

**SUBJECT:** Requiring school safety training for school board trustees

**COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment

**VOTE:** 11 ayes — Dutton, Lozano, Allison, K. Bell, Bernal, Buckley,  
M. González, Huberty, Meza, Talarico, VanDeaver

0 nays

2 absent — Allen, K. King

**WITNESSES:** For — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Paige Williams, Texas Classroom Teachers Association)

Against — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Heather Sheffield)

On — Grover Campbell, Texas Association of School Boards;  
(*Registered, but did not testify*: Jeff Cottrill, Craig Goralski, Eric Marin,  
and Monica Martinez, Texas Education Agency; Matt Fuller)

**BACKGROUND:** Education Code sec. 11.159 requires the State Board of Education to provide training courses for school district trustees and requires trustees to complete the training.

**DIGEST:** HB 690 would add school safety training to the courses the State Board of Education requires school board trustees to complete. The board would have to develop the curriculum and training materials in coordination with the Texas School Safety Center by January 1, 2022.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2021.

**SUPPORTERS SAY:** HB 690 would help school board trustees be better prepared to make informed decisions on school safety by requiring them to undergo training on the issue. While school trustees already face a substantial amount of required training, it is critical that these leaders adopt best practices to provide a safe and secure environment for students and teachers.

The Texas School Safety Center serves as a clearinghouse for disseminating research-based safety and security information and is best situated to develop the course.

**CRITICS  
SAY:**

HB 690 would add to school board trustee training requirements that already are among the highest of any state. It would be a better use of trustees' time to ensure existing training courses covered safety-related information, rather than to create a new mandate.