

BILL ANALYSIS

H.B. 1368
By: Jones, Venton
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The bill author has informed the committee that school nurses, counselors, and librarians provide crucial services to students, including managing students' chronic health conditions, offering mental health support, and facilitating access to educational resources, but that schools across the state report difficulties in maintaining full-time staffing for these positions. The bill author has further informed the committee that current law does not require schools to inform parents when such support staff are not present full time and that this lack of transparency can cause anxiety in parents, who often assume the vital resources provided by these staff members are consistently available. H.B. 1368 seeks to address this issue by establishing notice requirements for certain prolonged absences from a school of a full-time nurse, school counselor, or librarian or the equivalent of such a staff member, ensuring parents have more information to make informed decisions about their child's education.

CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

H.B. 1368 amends the Education Code to require a public school, including an open-enrollment charter school, that does not have a full-time nurse, school counselor, or librarian or the equivalent of such a staff member assigned to be present at the school for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year to provide written notice of the absence to the parent of or other person standing in parental relation to each student enrolled in the school. The bill establishes that a school has the equivalent of a full-time nurse, school counselor, or librarian if the school has two or more of the respective staff members assigned to the school and all regular student instructional hours at the campus during the regular school day are covered by the assignment of at least one such staff member.

H.B. 1368 requires the principal of the school to provide the required notice not later than the 30th instructional day after the first day the school does not have a full-time nurse, school counselor, or librarian assigned to be present at the school. The bill requires the school to make a good faith effort to ensure that the required notice is provided in a bilingual form to any parent or other person standing in parental relation whose primary language is not English and to retain a copy of any such notice. The bill authorizes a school to satisfy the notice requirement by posting the notice on the school's website and requires the posted notice to be accessible from the home page of the website by use of not more than three links.

H.B. 1368 applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year. The bill's provisions expressly do not apply to a public school district or charter school with a student enrollment of less than 10,000 students.

EFFECTIVE DATE

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2025.