

- SUBJECT:** Reporting certain truancy information through PEIMS
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — committee substitute recommended
- VOTE:** 12 ayes — Huberty, Bernal, Allen, Allison, Ashby, K. Bell, Dutton, M. González, K. King, Meyer, Talarico, VanDeaver
- 0 nays
- 1 absent — Sanford
- WITNESSES:** For — Ellen Stone, Texas Appleseed; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Lisa Flores, Easter Seals Central Texas; Paige Williams, Texas Classroom Teachers Association; Jose Flores and Reginald Smith, Texas Criminal Justice Coalition; Kyle Ward, Texas PTA; Martha Leal, Texas School Counselor Association)
- Against — Jeremy Newman, Texas Home School Coalition; (*Registered, but did not testify:* Bill Kelberlau; Joshua Newman)
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify:* Eric Marin and Melody Parrish, Texas Education Agency)
- BACKGROUND:** Education Code sec. 25.085 requires a child who is at least 6 years old, or who is younger than 6 and has previously been enrolled in 1st grade, and who has not yet reached 19 years old to attend school. Sec. 25.086 exempts certain students from the requirements of compulsory school attendance.
- Education Code sec. 25.0915 requires school districts to initiate truancy prevention measures for students who fail to attend school without excuse on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period. Sec. 25.093 makes it an offense for a parent to, with criminal negligence, contribute to a child's nonattendance at school.
- DIGEST:** CSHB 548 would require the education commissioner to require each

school district and open-enrollment charter school to report through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) data disaggregated by campus and grade regarding:

- the number of children who are required to attend school and who failed to attend school without excuse for 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year;
- the number of students for whom the district initiated a truancy prevention measure; and
- the number of parents of students against whom an attendance officer or other appropriate school official had filed a complaint for contributing to a student's nonattendance.

The education commissioner would adopt these rules by January 1, 2020.

The bill would take effect September 1, 2019.

**SUPPORTERS
SAY:**

CHSB 548 would ensure legislators had access to grade-level data on truancy information so they could make informed policy on truancy. There are specific funds at the Office of the Governor designated to helping schools address truancy, but without the data the office cannot properly identify the schools that could benefit from their grants.

**OPPONENTS
SAY:**

Although well intentioned, CSHB 548 would not explicitly exempt students who are homeschooled or who attend a private or parochial school. Inadvertently requiring school districts to report information on these students would be difficult as they do not currently count these children under compulsory attendance statutes.

NOTES:

The author plans to offer a floor amendment that would exempt certain children from being counted for truancy purposes under Education Code sec. 25.086.