:

1                   (i) across different subject areas at the  
2 same grade level; and

3                   (ii) in the classroom with related  
4 nonclassroom activities; and

5                   (6) in the report required under Subsection (h), make  
6 specific recommendations for legislative and other actions,  
7 including budget-related recommendations regarding policy  
8 initiatives and reforms necessary to implement and increase  
9 nutrition education, awareness, and resources in public schools in  
10 kindergarten through 12th grade.

11                  (f) State agencies shall cooperate with the task force as  
12 necessary.

13                  (g) The task force shall meet not less than once each month.  
14 The task force may meet by telephone conference call,  
15 videoconference, or any similar telecommunication method.

16                  (h) Not later than November 1 of each even-numbered year,  
17 the task force shall prepare a report on the task force's  
18 recommendations and provide the report in writing or electronically  
19 to the governor and members of the legislature.

20                  (i) At least every three years, the agency, the Health and  
21 Human Services Commission, and the Department of Agriculture shall  
22 review and, if necessary, revise any rules, recommendations, and  
23 policies implemented based on the recommendations of the task  
24 force.

25                  SECTION 3. Not later than March 1, 2020, the Nutrition  
26 Education Task Force established under Section 28.0046, Education  
27 Code, as added by this Act, shall develop and submit to the Texas

1 Education Agency, the Health and Human Services Commission, and the  
2 Department of Agriculture recommendations for implementation  
3 during the 2020-2021 school year.

4 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
5 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
6 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
7 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
8 Act takes effect September 1, 2019.