

BILL ANALYSIS

S.B. 570
By: Bettencourt
Public Education
Committee Report (Unamended)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

During the interim period for the 87th Texas Legislature, members of the senate served on the Senate Select Committee to Protect All Texans after the horrific events that occurred at Robb Elementary School. As detailed in that committee's report, one of the many issues discussed during committee hearings was the need to empower schools to further address truancy. S.B. 570 seeks to establish common-sense practices that will help address truancy by requiring each public school district and open-enrollment charter school to adopt and implement an attendance policy to inform students and parents about the importance of attending school and to provide appropriate supports to students who fail to regularly attend school.

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. 570 amends the Education Code to require the board of trustees of each public school district and the governing body of each open-enrollment charter school to adopt and implement an attendance policy to inform students and parents regarding the importance of regular attendance and to provide appropriate supports to students who fail to regularly attend school. The bill clarifies that a "parent" includes a person standing in parental relation for purposes of the bill's provisions. The bill requires the attendance policy to do the following:

- describe the benefits of regular attendance;
- describe the consequences of failing to regularly attend school, including the negative effects on a student's academic progress and the negative effects on a student and the student's family as a result of a referral to a truancy court for truant conduct as described under Family Code provisions regarding truancy court proceedings;
- provide for a parent of a student enrolled in the district or charter school to elect to receive notifications of the student's absence from school for a day or part of a day, regardless of whether the student's absence is excused or unexcused, through:
 - email or text message, if the district or charter school has the capability to send notifications through those methods; or
 - first class mail, if the district or charter school does not have that capability;
- provide for a meeting between a parent of an enrolled student and a school counselor, principal, or appropriate administrator when the student becomes at risk for engaging in truant conduct, as provided by the attendance policy, to discuss the student's behavior

and any conditions at the student's home that may be contributing to the student's failure to attend school;

- if a parent of an enrolled student fails to attend such a meeting, authorize the school attendance officer to make a home visit or otherwise contact the parent in the manner provided under state law to investigate the student's behavior and living conditions and report the attendance officer's findings to the district or charter school; and
- establish guidelines to identify a student in need of additional support and to refer the student to in-school or out-of-school services aimed at addressing the student's failure to regularly attend school.

The bill requires each district or charter school, at the beginning of each school year, to provide a copy of the attendance policy to the parent of each enrolled student.

S.B. 570 applies beginning with the 2025-2026 school year.

EFFECTIVE DATE

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