

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

S.B. 1556
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Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Currently, the Texas School Safety Center (TxSSC) reviews school districts' safety plans and provides some safety information and training. S.B. 1556 creates the School Safety Advisory Council (council), comprised of entities with expertise in relevant areas to determine best practices. The council brings together experts in school safety, emergency management, rapid response training, and multi-hazard emergencies, headed by the chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management, to study multi-hazard school safety practices and make recommendations regarding best practices to the TxSSC, which will use those recommendations to create a voluntary School Safety Certification Program.

As proposed, S.B. 1556 amends current law relating to the establishment of the School Safety Advisory Council and School Safety Certification Program.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 418, Government Code, by adding Section 418.0426, as follows:

Sec. 418.0426. SCHOOL SAFETY ADVISORY COUNCIL. (a) Requires the chief of the Texas Division of Emergency Management (chief), or a designee of the chief, the director of the Advanced Law Enforcement Rapid Response Training Center, or a designee of the director, the director of the Texas School Safety Center, or a designee of the director, and the agency director of the Texas A&M Engineering Extension Service (agency director), or a designee of the agency director, to establish a School Safety Advisory Council (council).

- (1) Requires the chief, or a designee of the chief, to serve as the chair of the council.
- (2) Requires the council to study best practices for use in school multi-hazard emergency operations planning in order to make recommendations to the Texas School Safety Center and the Office of Homeland Security.
- (3) Requires the council to consider input from school safety personnel, first responders, emergency managers, local officials, school districts, educators, nonprofit organizations, and other stakeholders in order to make its recommendations.
- (4) Requires the council to report its findings, including recommendations for any necessary statutory changes, to the legislature before September 1, 2014, and every subsequent even-numbered year.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 37.2051, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 37.2051. New heading: SCHOOL SAFETY CERTIFICATION PROGRAM. (a) Creates this subsection from existing text. Requires the Texas School Safety Center (center), in consultation with the council, to create a School Safety Certification Program for school districts that meet the following eligibility criteria:

- (1) in the district's multihazard emergency operations plan, the district includes physical security measures, a plan to communicate with parents and the media in the event of an emergency, and an outline of safety training for school personnel;
- (2) the district demonstrates to the center that the district conducts a minimum of one emergency drill for lockdown, evacuation, reverse evacuation, weather, and shelter-in-place each year;
- (3) the district has updated its school safety and security audit and reported the results to the center as required by Section 37.108(c) (relating to the requirement that a school district or public junior college district report the results of the safety and security audit conducted to the district's board of trustees and in a certain manner, to the Texas School Safety Center), Education Code; and
- (4) other eligibility criteria as recommended by the council under Section 418.0426, Government Code.

Deletes existing text requiring the center to develop security criteria that school districts are authorized to consider in the design of instruction facilities.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage, or September 1, 2013.