

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 906  
By: Thompson, Senfronia  
Public Health  
Committee Report (Substituted)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

In response to proposals to increase state spending on mental health programs for public schools, there are calls to make sure that these programs operate as efficiently and effectively as possible. C.S.H.B. 906 seeks to answer these calls by establishing a collaborative task force on public school mental health services to study and evaluate school mental health services and related training.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

### **ANALYSIS**

C.S.H.B. 906 amends the Education Code to establish the Collaborative Task Force on Public School Mental Health Services for purposes of studying and evaluating:

- mental health services that are funded by the state and provided at a public school district or open-enrollment charter school directly to a student enrolled in the district or charter school, a parent or family member of or person standing in parental relation to such a student, or an employee of the district or charter school;
- training provided to an educator employed by the district or charter school to provide the mental health services; and
- the impact such mental health services have on the physical and emotional safety and well-being of the individuals who are provided the mental health services and on the number of violent incidents that occur at districts or charter schools.

C.S.H.B. 906 sets out the membership of the task force that includes the commissioner of education or the commissioner's designee and additional members appointed by the commissioner or the task force, as applicable. The bill requires appointments to the task force to be made without regard to the race, color, disability, sex, religion, age, or national origin of the appointee. The bill sets out provisions relating to meetings and officers. The bill prohibits a member of the task force from receiving compensation or reimbursement for service on the task force and exempts the task force from state law relating to state agency advisory committees.

C.S.H.B. 906 requires the commissioner to designate one institution of higher education with experience in evaluating mental health services to serve as the lead institution for the task force.

The bill requires the designated lead institution to provide faculty, staff, and administrative support services to the task force as determined necessary by the task force to administer the bill's provisions. The bill requires the commissioner to designate two institutions of higher education with experience in evaluating mental health services to assist the task force and the designated lead institution as determined necessary by the task force to administer the bill's provisions. The bill requires the commissioner, in making these designations, to give preference to at least one predominantly black institution of higher education, as defined by federal law. The bill requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA), a district, or a charter school, on request of the task force, to provide information or other assistance to the task force.

C.S.H.B. 906 requires the task force to gather data on the number of students enrolled in each district and charter school; the number of individuals to whom each district or charter school provides the applicable mental health services; the number of individuals for whom each district or charter school has the resources to provide the mental health services; and the race, ethnicity, gender, special education status, and geographic location of individuals who are provided the mental health services. The bill requires the task force to study, evaluate, and make recommendations regarding such mental health services, the applicable educator training, and the impact, as described by the bill, of those mental health services.

C.S.H.B. 906 requires the task force, not later than November 1 of each even-numbered year, to submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and TEA a report of the results of the task force's activities in fulfilling its duties and any recommendations for legislative or other action. The bill authorizes the commissioner to provide not more than 10 percent of the state funds allocated to TEA for public school mental health services for purposes of the task force, caps the task force's administrative costs at 10 percent of any money allocated to the task force, and authorizes the task force to accept a gift or grant from a private individual, a foundation, or the federal government. The bill's provisions expire and the task force is abolished December 1, 2025. The bill requires the commissioner to appoint the members of the task force and designate the institutions of higher education to provide support services not later than October 1, 2019.

#### **EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2019.

#### **COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL AND SUBSTITUTE**

While C.S.H.B. 906 may differ from the original in minor or nonsubstantive ways, the following summarizes the substantial differences between the introduced and committee substitute versions of the bill.

The substitute changes the type of mental health services the task force must study and evaluate from mental health services funded by competitive state grants to mental health services funded by the state.

The substitute includes the impact of mental health services as a required subject for study and evaluation. The substitute expands the types of data gathered by the task force.

The substitute revises the composition of the task force and includes TEA among the required recipients of the task force's biennial report.

The substitute includes an authorization for the commissioner to provide certain state funds allocated for public school mental health services for purposes of the task force.

The substitute changes the date the bill's provisions expire and the task force is abolished.