

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
88R14486 MPF-D

S.B. 1966
By: Alvarado
Health & Human Services
3/24/2023
As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

According to the Texas Medical Association, Texas leads the nation in the rise of uninsured children. S.B. 1966 attempts to alleviate the potential consequences of this issue by creating a grant program that will be used to make school-based clinics that can provide free comprehensive preventative, primary and behavioral healthcare in underserved schools throughout Texas. Underserved schools are defined as schools where 50 percent of students are uninsured and/or 50 percent of students are in the free or reduced lunch program in the school district.

The services provided range from mental health services, immunizations, well-child exams, sports physicals, acute care for minor illnesses and injuries, and management of chronic illnesses to dental screenings and treatments, basic health education, and nutrition security.

The California School-Based Health Alliance says these clinics have proven to increase school attendance, help eligible students and families enroll in health insurance, offer support to at-risk students, reduce emergency room visits, and create a positive school climate that fosters learning. Lastly, these clinics will be open to adults in the community, potentially increasing the overall health of the communities that need it most.

As proposed, S.B. 1966 amends current law relating to a grant program for school-based health care initiatives established to serve certain underserved students.

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 Subchapter B, Chapter 531, Government Code, by adding Section 531.0606, as follows:

Sec. 531.0606. SCHOOL-BASED HEALTH CARE GRANT PROGRAM. (a) Defines "program."

(b) Requires the Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), using legislative appropriations available for that purpose, to establish and administer a grant program for health care organizations to implement, maintain, and expand a school-based health care initiative for underserved students and to provide those students with preventative, primary, and behavioral health care, including medical services; dental services; therapeutic services; and nonmedical services, such as nutritional services.

(c) Requires HHSC to establish grant application procedures, criteria for evaluating applications and awarding grants, and procedures for monitoring the use of grants awarded under the program and ensuring compliance with any condition of a grant awarded under the program.

(d) Requires a grant recipient to use grant money to establish a school-based health care initiative for a school district that has a student population with at least 50 percent of its students who are uninsured or underinsured or who receive free or reduced-price lunches.

(e) Authorizes HHSC to award a grant under the program only in accordance with a contract between HHSC and a grant recipient. Requires that the contract include provisions granting HHSC sufficient control over the money awarded to ensure the public purpose of providing health care services to underserved students is accomplished and this state receives the return benefit.

SECTION 2. Provides that HHSC is required to implement a provision of this Act only if the legislature appropriates money specifically for that purpose. Provides that HHSC, if the legislature does not appropriate money specifically for that purpose, is authorized, but is not required, to implement a provision of this Act using other appropriations available for that purpose.

SECTION 3. Effective date: September 1, 2023.