

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
83R3928 VOO-F

S.B. 260
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Veteran Affairs & Military Installations
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

S.B. 260 amends Section 25.087 (Excused Absences), Education Code, to provide that a student who is the child of an active duty military member must be allowed up to 10 days of excused absences upon his or her parent's or legal guardian's deployment or return from deployment of six months or more. Current statute provides that students shall be excused for such events as religious holy days, required court appearances, and naturalization oath ceremonies, and may be excused for events such as visiting a college during their junior or senior year or to play "Taps" at a military honors funeral. For each of these provisions, students are allowed a reasonable time to make up work missed and districts are not penalized financially for the student's absences.

The bill provides valuable time for military families to spend together as they deal with the difficult emotions of deployment and as they transition back from deployment abroad.

S.B. 260 also protects school districts that are already inclined to accommodate military students during these events by treating the students as having attended school during the 10-day window, thus preserving the district's average daily attendance funding for that student.

As proposed, S.B. 260 amends current law relating to the absence of a student from school to visit with a parent or guardian who will be or has been deployed on military duty.

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 25.087, Education Code, by adding Subsection (b-4) and amending Subsection (d), as follows:

(b-4) Requires a school district to excuse for a maximum of 10 days a student whose parent or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services as defined by Section 162.002 (Execution of Compact) and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from continuous deployment of at least six months outside the locality where the parent or guardian regularly resides, to visit with the student's parent or guardian. Requires that an excused absence under this subsection be taken not earlier than the 60th day before the date of deployment or not later than the 30th day after the date of return from deployment.

(d) Prohibits a student whose absence is excused under Subsection (b) (relating to a school district excusing a student from attending school), (b-2) (relating to a school district excusing a student from attending school to visit an institution of higher education), (b-4), or (c) (relating to a school district excusing a student from attending school to sound "Taps" at a military funeral) from being penalized for that absence and requires the student to be counted as if the student attended school for purposes of calculating the average daily attendance of students in the school district. Requires that a student whose absence is excused under Subsection (b), (b-2), (b-4), or (c) be allowed a reasonable time to make up school work missed on those days.

SECTION 2. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2013.