

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 204
By: Paxton
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

The rights of parents and guardians regarding the education of their children are in numerous provisions of state and federal law. However, the bill sponsor has informed the committee that the various places parental rights are found in Texas statutes present navigational challenges for parents who may be unaware of their rights and, even if the relevant statute is found, the right may not be easily discernable since statutes are not always written in plain language, creating further difficulty for a concerned parent to determine if one's rights have been violated. S.B. 204 seeks to empower parents and provide them with convenient and clear information on parental rights by creating an easily accessible, plain-language, searchable online handbook as one centralized place to find parental rights regarding the education of a parent's child and by setting out training requirements for a member of an independent school district's board of trustees on parental rights in 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

S.B. 204 amends the Education Code to require the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to create, not later than January 1, 2026, and maintain a handbook that explains all rights of a parent regarding the education of the parent's child, including a student's rights that the parent may enforce on the student's behalf. The handbook must be written in plain language, updated on an annual basis to reflect any relevant changes in applicable law or TEA guidance, and made publicly available in a searchable format on the TEA website.

S.B. 204 requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) to require a member of the board of trustees of an independent school district to complete training on the rights of a parent regarding the education of the parent's child. The bill requires the SBOE, with assistance from TEA, to develop the curriculum and materials for the training. The SBOE must develop and make available that training not later than April 1, 2026. The bill requires a trustee who takes the oath of office before January 1, 2026, to complete the training not later than September 1, 2026.

EFFECTIVE DATE

September 1, 2025.