

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center

H.B. 4056
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Education
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Enrolled

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

As mental health issues have become more and more visible among Texas' public school students, the promotion of programs to address these students' unique needs has become a priority in order to maximize their academic potential. The Department of State Health Services (DSHS), in conjunction with the Texas Education Agency (TEA), already compiles a list of best practices programs for addressing mental health concerns, which schools may choose to reference when seeking to develop their own program offerings. However, concerned stakeholders note that the list of program topics could be strengthened through the inclusion of additional programs on, for example, promoting a positive school climate, practicing trauma-informed strategies, and implementing positive behavior interventions.

H.B. 4056 encourages the use of best practices to improve academic outcomes for these students by broadening the base of program topics covered by the list developed by DSHS and TEA. These additional existing programs, which will be provided as an optional resource for school districts to use at their discretion, will help schools better reach students with mental health concerns. (Original Author's / Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

H.B. 4056 amends current law relating to a list of best practice-based programs and research-based practices in certain areas for implementation in public schools.

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 Section 161.325, Health and Safety Code, by amending Subsections (a), (a-1), (b), and (c) and adding Subsection (a-3), as follows:

(a) Requires the Department of State Health Services (DSHS), in coordination with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and regional education service centers, to provide and annually update a list of recommended best practice-based programs and research-based practices (list) in the areas specified under Subsection (a-1) for implementation in public elementary, junior high, middle, and high schools within the general education setting.

(a-1) Requires that the list include programs and practices in certain areas, including building skills related to managing emotions, establishing and maintain positive relationships, and responsible decision-making, rather than mental health promotion and positive youth development; trauma-informed practices; positive school climates; and positive behavior supports. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(a-3) Defines "school climate."

(b) Requires that the suicide prevention programs on the list include components that provide for training counselors, teachers, nurses, administrators, and other staff, as well as law enforcement officers and social workers who regularly interact with students to identify certain student interactions.

(c) Requires DSHS and TEA, in developing the list, to consider any existing suicide prevention method developed by a school district, and any Internet or online course or program developed in this state or another state that is based on best practices recognized by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration or the Suicide Prevention Resource Center.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 21.044(c-1), Education Code, as follows:

(c-1) Requires that any minimum academic qualifications for a certificate specified under Subsection (a) (relating to requiring the State Board for Educator Certification to propose rules establishing certain requirements a person is required to accomplish to obtain a certain certificate) that require a person to possess a bachelor's degree also require that the person receive, as part of the training required to obtain that certificate, instruction regarding mental health, substance abuse, and youth suicide. Requires that the instruction required be provided through a program selected from the list.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2017.