

By: González of El Paso, Leach, Moody,
Capriglione

H.B. No. 129

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to digital citizenship instruction in public schools.

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

SECTION 1. Section 28.002(z), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(z) The State Board of Education by rule shall require each school district to incorporate instruction in digital citizenship into the district's curriculum, including information regarding the potential criminal consequences of cyberbullying, and require students enrolled in grade level six to complete instruction in digital citizenship as part of the district's social studies curriculum. In this subsection:

(1) "Cyberbullying" has the meaning assigned by Section 37.0832.

(2) "Digital citizenship" means the standards of appropriate, responsible, and healthy online behavior, including:

(A) the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, create, and act on all forms of digital communication;

(B) digital ethics, etiquette, respectful discourse with people who have differing opinions, safety, security, digital footprint, and the identification of rhetoric that incites violence based on a person's race, religion, or political affiliation;

(C) cyberbullying prevention and response; and

1 (D) the importance of the right to freedom of
2 speech contained in the Bill of Rights of the Constitution of the
3 United States, including:

4 (i) the central role that the right to
5 freedom of speech has in the history of the United States; and

6 (ii) the applicability of protections for
7 freedom of speech for online interaction.

8 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2021-2022
9 school year.

10 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
11 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
12 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
13 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
14 Act takes effect September 1, 2021.