

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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H.B. 2184
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Education
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Engrossed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

In 2017, over 800 juveniles were admitted to the juvenile justice system in Texas. As these youth are released from juvenile justice facilities and are asked to reenter a typical school environment, these students often face unintentional barriers to their transition back to everyday life.

Facilitating a student's reentry into the traditional school population is not a simple process, and there are a variety of individual, school, and systemic factors that must be addressed if young people are to successfully return to schools. While all parties have the student's best interest at heart, it has become clear that these students, school districts, and juvenile justice facilities need guidance for how best to serve this unique population.

H.B. 2184 seeks to create a pathway back to school for justice-involved youth that will allow them to easily reenter into the traditional public school population. This legislation would require school districts to promptly begin the process of reintroducing the student back into the traditional public school system upon that student's reenrollment. The legislation additionally lays the framework with a suite of robust options available to the students and schools to facilitate the reentry process.

H.B. 2184 amends current law relating to a public school student's transition from an alternative education program to a regular classroom.

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 A, Chapter 37, Education Code, by adding Section 37.023, as follows:

Sec. 37.023. TRANSITION FROM ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION PROGRAM TO REGULAR CLASSROOM. (a) Defines "alternative education program" and "licensed clinical social worker."

(b) Requires the alternative education program administrator, as soon as practicable after an alternative education program determines the date of a student's release from the program, to:

(1) provide written notice of that date to:

(A) the student's parent or a person standing in parental relation to the student; and

(B) the administrator of the campus to which the student intends to transition; and

(2) provide the campus administrator:

(A) an assessment of the student's academic growth while attending the alternative education program; and

(B) the results of any assessment instruments administered to the student.

(c) Requires the campus administrator, not later than five instructional days after the date of a student's release from an alternative education program, to coordinate the student's transition to a regular classroom. Requires the coordination to include assistance and recommendations from school counselors, school district peace officers, school resource officers, licensed clinical social workers, campus behavior coordinators, classroom teachers who are or may be responsible for implementing the student's personalized transition plan developed under Subsection (d), and any other appropriate school district personnel.

(d) Requires the assistance required by Subsection (c) to include a personalized transition plan for the student developed by the campus administrator. Provides that a personalized transition plan:

(1) is required to include recommendations for the best educational placement of the student; and

(2) is authorized to include:

(A) recommendations for counseling, behavioral management, or academic assistance for the student with a concentration on the student's academic or career goals;

(B) recommendations for assistance for obtaining access to mental health services provided by the district or school, a local mental health authority, or another private or public entity;

(C) the provision of information to the student's parent or a person standing in parental relation to the student about the process to request a full individual and initial evaluation of the student for purposes of special education services under Section 29.004 (Full Individual and Initial Evaluation); and

(D) a regular review of the student's progress toward the student's academic or career goals.

(e) Requires the campus administrator, or the administrator's designee, if practicable, to meet with the student's parent or a person standing in parental relation to the student to coordinate plans for the student's transition.

(f) Provides that this section applies only to a student subject to compulsory attendance requirements under Section 25.085 (Compulsory School Attendance).

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2019–2020 school year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2019.