

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
89R18246 MEW-D

C.S.S.B. 57
By: Zaffirini
Education K-16
3/13/2025
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Current law requires Texas schools to implement general emergency operations plans, but it does not mandate specific accommodations for students with disabilities during drills and emergencies, putting these students at increased risk. S.B. 57 would address this gap by requiring school districts to include necessary accommodations for students with disabilities in their individualized education programs (IEPs) or Section 504 plans and by directing the Texas Education Agency to establish related guidelines for public schools' emergency plans. This change would ensure that the unique needs of students with disabilities are systematically addressed during emergencies, enhancing their safety and well-being.

(Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.S.B. 57 amends current law relating to provisions and plans by public schools to ensure the safety of individuals with disabilities or impairments during a mandatory school drill or a disaster or emergency situation.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 3 (Section 37.1086, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 29, Education Code, by adding Section 29.0052, as follows:

Sec. 29.0052. INCLUSION OF ACCOMMODATIONS DURING MANDATORY SCHOOL DRILLS IN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM OR SECTION 504 PLAN. (a) Defines "committee," "Section 504 plan," and "team."

(b) Requires a student's committee or team, as applicable, in developing or modifying an individualized education program or a Section 504 plan for the student, to consider whether the student's disabilities or impairments would require the school district to provide any specific accommodations for the student during a mandatory school drill required under Section 37.114 (Best Practices for Emergency School Drills and Exercises; Mandatory School Drills). Requires the student's committee or team, if the committee or team determines that the student would require a specific accommodation, to:

(1) identify each disability or impairment that requires accommodation; and

(2) for each disability or impairment identified under Subdivision (1), recommend specific accommodations for that disability or impairment.

(c) Requires a committee or team, in making considerations and specifying required accommodations under Subsection (b), to follow the guidelines

established by the commissioner of education (commissioner) under Section 37.1086.

(d) Requires a student's committee or team to provide to each administrator with emergency planning responsibilities at the school district and campus at which the student is enrolled the information described by Subsections (b)(1) and (2).

(e) Authorizes a committee or team to invite school district and campus administrators with emergency planning responsibilities to assist the committee or team in making the considerations and specifying the required accommodations described by Subsection (b).

SECTION 2. Amends Section 37.108(f), Education Code, to require a school district to include in its multihazard emergency operations plan certain provisions, including provisions for ensuring that students and district personnel with disabilities are provided equal access to safety during a disaster or emergency situation based on the guidelines established by the commissioner under Section 37.1086.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 37.1086, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 37.1086. New heading: GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL DRILL ACCOMMODATIONS AND MULTHAZARD EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN PROVISIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES OR IMPAIRMENTS. (a) Requires the commissioner by rule, rather than the Texas Education Agency, to establish guidelines for the considerations and specifications required under Section 29.0052 regarding accommodations for a student with an individualized education program or a plan created under Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Section 794). Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(b) Requires the commissioner, in establishing guidelines under Subsection (a), to consult with certain entities, including public school educators and administrators who work with students with disabilities or impairments. Makes a nonsubstantive change.

(c) Redesignates existing Subsection (b) as Subsection (c). Makes conforming changes.

SECTION 4. Requires the commissioner, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act but not later than June 1, 2026, to adopt rules establishing the guidelines required by Section 37.1086, Education Code, as amended by this Act.

SECTION 5. Provides that Section 29.0052, Education Code, as added by this Act, applies beginning with the 2026–2027 school year.

SECTION 6. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2025.