

By: Johnson

S.B. No. 1345

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of a public school transportation task force.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 34, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 34.016 to read as follows:

Sec. 34.016. PUBLIC SCHOOL TRANSPORTATION TASK FORCE. (a) In this section, "task force" means the public school transportation task force established under this section.

(b) The public school transportation task force is established to study and make recommendations relating to modernizing public school transportation in this state.

(c) The task force is composed of 20 members as follows:

(1) one member appointed by the governor;

(2) one member appointed by the lieutenant governor;

(3) one member appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives; and

(4) 17 members appointed by the commissioner as follows:

(A) three parents of students enrolled in a school district who use the district's school transportation system, or would use that transportation system if it were available, at least one of whom must be a parent of a student enrolled at a campus that receives supplemental funding under Part

1 A, Title 1, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20
2 U.S.C. Section 6311 et seq.) and:

3 (i) one of whom resides in a rural school
4 district;

5 (ii) one of whom resides in a suburban
6 school district; and

7 (iii) one of whom resides in an urban school
8 district;

9 (B) three school district transportation
10 directors, one of whom is from a rural school district, one of whom
11 is from a suburban school district, and one of whom is from an urban
12 school district;

13 (C) two directors of a school district's special
14 education program under Subchapter A, Chapter 29, at least one of
15 whom is from a rural school district;

16 (D) two members who represent open-enrollment
17 charter schools, one of whom is from a school that offers a school
18 transportation system and one of whom is from a school that does not
19 offer a school transportation system;

20 (E) one member who represents a private
21 prekindergarten provider that partners with a school district under
22 Section 29.153(g);

23 (F) one member from an association that
24 represents school bus drivers or school transportation staff;

25 (G) one member who represents an off-campus
26 after-school program;

27 (H) two members who represent public

1 transportation providers; and

2 (I) two members who are chief financial officers
3 of a school district, one of whom is from a rural district and one of
4 whom is from an urban district.

5 (d) The task force shall hold its first meeting not later
6 than October 1, 2025, and shall elect a presiding officer from among
7 its membership. After the initial meeting, the task force shall
8 meet at the times and places that the presiding officer determines
9 appropriate.

10 (e) Members of the task force serve without compensation but
11 are entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses
12 incurred in performing official duties under this section.

13 (f) The agency shall provide information, assistance, and
14 administrative support to the task force. To the extent feasible,
15 the agency, in cooperation with school districts and
16 open-enrollment charter schools, shall provide the task force with
17 information relating to:

18 (1) criteria used by districts and schools to
19 determine student eligibility for school-provided transportation
20 and whether the criteria create barriers for a student to attend the
21 student's school of choice;

22 (2) school transportation system utilization patterns
23 and operations, including:

24 (A) the number of students eligible for
25 school-provided transportation who use the school transportation
26 system;

27 (B) whether routes are at capacity; and

1 (C) methodologies used by districts and schools
2 to identify utilization patterns and adjust transportation
3 operations accordingly;

4 (3) school transportation system staffing, including:

5 (A) the number of drivers required to cover
6 routes;

7 (B) driver pay rates and hours of operation;

8 (C) driver vacancies; and

9 (D) contracts with public transportation
10 providers or third-party transportation providers to satisfy
11 school transportation needs;

12 (4) school transportation system fleet
13 diversification, including:

14 (A) the types of vehicles used to satisfy school
15 transportation needs;

16 (B) the associated costs of vehicles described by
17 Paragraph (A), including purchasing, fuel, and maintenance costs;

18 (C) resale or salvage values of vehicles
19 described by Paragraph (A); and

20 (D) the costs of a potential transition to
21 electric vehicles; and

22 (5) discrepancies between the number of students
23 eligible for school-provided transportation and the number of
24 students who use that transportation and the causes of the
25 discrepancies.

26 (g) The task force shall study:

27 (1) transportation challenges that create barriers

1 for a student to attend the school district or open-enrollment
2 charter school of the student's choice;

3 (2) improvements to the method of providing funding
4 for school transportation systems under Section 48.151;

5 (3) existing and potential funding sources for school
6 transportation systems;

7 (4) potential partnerships among school districts,
8 open-enrollment charter schools, public and private transportation
9 providers, and local nonprofit organizations to meet school
10 transportation needs and create cost efficiencies while
11 maintaining safety standards;

12 (5) career pathways in school transportation and
13 logistics; and

14 (6) competitive salaries and benefits packages
15 necessary to recruit and retain school transportation drivers.

16 (h) Not later than December 1, 2026, the task force shall
17 submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the
18 house of representatives, and each legislative committee with
19 primary jurisdiction over primary and secondary education a report
20 on the task force's findings and any recommendations for
21 legislative or other action.

22 (i) The task force is abolished and this section expires
23 September 1, 2027.

24 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
25 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
26 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
27 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this

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1 Act takes effect September 1, 2025.