

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 1559
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Education
5/17/2015
Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Interested parties recognize a need to increase the awareness of the availability of local programs and services for homeless students. While some local programs and charitable organizations that assist homeless students have historically tried to increase awareness in the student population through setting up informational tables at local schools, the parties contend that there should be a more effective method of increasing awareness with a greater likelihood of coming to the attention of homeless students. H.B. 1559 seeks to provide for such a method.

H.B. 1559 amends current law relating to public school Internet website information concerning local programs and services available to assist homeless 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 Z, Chapter 33, Education Code, by adding Section 33.906, as follows:

Sec. 33.906. WEBSITE INFORMATION CONCERNING LOCAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES AVAILABLE TO ASSIST HOMELESS STUDENTS. (a) Requires each school that maintains an Internet website, except as provided by Subsection (e), to post on the website information regarding local programs and services, including charitable programs and services, available to assist homeless students.

(b) Requires a school to which Subsection (a) applies to make a good faith effort to compile information described by that subsection and to post the information compiled in a format and style that is easily understandable by students or parents, as appropriate based on the grade levels the school offers.

(c) Authorizes a representative of a local program or service available to assist homeless students to request to have information concerning the program or service posted on a school's website. Authorizes a school to determine the information that is posted on the school's website and provides that the school is not required to post information as requested by the representative.

(d) Provides that a school district is not liable for any harm to a student that results in connection with a local program or service referred to on the website of a district school as provided by this section.

(e) Provides that this section does not apply to a school within a school district that has an enrollment of fewer than 3,000 students and is primarily located in a county with a population of less than 50,000.

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2015-2016 school year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2015.