By:  Creighton S.B. No. 2520

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to measures for ensuring safety and security in public schools.

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

SECTION 1.  Subchapter D, Chapter 37, Education Code, is amended by adding Sections 37.1083 to read as follows:

Sec. 37.1083.  AGENCY MONITORING OF SCHOOL DISTRICT SAFETY AND SECURITY REQUIREMENTS. (a) The agency shall monitor the implementation and operation of requirements related to school district safety and security, including school district:

(1)  multihazard emergency operations plans; and

(2)  safety and security audits.

(b)  The agency shall establish an office of school safety and security within the agency to coordinate the agency's monitoring of school district safety and security requirements under this section. The director of the office is appointed by the governor and must report directly to the commissioner.

(c)  The agency shall provide technical assistance to school districts to support the implementation and operation of safety and security requirements, including the preparation of multihazard emergency operations plans and performance of safety and security audits.

(d)  The agency may engage or require a school district to engage a third party as necessary to enable the agency to monitor the implementation and operation of school district safety and security requirements under this section.

(e)  The commissioner may take appropriate action under Chapter 39A, including the assignment of a conservator or the appointment of a board of managers, if a school district fails to:

(1)  submit to the required monitoring under this section;

(2)  comply with applicable safety and security requirements; or

(3)  address in a reasonable time period, as determined by commissioner rule, issues raised by the monitoring of the district under this section.

(f)  The agency, or if approved by the agency, the Texas School Safety Center, may identify, develop, and make available to school districts information to assist districts in the implementation and operation of safety and security requirements, including relevant:

(1)  guidelines;

(2)  techniques;

(3)  blueprints;

(4)  best practices; and

(5)  procedures.

(g)  The agency, the Texas School Safety Center, and school districts may share information described by Subsection (f) with one another.

(h)  The agency may require a school district to submit information necessary for the agency to monitor the implementation and operation of school district safety and security requirements under this section, including:

(1) notice of an event requiring a district's emergency response; and

(2) information regarding the district's response and use of emergency operations procedures during an event described by Subdivision (1).

(i) The agency may review school district records as necessary to ensure compliance with this subchapter and Subchapter G.

(j) Any document or information collected, identified, developed, or produced relating to the monitoring of school district safety and security requirements under this section is confidential under Sections 418.177 and 418.181, Government Code, and not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code.

(k) The commissioner may adopt rules as necessary to administer this section.

SECTION 2.  Subchapter D, Chapter 37, Education Code, is amended by adding Sections 37.117 to read as follows:

Sec.37.117. SAFE SCHOOLS UNIVERSAL PLATFORM. (a) In this section:

(1) "Office" means the office of school safety and Security established under Section 37.1083.

(2) "Universal platform" means the safe schools Universal platform established under this section.

(b)  The office shall contract with an outside vendor to create and maintain a safe schools universal platform to serve as a centralized integrated repository and analytics resource for data relating to school safety and community welfare.

(c)  The universal platform must be:

(1) designed to integrate and present data, as necessary, from:

(A)  social media and other Internet sources;

(B)  relevant state agencies;

(C)  any tool developed or available for reporting suspicious activity; and

(D)  reports and notifications provided by a school district or open-enrollment charter school, including:

(i)  incident reports generated after an incident affecting school safety; and

(ii)  notifications provided by the district or school indicating an upcoming event or incident may cause a disruption to the normal operations of the district or school or the functions of the surrounding community;

(2)  to the extent possible, capable of integrating with existing platforms or technologies used by school districts and open-enrollment charter schools for school safety; and

(3)  able to relay information clearly and in real time to each person or entity necessary to provide a unified response to a safety incident, or to take appropriate action in response to an anticipated disruption to the normal functions of the surrounding community, including:

(A)  the governor;

(B)  affected school districts and open-enrollment charter schools;

(C)  relevant state agencies;

(D)  relevant law enforcement agencies; and

(E)  other first responders.

(d)  A document, information, or data collected for, identified on, or published to the universal platform is confidential and not subject to disclosure under Chapter 552, Government Code.

(e)  The commissioner shall adopt rules as necessary to implement this section.

SECTION 3.  (a)  This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.