

By: Dutton, Simmons

H.B. No. 2967

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to vision screenings for public and private school students, including vision screening information reporting for public school students, and to the creation of a vision care grant program for certain students.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 38, Education Code, is amended by adding Sections 38.035, 38.0351, and 38.0352 to read as follows:

Sec. 38.035. VISION SCREENING REPORTING. (a) Not later than May 31 of each year, the agency shall post on the agency's Internet website a report regarding the number of students in each school district identified as having a vision disorder or other vision problem requiring vision care under the screening program described by Section 36.004, Health and Safety Code, disaggregated by:

(1) grade level;

(2) campus;

(3) gender;

(4) race;

(5) ethnicity;

(6) whether the student is educationally disadvantaged;

(7) the number of times the student was previously

1 identified as having a vision disorder or other vision problem;

2 (8) the identified vision disorder or problem; and

3 (9) the type of screening equipment used for the
4 screening.

5 (b) The commissioner by rule shall require each school
6 district to report to the agency information necessary for the
7 agency to prepare the report required by this section.

8 (c) The agency shall store and maintain information
9 reported to the agency under this section using the data management
10 system described by Section 38.0352.

11 Sec. 38.0351. VISION CARE GRANT PROGRAM FOR CERTAIN
12 STUDENTS. (a) In this section:

13 (1) "Eligible student" means a student who:

14 (A) has been identified as having a vision
15 disorder or other vision problem under the screening program
16 described by Section 36.004, Health and Safety Code; and

17 (B) is educationally disadvantaged.

18 (2) "Vision care" includes eye exams and assistive or
19 corrective visual devices, such as glasses or contact lenses
20 dispensed under a prescription.

21 (b) From money appropriated or otherwise available for that
22 purpose, the agency shall establish and administer a grant program
23 for the purpose of awarding grants to cover the costs of:

24 (1) screening eligible students for vision disorders
25 or other vision problems; and

26 (2) providing vision care to eligible students
27 identified as having a vision disorder or other vision problem.

1 (c) The agency shall develop eligibility and selection
2 criteria for grant applicants.

3 (d) The commissioner shall adopt the rules necessary to
4 administer the grant program established under this section.

5 (e) The agency may award a grant under this section only in
6 accordance with a contract between the agency and grant recipient.
7 The contract must include provisions under which the agency is
8 granted sufficient control to ensure the public purpose of
9 providing vision care to eligible students is accomplished and this
10 state receives the return benefit.

11 (f) Money allocated under this section:

12 (1) may only be used to cover the costs associated with
13 providing vision care to eligible students; and

14 (2) may not be used to supplant any other money
15 provided for the same purpose.

16 (g) The agency may solicit and accept gifts, grants, and
17 donations for the purpose of implementing the grant program
18 established under this section.

19 Sec. 38.0352. ACQUISITION OF DATA MANAGEMENT SYSTEM. (a)
20 The agency shall acquire and maintain a third-party data management
21 system to facilitate the reporting of information to the agency
22 under Section 38.035 and to maintain any information under Section
23 38.0351 as the agency determines necessary.

24 (b) The data management system the agency acquires and
25 maintains under Subsection (a) must comply with any applicable
26 federal and state privacy laws.

27 (c) The agency may enter into a memorandum of understanding

1 with the Health and Human Services Commission for the commission to
2 utilize the data management system the agency acquires and
3 maintains under Subsection (a) in conducting the screening program
4 for vision disorders under Section 36.004, Health and Safety Code.

5 SECTION 2. Section 36.004(b-1), Health and Safety Code, is
6 amended to read as follows:

7 (b-1) The rules must allow an individual who attends a
8 public or private school to be screened:

9 (1) using photoscreening to detect vision disorders;
10 ~~[and]~~

11 (2) using an electronic eye chart as a substitute for a
12 printed eye chart to assess visual acuity; and

13 (3) using visual screening techniques to detect depth
14 perception issues and color blindness.

15 SECTION 3. Section 36.006, Health and Safety Code, is
16 amended by adding Subsections (a-1) and (a-2) to read as follows:

17 (a-1) The form prescribed by the department under
18 Subsection (a) must include:

19 (1) separate spaces for the student's first and last
20 name;

21 (2) a space for the preschool's or school's name;

22 (3) a space for the student's grade level;

23 (4) information for a student's parent regarding
24 available resources for low-cost vision care; and

25 (5) information for a student's parent regarding the
26 student's potential eligibility to receive benefits under the child
27 health plan program, as defined by Section 521.0001, Government

1 Code.

2 (a-2) The department shall biennially update the form
3 information required under Subsection (a-1)(4).

4 SECTION 4. (a) Not later than December 1, 2025, the
5 commissioner of education shall adopt rules necessary to implement
6 Sections 38.035, 38.0351, and 38.0352, Education Code, as added by
7 this Act.

8 (b) Not later than December 1, 2025, the executive
9 commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission shall
10 adopt rules necessary to implement the changes in law made by this
11 Act to Chapter 36, Health and Safety Code.

12 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2025.