By:  West S.B. No. 9

(In the Senate - Filed July 9, 2021; July 9, 2021, read first time and referred to Committee on Jurisprudence; July 13, 2021, reported favorably by the following vote: Yeas 4, Nays 0; July 13, 2021, sent to printer.)

COMMITTEE VOTE

                    Yea Nay Absent  PNV

Huffman           X

Hinojosa             X

Creighton            X

Hughes                         X

Johnson              X

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to requiring public schools to provide instruction and materials and adopt policies relating to the prevention of child abuse, family violence, and dating violence.

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

SECTION 1.  This Act may be cited as the Christine Blubaugh Act.

SECTION 2.  Section 28.002, Education Code, is amended by adding Subsections (u), (u-1), (u-2), and (u-3) to read as follows:

(u)  The State Board of Education shall adopt rules requiring students to receive instruction on the prevention of child abuse, family violence, and dating violence at least once in middle or junior high school and at least once in high school. The instruction must include information on:

(1)  the dating violence policy adopted by the student's school district under Section 37.0831;

(2)  the prevalence of dating violence and the recognition of abuse warning signs;

(3)  the procedures for reporting violence or abuse; and

(4)  educational materials or resources available to students under Section 37.0831(c).

(u-1)  Before each school year, a school district shall provide written notice as described by Subsection (u-2) to a parent of each student enrolled in the district who will receive:

(1)  the instruction required by Subsection (u); or

(2)  any other instruction required by state law relating to the prevention of child abuse, family violence, and dating violence.

(u-2)  The written notice required by Subsection (u-1) must include:

(1)  a statement that the district will provide instruction to the parent's student relating to the prevention of child abuse, family violence, and dating violence;

(2)  a description of:

(A)  the curriculum materials that will be used in providing instruction to the parent's student relating to the prevention of child abuse, family violence, and dating violence; and

(B)  the educational materials and resources described by Section 37.0831(c); and

(3)  a statement of the parent's right to:

(A)  review the materials and resources described by Subdivision (2); and

(B)  remove the student from instruction relating to the prevention of child abuse, family violence, and dating violence without subjecting the student to any disciplinary action, academic penalty, or other sanction imposed by the district or the student's school.

(u-3)  If a school district does not comply with the requirements of Subsections (u-1) and (u-2), a parent of a student enrolled in the district may file a complaint in accordance with the district's grievance procedure adopted as required by Section 26.011.

SECTION 3.  The heading to Section 37.0831, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 37.0831.  DATING VIOLENCE POLICIES; EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS AND RESOURCES.

SECTION 4.  Section 37.0831, Education Code, is amended by amending Subsection (b) and adding Subsection (c) to read as follows:

(b)  A dating violence policy must:

(1)  include:

(A)  a definition of dating violence that includes the intentional use of physical, sexual, verbal, or emotional abuse by a person to harm, threaten, intimidate, or control another person in a dating relationship, as defined by Section 71.0021, Family Code;

(B)  a clear statement that dating violence is not tolerated at school;

(C)  reporting procedures and guidelines for students who are victims of dating violence; and

(D)  information regarding the instruction on the prevention of dating violence required under Section 28.002(u); and

(2)  address safety planning, enforcement of protective orders, school-based alternatives to protective orders, training for teachers and administrators at each district campus that instructs students in grade six or higher, counseling for affected students, and awareness education for students and parents.

(c)  To the extent possible, a school district shall make available to students:

(1)  age-appropriate educational materials that include information on the dangers of dating violence; and

(2)  resources to students seeking help.

SECTION 5.  This Act applies beginning with the 2021-2022 school year.

SECTION 6.  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 on the 91st day after the last day of the legislative session.

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