

EDUCATION CODE

TITLE 2. PUBLIC EDUCATION

SUBTITLE E. STUDENTS AND PARENTS

CHAPTER 25. ADMISSION, TRANSFER, AND ATTENDANCE

SUBCHAPTER A. ADMISSION AND ENROLLMENT

Sec. 25.001. ADMISSION. (a) A person who, on the first day of September of any school year, is at least five years of age and under 21 years of age, or is at least 21 years of age and under 26 years of age and is admitted by a school district to complete the requirements for a high school diploma is entitled to the benefits of the available school fund for that year. Any other person enrolled in a prekindergarten class under Section 29.153 or Subchapter E-1, Chapter 29, is entitled to the benefits of the available school fund.

(b) The board of trustees of a school district or its designee shall admit into the public schools of the district free of tuition a person who is over five and younger than 21 years of age on the first day of September of the school year in which admission is sought, and may admit a person who is at least 21 years of age and under 26 years of age for the purpose of completing the requirements for a high school diploma, if:

(1) the person and either parent of the person reside in the school district;

(2) the person does not reside in the school district but a parent of the person resides in the school district and that parent is a joint managing conservator or the sole managing conservator or possessory conservator of the person;

(3) the person and the person's guardian or other person having lawful control of the person under a court order reside within the school district;

(4) the person has established a separate residence under Subsection (d);

(5) the person is homeless, as defined by 42 U.S.C. Section 11302, regardless of the residence of the person, of either parent of the person, or of the person's guardian or other person

having lawful control of the person;

(6) the person is a foreign exchange student placed with a host family that resides in the school district by a nationally recognized foreign exchange program, unless the school district has applied for and been granted a waiver by the commissioner under Subsection (e);

(7) the person resides at a residential facility located in the district;

(8) the person resides in the school district and is 18 years of age or older or the person's disabilities of minority have been removed; or

(9) the person does not reside in the school district but the grandparent of the person:

(A) resides in the school district; and

(B) provides a substantial amount of after-school care for the person as determined by the board.

(b-1) A person who is 21 years of age or older and is admitted by a school district for the purpose stated in Subsection (b) is not eligible for placement in a disciplinary alternative education program or a juvenile justice alternative education program if the person engages in conduct that would require or authorize such placement for a student under the age of 21. If the student engages in conduct that would otherwise require such placement, the district shall revoke admission of the student into the public schools of the district.

(b-2) A person who is 21 years of age or older who is admitted by a school district to complete the requirements for a high school diploma and who has not attended school in the three preceding school years may not be placed with a student who is 18 years of age or younger in a classroom setting, a cafeteria, or another district-sanctioned school activity. Nothing in this subsection prevents a student described by this subsection from attending a school-sponsored event that is open to the public as a member of the public.

(c) The board of trustees of a school district or the board's designee may require evidence that a person is eligible to attend the public schools of the district at the time the board or

its designee considers an application for admission of the person. The board of trustees or its designee shall establish minimum proof of residency acceptable to the district. The board of trustees or its designee may make reasonable inquiries to verify a person's eligibility for admission.

(d) For a person under the age of 18 years to establish a residence for the purpose of attending the public schools separate and apart from the person's parent, guardian, or other person having lawful control of the person under a court order, it must be established that the person's presence in the school district is not for the primary purpose of participation in extracurricular activities. The board of trustees shall determine whether an applicant for admission is a resident of the school district for purposes of attending the public schools and may adopt reasonable guidelines for making a determination as necessary to protect the best interests of students. The board of trustees is not required to admit a person under this subsection if the person:

(1) has engaged in conduct or misbehavior within the preceding year that has resulted in:

(A) removal to a disciplinary alternative education program; or

(B) expulsion;

(2) has engaged in delinquent conduct or conduct in need of supervision and is on probation or other conditional release for that conduct; or

(3) has been convicted of a criminal offense and is on probation or other conditional release.

(e) A school district may request that the commissioner waive the requirement that the district admit a foreign exchange student who meets the conditions of Subsection (b)(6). The commissioner shall respond to a district's request not later than the 60th day after the date of receipt of the request. The commissioner shall grant the request and issue a waiver effective for a period not to exceed three years if the commissioner determines that admission of a foreign exchange student would:

(1) create a financial or staffing hardship for the district;

(2) diminish the district's ability to provide high quality educational services for the district's domestic students; or

(3) require domestic students to compete with foreign exchange students for educational resources.

(f) A child placed in foster care by an agency of the state or by a political subdivision shall be permitted to attend the public schools in the district in which the foster parents reside free of any charge to the foster parents or the agency. A durational residence requirement may not be used to prohibit that child from fully participating in any activity sponsored by the school district.

(g) A student who was enrolled in a primary or secondary public school before the student entered the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services and who is placed at a residence outside the attendance area for the school or outside the school district is entitled to continue to attend the school in which the student was enrolled immediately before entering conservatorship until the student successfully completes the highest grade level offered by the school at the time of placement without payment of tuition. The student is entitled to continue to attend the school regardless of whether the student remains in the conservatorship of the department for the duration of the student's enrollment in the school.

(g-1) If a student who is in the conservatorship of the department is enrolled in a primary or secondary public school, other than the school in which the student was enrolled at the time the student was placed in the conservatorship of the department, the student is entitled to continue to attend that school without payment of tuition until the student successfully completes the highest grade level offered by the school at the time of enrollment in the school, even if the child's placement is changed to a residence outside the attendance area for that school or outside the school district. The student is entitled to continue to attend the school regardless of whether the student remains in the conservatorship of the department for the duration of the student's enrollment in the school.

(h) In addition to the penalty provided by Section 37.10, Penal Code, a person who knowingly falsifies information on a form required for enrollment of a student in a school district is liable to the district if the student is not eligible for enrollment in the district but is enrolled on the basis of the false information. The person is liable, for the period during which the ineligible student is enrolled, for the greater of:

(1) the maximum tuition fee the district may charge under Section 25.038; or

(2) the amount the district has budgeted for each student as maintenance and operating expenses.

(i) A school district may include on an enrollment form notice of the penalties provided by Section 37.10, Penal Code, and of the liability provided by Subsection (h) for falsifying information on the form.

(j) For the purposes of this subchapter, the board of trustees of a school district by policy may allow a person showing evidence of legal responsibility for a child other than an order of a court to substitute for a guardian or other person having lawful control of the child under an order of a court.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1019, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 396, Sec. 2.08, eff. Sept. 1, 1999;

Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1055, Sec. 2, eff. June 20, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 164 (H.B. 25), Sec. 2, eff. May 27, 2005.

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 920 (H.B. 283), Sec. 1, eff. June 18, 2005.

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 850 (H.B. 1137), Sec. 1, eff. June 15, 2007.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 161 (S.B. 1093), Sec. 4.002, eff. September 1, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 688 (H.B. 2619), Sec. 9, eff. September 1, 2013.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 142 (H.B. 4), Sec. 3, eff. May 28, 2015.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 944 (S.B. 206), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2015.

Sec. 25.0011. CERTAIN INCARCERATED CHILDREN. (a) For purposes of Section 25.001, a person is not considered to reside in a school district if:

(1) the person is incarcerated in a private juvenile detention facility in the district as a result of the order of a court in another state; and

(2) the person resided in another state or country immediately before incarceration in the facility.

(b) A school district may provide educational services to a person described by Subsection (a) if the district is fully compensated for the cost of the services through payment of tuition for the person by the operator of the juvenile detention facility or other person having lawful control of the person in an amount equal to the actual cost of educating the person.

(c) For purposes of this section, "private juvenile detention facility" means a juvenile detention facility that is not operated by a governmental entity.

Added by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 1477, Sec. 30, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 25.002. REQUIREMENTS FOR ENROLLMENT. (a) If a parent or other person with legal control of a child under a court order enrolls the child in a public school, the parent or other person or the school district in which the child most recently attended school shall furnish to the school district:

(1) the child's birth certificate or another document suitable as proof of the child's identity;

(2) a copy of the child's records from the school the child most recently attended if the child has been previously enrolled in a school in this state or another state; and

(3) a record showing that the child has the immunizations as required under Section 38.001, in the case of a child required under that section to be immunized, proof as required by that section showing that the child is not required to

be immunized, or proof that the child is entitled to provisional admission under that section and under rules adopted under that section.

(a-1) Information a school district furnishes under Subsections (a)(1) and (2) must be furnished by the district not later than the 10th working day after the date a request for the information is received by the district. Information a parent or other person with legal control of a child under a court order furnishes under Subsections (a)(1) and (2) must be furnished by the parent or other person not later than the 30th day after the date a child is enrolled in a public school. If a parent or other person with legal control of a child under a court order requests that a district transfer a child's student records, the district to which the request is made shall notify the parent or other person as soon as practicable that the parent or other person may request and receive an unofficial copy of the records for delivery in person to a school in another district.

(b) If a child is enrolled under a name other than the child's name as it appears in the identifying document or records, the school district shall notify the missing children and missing persons information clearinghouse of the child's name as shown on the identifying document or records and the name under which the child is enrolled. The information in the notice is confidential and may be released only to a law enforcement agency.

(c) If the information required by Subsection (a) is not furnished to the district within the period provided by that subsection, the district shall notify the police department of the municipality or sheriff's department of the county in which the district is located and request a determination of whether the child has been reported as missing.

(d) When accepting a child for enrollment, the school district shall inform the parent or other person enrolling the child that presenting a false document or false records under this section is an offense under Section 37.10, Penal Code, and that enrollment of the child under false documents subjects the person to liability for tuition or costs under Section 25.001(h).

(e) A person commits an offense if the person enrolls a

child in a public school and fails to furnish an identifying document or record relating to the child on the request of a law enforcement agency conducting an investigation in response to a notification under Subsection (c). An offense under this subsection is a Class B misdemeanor.

(f) Except as otherwise provided by this subsection, for a child to be enrolled in a public school, the child must be enrolled by the child's parent or by the child's guardian or other person with legal control of the child under a court order. A school district shall record the name, address, and date of birth of the person enrolling a child.

(g) A school district shall accept a child for enrollment in a public school without the documentation required by Subsection (a) if the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services has taken possession of the child under Chapter 262, Family Code. The Department of Protective and Regulatory Services shall ensure that the documentation required by Subsection (a) is furnished to the school district not later than the 30th day after the date the child is enrolled in the school.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 575, Sec. 34, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1514, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2001; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 234, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 164 (H.B. 25), Sec. 3, eff. May 27, 2005.

Sec. 25.0021. USE OF LEGAL SURNAME. In each public school a student must be identified by the student's legal surname as that name appears:

(1) on the student's birth certificate or other document suitable as proof of the student's identity; or

(2) in a court order changing the student's name.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1300, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Sec. 25.0022. FOOD ALLERGY INFORMATION REQUESTED UPON ENROLLMENT. (a) In this section, "severe food allergy" means a

dangerous or life-threatening reaction of the human body to a food-borne allergen introduced by inhalation, ingestion, or skin contact that requires immediate medical attention.

(b) On enrollment of a child in a public school, a school district shall request, by providing a form or otherwise, that a parent or other person with legal control of the child under a court order:

(1) disclose whether the child has a food allergy or a severe food allergy that, in the judgment of the parent or other person with legal control, should be disclosed to the district to enable the district to take any necessary precautions regarding the child's safety; and

(2) specify the food to which the child is allergic and the nature of the allergic reaction.

(c) A school district shall maintain the confidentiality of information provided under this section, and may disclose the information to teachers, school counselors, school nurses, and other appropriate school personnel only to the extent consistent with district policy under Section 38.009 and permissible under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (20 U.S.C. Section 1232g).

(d) Except as provided by Subsections (e) and (f), information regarding a child's food allergy, regardless of how it is received by the school or school district, shall be retained in the child's student records but may not be placed in the health record maintained for the child by the school district.

(e) If the school receives documentation of a food allergy from a physician, that documentation shall be placed in the health record maintained for the child by the school district.

(f) A registered nurse may enter appropriate notes about a child's possible food allergy in the health record maintained for the child by the school district, including a notation that the child's student records indicate that a parent has notified the school district of the child's possible food allergy.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1276 (H.B. 742), Sec. 1, eff. June 17, 2011.

Sec. 25.003. TUITION FOR CERTAIN CHILDREN FROM OTHER STATES. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this code, a school district shall charge tuition for a child who resides at a residential facility and whose maintenance expenses are paid in whole or in part by another state or the United States.

(b) A tuition charge under this section must be submitted to the commissioner for approval.

(c) The attendance of the child is not counted for purposes of allocating state funds to the district.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 396, Sec. 2.09, eff. Sept. 1, 1999.

Sec. 25.0031. TUITION FOR STUDENTS HOLDING CERTAIN STUDENT VISAS. (a) Notwithstanding any other provision of this code, if a student is required, as a condition of obtaining or holding the appropriate United States student visa, to pay tuition to the school district or open-enrollment charter school that the student attends to cover the cost of the student's education provided by the district or charter school, the district or charter school shall accept tuition for the student in an amount equal to the full unsubsidized per capita cost of providing the student's education for the period of the student's attendance at school in the district or at the charter school.

(b) The commissioner shall, for purposes of Subsection (a), develop guidelines for determining the amount of the full unsubsidized per capita cost of providing a student's education. A school district or open-enrollment charter school may not accept tuition in an amount greater than the amount computed under the commissioner's guidelines unless the commissioner approves a greater amount as a more accurate reflection of the cost of education to be provided by the district or charter school.

(c) Notwithstanding any other provision of this code, the attendance of a student for whom a school district or open-enrollment charter school accepts tuition under this section is not counted for purposes of allocating state funds to the district or charter school.

Added by Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 523 (S.B. 453), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Sec. 25.004. TUITION FOR CERTAIN MILITARY DEPENDENTS PROHIBITED. A school district may not charge tuition for the attendance of a student who is domiciled in another state and resides in military housing that is located in the district but is exempt from taxation by the district.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 526, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 11, 2001.

Sec. 25.005. RECIPROCITY AGREEMENTS REGARDING MILITARY PERSONNEL AND DEPENDENTS. (a) To facilitate the transfer of military personnel and their dependents to and from the public schools of this state, the agency shall pursue reciprocity agreements governing the terms of those transfers with other states that are not parties to the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children adopted under Chapter 162.

(b) A reciprocity agreement must:

(1) address procedures for:

(A) transferring student records;

(B) awarding credit for completed course work;

and

(C) permitting a student to satisfy the requirements of Section 39.025 through successful performance on comparable end-of-course or other exit-level assessment instruments administered in another state; and

(2) include appropriate criteria developed by the agency.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1073, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Amended by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 149, Sec. 24, eff. May 27, 2003; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 445, Sec. 1, eff. June 20, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1312 (S.B. 1031), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 8 (S.B. 90), Sec. 2, eff. May

5, 2009.

Sec. 25.006. TRANSITION ASSISTANCE FOR MILITARY DEPENDENTS.

(a) The legislature finds that:

(1) school-age dependents of military personnel are faced with numerous transitions during their formative years; and

(2) military dependents who move from one school to another during the high school years are faced with special challenges to learning and future achievement.

(b) In recognition of the challenges faced by military dependents and the importance of military families to our community and economy, the agency shall assist the transition of military students from one school to another by:

(1) improving the timely transfer of student records;

(2) developing systems to ease student transition during the first two weeks of enrollment at a new school;

(3) promoting practices that foster student access to extracurricular programs;

(4) establishing procedures to lessen the adverse impact of student moves to a new school after the end of the student's junior year of high school;

(5) encouraging or maintaining partnerships between military bases and affected school districts;

(6) encouraging school districts to provide services for military students in transition when applying for admission to postsecondary study and when seeking sources of funding for postsecondary study; and

(7) providing other assistance as identified by the agency.

(c) The agency shall collect data each year from school districts and open-enrollment charter schools through the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) relating to the enrollment of military-connected students. The data relating to the enrollment of military-connected students under this section:

(1) must include the number of active duty military-connected students and the number of National Guard or reserve military-connected students enrolled in the school

district or open-enrollment charter school on a date at the beginning of the school year specified by the agency and a date at the end of the school year specified by the agency; and

(2) may not be used for purposes of determining a campus or district performance rating under Section 39.054.

(d) In this section, "military-connected student" means a student enrolled in a school district or open-enrollment charter school who is a dependent of a member of:

(1) the United States military serving in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard on active duty;

(2) the Texas National Guard; or

(3) a reserve force of the United States military.

Added by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 164 (H.B. 25), Sec. 1, eff. May 27, 2005.

Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 173 (H.B. 525), Sec. 1, eff. May 25, 2013.

Sec. 25.007. TRANSITION ASSISTANCE FOR STUDENTS WHO ARE HOMELESS OR IN SUBSTITUTE CARE. (a) The legislature finds that:

(1) students who are homeless or in substitute care are faced with numerous transitions during their formative years; and

(2) students who are homeless or in substitute care who move from one school to another are faced with special challenges to learning and future achievement.

(a-1) In this section, "students who are homeless" has the meaning assigned to the term "homeless children and youths" under 42 U.S.C. Section 11434a.

(b) In recognition of the challenges faced by students who are homeless or in substitute care, the agency shall assist the transition of students who are homeless or in substitute care from one school to another by:

(1) ensuring that school records for a student who is homeless or in substitute care are transferred to the student's new school not later than the 10th working day after the date the student begins enrollment at the school;

- (2) developing systems to ease transition of a student who is homeless or in substitute care during the first two weeks of enrollment at a new school;
- (3) developing procedures for awarding credit, including partial credit if appropriate, for course work, including electives, completed by a student who is homeless or in substitute care while enrolled at another school;
- (4) developing procedures to ensure that a new school relies on decisions made by the previous school regarding placement in courses or educational programs of a student who is homeless or in substitute care and places the student in comparable courses or educational programs at the new school, if those courses or programs are available;
- (5) promoting practices that facilitate access by a student who is homeless or in substitute care to extracurricular programs, summer programs, credit transfer services, electronic courses provided under Chapter 30A, and after-school tutoring programs at nominal or no cost;
- (6) establishing procedures to lessen the adverse impact of the movement of a student who is homeless or in substitute care to a new school;
- (7) entering into a memorandum of understanding with the Department of Family and Protective Services regarding the exchange of information as appropriate to facilitate the transition of students in substitute care from one school to another;
- (8) encouraging school districts and open-enrollment charter schools to provide services for a student who is homeless or in substitute care in transition when applying for admission to postsecondary study and when seeking sources of funding for postsecondary study;
- (9) requiring school districts, campuses, and open-enrollment charter schools to accept a referral for special education services made for a student who is homeless or in substitute care by a school previously attended by the student, and to provide comparable services to the student during the referral process or until the new school develops an individualized education program for the student;

(10) requiring school districts, campuses, and open-enrollment charter schools to provide notice to the child's educational decision-maker and caseworker regarding events that may significantly impact the education of a child, including:

(A) requests or referrals for an evaluation under Section 504, Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. Section 794), or special education under Section 29.003;

(B) admission, review, and dismissal committee meetings;

(C) manifestation determination reviews required by Section 37.004(b);

(D) any disciplinary actions under Chapter 37 for which parental notice is required;

(E) citations issued for Class C misdemeanor offenses on school property or at school-sponsored activities;

(F) reports of restraint and seclusion required by Section 37.0021; and

(G) use of corporal punishment as provided by Section 37.0011;

(11) developing procedures for allowing a student who is homeless or in substitute care who was previously enrolled in a course required for graduation the opportunity, to the extent practicable, to complete the course, at no cost to the student, before the beginning of the next school year;

(12) ensuring that a student who is homeless or in substitute care who is not likely to receive a high school diploma before the fifth school year following the student's enrollment in grade nine, as determined by the district, has the student's course credit accrual and personal graduation plan reviewed;

(13) ensuring that a student in substitute care who is in grade 11 or 12 be provided information regarding tuition and fee exemptions under Section 54.366 for dual-credit or other courses provided by a public institution of higher education for which a high school student may earn joint high school and college credit;

(14) designating at least one agency employee to act as a liaison officer regarding educational issues related to students in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and

Protective Services; and

(15) providing other assistance as identified by the agency.

(c) The commissioner may establish rules to implement this section and to facilitate the transition between schools of children who are homeless or in substitute care.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 850 (S.B. 2248), Sec. 1, eff. June 19, 2009.

Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 688 (H.B. 2619), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1354 (S.B. 1404), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 746 (H.B. 1804), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2015.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 822 (H.B. 3748), Sec. 1, eff. June 17, 2015.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1206 (S.B. 1494), Sec. 1, eff. June 19, 2015.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1206 (S.B. 1494), Sec. 2, eff. June 19, 2015.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1206 (S.B. 1494), Sec. 3, eff. June 19, 2015.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1236 (S.B. 1296), Sec. 5.002, eff. September 1, 2015.

Reenacted and amended by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 419 (S.B. 1220), Sec. 1, eff. June 1, 2017.

Amended by:

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 419 (S.B. 1220), Sec. 2, eff. June 1, 2017.

Sec. 25.008. ENROLLMENT IN SUMMER SCHOOL COURSE BY PERSON NOT ENROLLED IN DISTRICT. (a) Except as provided by Subsection (b), a school district shall permit a person who is eligible under Section 25.001 to attend school in the district but who is not enrolled in school in the district to enroll in a district summer school course on the same basis as a district student, including:

(1) satisfaction of any course eligibility requirement; and

(2) payment of any fee authorized under Section 11.158 that is charged in connection with the course.

(b) Subsection (a) does not apply to enrollment in a program under Section 29.088, 29.090, or 29.098 or in a similar intensive program.

Added by Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 344 (H.B. 2137), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

SUBCHAPTER B. ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS

Sec. 25.031. ASSIGNMENTS AND TRANSFERS IN DISCRETION OF GOVERNING BOARD. In conformity with this subchapter, the board of trustees of a school district or the board of county school trustees or a school employee designated by the board may assign and transfer any student from one school facility or classroom to another within its jurisdiction.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Sec. 25.032. BASIS FOR ASSIGNMENT OR TRANSFER. The board of trustees of a school district, the board of county school trustees, or the person acting for the board must make the decision concerning the assignment or transfer of a student on an individual basis and may not consider as a factor in its decision any matter relating to the national origin of the student or the student's ancestral language.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Sec. 25.033. ASSIGNMENT OR TRANSFER ON PETITION OF PARENT. The parent or person standing in parental relation to any student may by petition in writing either:

(1) request the assignment or transfer of the student to a designated school or to a school to be designated by the board; or

(2) file objections to the assignment of the student to the school to which the student has been assigned.

Sec. 25.034. HEARING; ACTION ON PETITION; APPEAL. (a) On receiving a petition under Section 25.033, the board of trustees of the school district or the board of county school trustees shall:

(1) if a hearing is not requested, act on the petition not later than the 30th day after the date the petition is submitted and notify the petitioner of the board's conclusion; or

(2) if a hearing is requested, designate a time and place for holding a hearing not later than the 30th day after the date the petition is submitted.

(b) If a hearing is requested, it shall be conducted by the board in compliance with this section.

(c) The petitioner may present evidence relevant to the individual student.

(d) The board may conduct investigations as to the objection or request, examine any student involved, and employ agents, professional or otherwise, for the purpose of examinations and investigations.

(e) The board must grant the request made in the petition unless the board determines that there is a reasonable basis for denying the request. The decision of the board, either with or without hearing, is final unless the student, or the parent, guardian, or custodian of the student as next friend, files exception to the decision of the board as constituting a denial of any right of the student guaranteed under the United States Constitution.

(f) If an exception is filed under Subsection (e), the board may reconsider its decision. If the board has not ruled on the exception before the 16th day after the date of the filing, the exception is considered overruled. If the exception is overruled, an appeal of the board's decision may be filed in the district court of the county in which the board is located. The petition must:

(1) be filed not later than the 30th day after the date of the board's final decision; and

(2) state the facts relevant to the student that relate to the alleged denial of the student's rights under the

United States Constitution.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Sec. 25.0341. TRANSFER OF STUDENTS INVOLVED IN SEXUAL ASSAULT. (a) This section applies only to:

(1) a student:

(A) who has been convicted of continuous sexual abuse of young child or children under Section 21.02, Penal Code, or convicted of or placed on deferred adjudication for the offense of sexual assault under Section 22.011, Penal Code, or aggravated sexual assault under Section 22.021, Penal Code, committed against another student who, at the time the offense occurred, was assigned to the same campus as the student convicted or placed on deferred adjudication;

(B) who has been adjudicated under Section 54.03, Family Code, as having engaged in conduct described by Paragraph (A);

(C) whose prosecution under Section 53.03, Family Code, for engaging in conduct described by Paragraph (A) has been deferred; or

(D) who has been placed on probation under Section 54.04(d)(1), Family Code, for engaging in conduct described by Paragraph (A); and

(2) a student who is the victim of conduct described by Subdivision (1)(A).

(b) On the request of a parent or other person with authority to act on behalf of a student who is a victim to whom Subsection (a)(2) applies:

(1) the board of trustees of the school district shall transfer the student to:

(A) a district campus other than:

(i) the campus to which the student was assigned at the time the conduct occurred; or

(ii) the campus to which the student who engaged in the conduct is assigned, if the student who engaged in the conduct has been assigned to a different campus since the conduct occurred; or

(B) a neighboring school district, if there is only one campus in the district serving the grade level in which the student is enrolled; or

(2) if the student does not wish to transfer to another campus or district, the board of trustees shall transfer the student who engaged in the conduct to:

(A) a district campus other than the campus to which the student who is the victim of the conduct is assigned; or

(B) the district's disciplinary alternative education program or juvenile justice alternative education program, if there is only one campus in the district serving the grade level in which the student who engaged in the conduct is enrolled.

(c) A transfer under Subsection (b)(1) must be to a campus or school district, as applicable, agreeable to the parent or other person with authority to act on the student's behalf.

(d) To the extent permitted under federal law, a school district shall notify the parent or other person with authority to act on behalf of a student who is a victim to whom Subsection (a)(2) applies of the campus or program to which the student who engaged in conduct described by Subsection (a)(1)(A) is assigned.

(e) This section applies regardless of whether the conduct occurred on or off of school property.

(f) Section 25.034 does not apply to a transfer under this section.

(g) A school district is not required to provide transportation to a student who transfers to another campus or school district under this section.

Added by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 997 (H.B. 308), Sec. 1, eff. June 18, 2005.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 593 (H.B. 8), Sec. 3.25, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 25.0342. TRANSFER OF STUDENTS WHO ARE VICTIMS OF OR HAVE ENGAGED IN BULLYING.

(a) In this section, "bullying" has the meaning assigned by

Section 37.0832.

(b) On the request of a parent or other person with authority to act on behalf of a student who is a victim of bullying, the board of trustees of a school district or the board's designee shall transfer the victim to:

(1) another classroom at the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred; or

(2) a campus in the school district other than the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred.

(b-1) The board of trustees of a school district may transfer the student who engaged in bullying to:

(1) another classroom at the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred; or

(2) a campus in the district other than the campus to which the victim was assigned at the time the bullying occurred, in consultation with a parent or other person with authority to act on behalf of the student who engaged in bullying.

(b-2) Section 37.004 applies to a transfer under Subsection (b-1) of a student with a disability who receives special education services.

(c) The board of trustees or the board's designee shall verify that a student has been a victim of bullying before transferring the student under this section.

(d) The board of trustees or the board's designee may consider past student behavior when identifying a bully.

(e) The determination by the board of trustees or the board's designee is final and may not be appealed.

(f) A school district is not required to provide transportation to a student who transfers to another campus under Subsection (b)(2).

(g) Section 25.034 does not apply to a transfer under this section.

Added by Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 920 (H.B. 283), Sec. 2, eff. June 18, 2005.

Renumbered from Education Code, Section 25.0341 by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 921 (H.B. 3167), Sec. 17.001(12), eff. September 1,

2007.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 776 (H.B. 1942), Sec. 2, eff. June 17, 2011.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 776 (H.B. 1942), Sec. 3, eff. June 17, 2011.

Sec. 25.0343. TRANSFER OF STUDENTS RESIDING IN HOUSEHOLD OF STUDENT RECEIVING SPECIAL EDUCATION SERVICES. (a) If, for the purpose of receiving special education services under Subchapter A, Chapter 29, a school district assigns a student to a district campus other than the campus the student would attend based on the student's residence, the district shall permit the student's parent, guardian, or other person standing in parental relation to the student to obtain a transfer to the assigned campus for any other student residing in the household of the student receiving special education services, provided that:

(1) the other student is entitled under Section 25.001 to attend school in the district; and

(2) the appropriate grade level for the other student is offered at the campus.

(b) A school district is not required to provide transportation to a student who transfers to another campus under this section. This subsection does not affect any transportation services provided by the district in accordance with other law for the student receiving special education services.

(c) Section 25.034 does not apply to a transfer under this section.

(d) This section does not apply if the student receiving special education services resides in a residential facility.

Added by Acts 2006, 79th Leg., 3rd C.S., Ch. 5 (H.B. 1), Sec. 12.01, eff. May 31, 2006.

Sec. 25.035. TRANSFERS BETWEEN DISTRICTS OR COUNTIES. The boards of trustees of two or more adjoining school districts or the boards of county school trustees of two or more adjoining counties may, by agreement and in accordance with Sections 25.032, 25.033,

and 25.034, arrange for the transfer and assignment of any student from the jurisdiction of one board to that of another. In the case of the transfer and assignment of a student under this section, the participating governing boards shall also agree to the transfer of school funds or other payments proportionate to the transfer of attendance.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Sec. 25.036. TRANSFER OF STUDENT. (a) Any child, other than a high school graduate, who is younger than 21 years of age and eligible for enrollment on September 1 of any school year may transfer annually from the child's school district of residence to another district in this state if both the receiving district and the applicant parent or guardian or person having lawful control of the child jointly approve and timely agree in writing to the transfer.

(b) A transfer agreement under this section shall be filed and preserved as a receiving district record for audit purposes of the agency.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Sec. 25.037. TRANSFER OF STATE FUNDS. On the timely filing with the agency of notice of a child's transfer and certification by the agency of the transfer, the state available school fund apportionment transfers with the child. For purposes of computing state allotments to school districts under the Foundation School Program, the attendance of the child before the date of transfer is counted by the transfer sending district and the attendance of the child after the date of transfer is counted by the transfer receiving district.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Sec. 25.038. TUITION FEE FOR TRANSFER STUDENTS. The receiving school district may charge a tuition fee to the extent that the district's actual expenditure per student in average daily attendance, as determined by its board of trustees, exceeds the sum the district benefits from state aid sources as provided by Section

25.037. However, unless a tuition fee is prescribed and set out in a transfer agreement before its execution by the parties, an increase in tuition charge may not be made for the year of that transfer that exceeds the tuition charge, if any, of the preceding school year.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Sec. 25.039. CONTRACTS AND TUITION FOR EDUCATION OUTSIDE DISTRICT. (a) A school district that does not offer each grade level from kindergarten through grade 12 may provide by contract for students residing in the district who are at grade levels not offered by the district to be educated at those grade levels in one or more other districts. In each contract, the districts also shall agree to the transfer of school funds or other payments proportionate to the transfer of attendance.

(b) The school district in which the students reside shall pay tuition to any district with which it has a contract under this section for each of its students attending school in that district at a grade level for which the district has contracted. The amount of the tuition paid may not exceed the greater of the amount provided for by Section 25.038 or an amount specified by commissioner rule.

(c) A school district is not required to pay tuition to any district with which it has not contracted for the attendance by any of its students at a grade level for which it has contracted under this section with another district.

(d) A contract under this section may not be for a period exceeding five years.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 396, Sec. 1.32, eff. Sept. 1, 1999; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1069, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Sec. 25.040. TRANSFER TO DISTRICT OF BORDERING STATE. Any child entitled to attend the public school of any school district situated on the border of Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma, or New Mexico who finds it more convenient to attend the public school in a district in the contiguous state may have the apportionment of the

state and county available school funds paid to the school district of the contiguous state and may have additional tuition, if necessary, paid by the district of the child's residence on terms agreed on by the trustees of the receiving district and the trustees of the residence district.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Sec. 25.041. TRANSFER OF CHILDREN OR WARDS OF EMPLOYEES OF STATE SCHOOLS. A school-age child or ward of an employee of a state school for the mentally retarded constituted as a school district who resides in the boundaries of the state school property but who is not a student at the state school is entitled to attend school in a district adjacent to the state school free of any charge to the child's or ward's parent or guardian provided the parent or guardian is required by the superintendent of the state school to live on the grounds of the state school for the convenience of this state. A tuition charge required by the admitting district shall be paid by the district constituting the state school out of funds allotted to it by the agency.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Sec. 25.042. TRANSFER OF CHILDREN OF EMPLOYEES OF TEXAS JUVENILE JUSTICE DEPARTMENT FACILITIES. A school-age child of an employee of a facility of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department is entitled to attend school in a school district adjacent to the district in which the student resides free of any charge to the student's parents or guardian. Any tuition charge required by the admitting district shall be paid by the district from which the student transfers out of any funds appropriated to the facility.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 734 (H.B. [1549](#)), Sec. 21, eff. September 1, 2015.

Sec. 25.043. CLASSROOM PLACEMENT OF MULTIPLE BIRTH SIBLINGS. (a) In this section:

(1) "Multiple birth sibling" means a twin, triplet,

quadruplet, or other sibling resulting from a multiple birth.

(2) "Parent" includes a person standing in parental relation.

(b) The parent of multiple birth siblings who are assigned to the same grade level and school may request in writing, not later than the 14th day after the first day of enrollment, that the school place the siblings in the same classroom or in separate classrooms.

(c) Except as provided by Subsection (d) or (g), a school shall provide the multiple birth siblings with the classroom placement requested by the parent.

(d) At the end of the first grading period following the multiple birth siblings' enrollment in the school, if the principal of the school, in consultation with the teacher of each classroom in which the multiple birth siblings are placed, determines that the requested classroom placement is disruptive to the school, the principal may determine the appropriate classroom placement for the siblings.

(e) A parent may appeal the principal's classroom placement of multiple birth siblings in the manner provided by school district policy. During an appeal, the multiple birth siblings shall remain in the classroom chosen by the parent.

(f) The school may recommend to a parent the appropriate classroom placement for the multiple birth siblings and may provide professional educational advice to assist the parent with the decision regarding appropriate classroom placement.

(g) A school district is not required to place multiple birth siblings in separate classrooms if the request would require the school district to add an additional class to the grade level of the multiple birth siblings.

(h) This section does not affect:

(1) a right or obligation under Subchapter A, Chapter 29, or under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 U.S.C. Section 1400 et seq.) regarding the individual placement decisions of the school district admission, review, and dismissal committee; or

(2) the right of a school district or teacher to remove a student from a classroom under Chapter 37.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 91 (H.B. 314), Sec. 1, eff. May 15, 2007.

SUBCHAPTER C. OPERATION OF SCHOOLS AND SCHOOL ATTENDANCE

Sec. 25.081. OPERATION OF SCHOOLS. (a) Except as authorized under Subsection (b) of this section, Section 25.084, or Section 29.0821, for each school year each school district must operate for at least 75,600 minutes, including time allocated for instruction, intermissions, and recesses for students.

(b) The commissioner may approve the operation of schools for fewer than the number of minutes required under Subsection (a) if disaster, flood, extreme weather conditions, fuel curtailment, or another calamity causes the closing of schools.

(c) If the commissioner does not approve reduced operation time under Subsection (b), a school district may add additional minutes to the end of the district's normal school hours as necessary to compensate for minutes lost due to school closures caused by disaster, flood, extreme weather conditions, fuel curtailment, or another calamity.

(d) The commissioner may adopt rules to implement this section, including rules:

(1) for the application, on the basis of the minimum minutes of operation required by Subsection (a), of any provision of this title that refers to a minimum number of days of instruction under this section;

(2) to determine the minutes of operation that are equivalent to a day;

(3) defining minutes of operation and instructional time; and

(4) establishing the minimum number of minutes of instructional time required for a full-day and a half-day program to meet the time requirements under Subsection (a).

(e) A school district or education program is exempt from the minimum minutes of operation requirement if the district's or program's average daily attendance is calculated under Section 42.005(j).

Text of subsection as added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 851

(H.B. 2442), Sec. 1

(f) The commissioner may proportionally reduce the amount of funding a district receives under Chapter 41, 42, or 46 and the average daily attendance calculation for the district if the district operates on a calendar that provides fewer minutes of operation than required under Subsection (a).

Text of subsection as added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1144

(H.B. 441), Sec. 1

(f) A school district may not provide student instruction on Memorial Day. If a school district would be required to provide student instruction on Memorial Day to compensate for minutes of instruction lost because of school closures caused by disaster, flood, extreme weather conditions, fuel curtailment, or another calamity, the commissioner shall approve the instruction of students for fewer than the number of minutes required under Subsection (a).

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 824, Sec. 2, eff. June 20, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1084 (H.B. 2610), Sec. 1, eff. June 19, 2015.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 851 (H.B. 2442), Sec. 1, eff. June 15, 2017.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1144 (H.B. 441), Sec. 1, eff. June 15, 2017.

Sec. 25.0811. FIRST DAY OF INSTRUCTION. (a) Except as provided by this section, a school district may not begin instruction for students for a school year before the fourth Monday in August. A school district may:

(1) begin instruction for students for a school year

before the fourth Monday in August if the district operates a year-round system under Section 25.084; or

(2) begin instruction for students for a school year on or after the first Monday in August at a campus or at not more than 20 percent of the campuses in the district if:

(A) the district has a student enrollment of 190,000 or more;

(B) the district at the beginning of the school year provides, financed with local funds, days of instruction for students at the campus or at each of the multiple campuses, in addition to the minimum number of days of instruction required under Section 25.081;

(C) the campus or each of the multiple campuses are undergoing comprehensive reform, as determined by the board of trustees of the district; and

(D) a majority of the students at the campus or at each of the multiple campuses are educationally disadvantaged.

(b) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), a school district that does not offer each grade level from kindergarten through grade 12 and whose prospective or former students generally attend school in another state for the grade levels the district does not offer may start school on any date permitted under Subsection (a) or the law of the other state.

(c) Repealed by Acts 2006, 79th Leg., 3rd C.S., Ch. 5, Sec. 9.03, eff. May 31, 2006.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 909, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Amended by:

Acts 2006, 79th Leg., 3rd C.S., Ch. 5 (H.B. 1), Sec. 9.02, eff. May 31, 2006.

Acts 2006, 79th Leg., 3rd C.S., Ch. 5 (H.B. 1), Sec. 9.03, eff. May 31, 2006.

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 708 (H.B. 2171), Sec. 1, eff. June 15, 2007.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 277 (H.B. 1555), Sec. 1, eff. June 17, 2011.

Sec. 25.0812. LAST DAY OF SCHOOL. (a) Except as provided

by Subsection (b), a school district may not schedule the last day of school for students for a school year before May 15.

(b) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), a school district that does not offer each grade level from kindergarten through grade 12 and whose prospective or former students generally attend school in another state for the grade levels the district does not offer may schedule the last day of school on any date permitted under Subsection (a) or the law of the other state.

Added by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1084 (H.B. 2610), Sec. 2, eff. June 19, 2015.

Sec. 25.082. PLEDGES OF ALLEGIANCE; MINUTE OF SILENCE.

(a) Repealed by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 851 (H.B. 2442), Sec. 9, eff. June 15, 2017.

(b) The board of trustees of each school district and the governing board of each open-enrollment charter school shall require students, once during each school day at each campus, to recite:

(1) the pledge of allegiance to the United States flag in accordance with 4 U.S.C. Section 4; and

(2) the pledge of allegiance to the state flag in accordance with Subchapter C, Chapter 3100, Government Code.

(b-1) The board of trustees of each school district and the governing board of each open-enrollment charter school shall require that the United States and Texas flags be prominently displayed in accordance with 4 U.S.C. Sections 5-10 and Chapter 3100, Government Code, in each campus classroom to which a student is assigned at the time the pledges of allegiance to those flags are recited. A district or school is not required to spend federal, state, or local district or school funds to acquire flags required under this subsection. A district or school may raise money or accept gifts, grants, and donations to acquire flags required under this subsection.

(c) On written request from a student's parent or guardian, a school district or open-enrollment charter school shall excuse the student from reciting a pledge of allegiance under Subsection (b).

(d) The board of trustees of each school district and the governing board of each open-enrollment charter school shall provide for the observance of one minute of silence at each campus following the recitation of the pledges of allegiance to the United States and Texas flags under Subsection (b). During the one-minute period, each student may, as the student chooses, reflect, pray, meditate, or engage in any other silent activity that is not likely to interfere with or distract another student. Each teacher or other school employee in charge of students during that period shall ensure that each of those students remains silent and does not act in a manner that is likely to interfere with or distract another student.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.
Amended by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 126, Sec. 1, 2, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 881 (H.B. 773), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1140 (S.B. 2), Sec. 42, eff. September 1, 2013.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 851 (H.B. 2442), Sec. 2, eff. June 15, 2017.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 851 (H.B. 2442), Sec. 9, eff. June 15, 2017.

Sec. 25.0821. MINUTE OF SILENCE TO COMMEMORATE SEPTEMBER 11, 2001. (a) To commemorate the events of September 11, 2001, in each year that date falls on a regular school day, each public elementary or secondary school shall provide for the observance of one minute of silence at the beginning of the first class period of that day.

(b) Immediately before the period of observance required by this section, the class instructor shall make a statement of reference to the memory of individuals who died on September 11, 2001.

(c) The period of observance required by this section may be held in conjunction with the minute of silence required by Section

25.082.

Added by Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 925 (H.B. 1501), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Sec. 25.0822. PATRIOTIC SOCIETY ACCESS TO STUDENTS.

(a) In this section, "patriotic society" means a youth membership organization listed in Title 36 of the United States Code with an educational purpose that promotes patriotism and civic involvement.

(b) At the beginning of each school year, the board of trustees of an independent school district shall adopt a policy to allow the principal of a public school campus to provide representatives of a patriotic society with the opportunity to speak to students during regular school hours about membership in the society and the ways in which membership may promote a student's educational interest and level of civic involvement, leading to the student's increased potential for self-improvement and ability to contribute to improving the student's school and community.

(c) The board policy shall give a principal complete discretion over the specific date and time of the opportunity required to be provided under this section, except that the policy shall allow the principal to limit:

(1) the opportunity provided to a patriotic society to a single school day; and

(2) any presentation made to students as a result of the opportunity to 10 minutes in length.

Added by Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 925 (S.B. 1566), Sec. 8, eff. September 1, 2017.

Sec. 25.083. SCHOOL DAY INTERRUPTIONS. (a) The board of trustees of each school district shall adopt and strictly enforce a policy limiting interruptions of classes during the school day for nonacademic activities such as announcements and sales promotions. At a minimum, the policy must limit announcements other than emergency announcements to once during the school day.

(b) The board of trustees of each school district shall adopt and strictly enforce a policy limiting the removal of

students from class for remedial tutoring or test preparation. A district may not remove a student from a regularly scheduled class for remedial tutoring or test preparation if, as a result of the removal, the student would miss more than 10 percent of the school days on which the class is offered, unless the student's parent or another person standing in parental relation to the student provides to the district written consent for removal from class for such purpose.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 211 (H.B. 5), Sec. 5(a), eff. June 10, 2013.

Sec. 25.084. YEAR-ROUND SYSTEM. (a) A school district may operate its schools year-round on either a single-track or a multitrack calendar. If a school district adopts a year-round system, the district may modify:

(1) the number of contract days of employees and the number of days of operation, including any time required for staff development, planning and preparation, and continuing education, otherwise required by law;

(2) testing dates, data reporting, and related matters;

(3) the date of the first day of instruction of the school year under Section 25.0811 for a school that was operating year-round for the 2000-2001 school year; and

(4) a student's eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities when the student's calendar track is not in session.

(b) The operation of schools year-round by a district does not affect the amount of state funds to which the district is entitled under Chapter 42.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 909, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Sec. 25.085. COMPULSORY SCHOOL ATTENDANCE. (a) A child who

is required to attend school under this section shall attend school each school day for the entire period the program of instruction is provided.

(b) Unless specifically exempted by Section [25.086](#), a child who is at least six years of age, or who is younger than six years of age and has previously been enrolled in first grade, and who has not yet reached the child's 19th birthday shall attend school.

(c) On enrollment in prekindergarten or kindergarten, a child shall attend school.

(d) Unless specifically exempted by Section [25.086](#), a student enrolled in a school district must attend:

(1) an extended-year program for which the student is eligible that is provided by the district for students identified as likely not to be promoted to the next grade level or tutorial classes required by the district under Section [29.084](#);

(2) an accelerated reading instruction program to which the student is assigned under Section [28.006\(g\)](#);

(3) an accelerated instruction program to which the student is assigned under Section [28.0211](#);

(4) a basic skills program to which the student is assigned under Section [29.086](#); or

(5) a summer program provided under Section [37.008\(1\)](#) or Section [37.021](#).

(e) A person who voluntarily enrolls in school or voluntarily attends school after the person's 19th birthday shall attend school each school day for the entire period the program of instruction is offered. A school district may revoke for the remainder of the school year the enrollment of a person who has more than five absences in a semester that are not excused under Section [25.087](#), except a school district may not revoke the enrollment of a person under this subsection on a day on which the person is physically present at school. A person whose enrollment is revoked under this subsection may be considered an unauthorized person on school district grounds for purposes of Section [37.107](#).

(f) The board of trustees of a school district may adopt a policy requiring a person described by Subsection (e) who is under 21 years of age to attend school until the end of the school

year. Section 65.003(a), Family Code, does not apply to a person subject to a policy adopted under this subsection. Sections 25.093 and 25.095 do not apply to the parent of a person subject to a policy adopted under this subsection.

(g) After the third unexcused absence of a person described by Subsection (e), a school district shall issue a warning letter to the person that states the person's enrollment may be revoked for the remainder of the school year if the person has more than five unexcused absences in a semester.

(h) As an alternative to revoking a person's enrollment under Subsection (e), a school district may impose a behavior improvement plan described by Section 25.0915(a-1)(1).

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995. Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1019, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 396, Sec. 2.10, eff. Sept. 1, 1999; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 711, Sec. 1, eff. June 18, 1999; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1055, Sec. 3, eff. June 20, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 50 (H.B. 566), Sec. 1, eff. May 10, 2007.

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 850 (H.B. 1137), Sec. 2, eff. June 15, 2007.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 935 (H.B. 2398), Sec. 7, eff. September 1, 2015.

Sec. 25.086. EXEMPTIONS.

(a) A child is exempt from the requirements of compulsory school attendance if the child:

(1) attends a private or parochial school that includes in its course a study of good citizenship;

(2) is eligible to participate in a school district's special education program under Section 29.003 and cannot be appropriately served by the resident district;

(3) has a physical or mental condition of a temporary and remediable nature that makes the child's attendance infeasible and holds a certificate from a qualified physician specifying the temporary condition, indicating the treatment prescribed to remedy

the temporary condition, and covering the anticipated period of the child's absence from school for the purpose of receiving and recuperating from that remedial treatment;

(4) is expelled in accordance with the requirements of law in a school district that does not participate in a mandatory juvenile justice alternative education program under Section [37.011](#);

(5) is at least 17 years of age and:

(A) is attending a course of instruction to prepare for the high school equivalency examination, and:

(i) has the permission of the child's parent or guardian to attend the course;

(ii) is required by court order to attend the course;

(iii) has established a residence separate and apart from the child's parent, guardian, or other person having lawful control of the child; or

(iv) is homeless as defined by 42 U.S.C. Section 11302; or

(B) has received a high school diploma or high school equivalency certificate;

(6) is at least 16 years of age and is attending a course of instruction to prepare for the high school equivalency examination, if:

(A) the child is recommended to take the course of instruction by a public agency that has supervision or custody of the child under a court order; or

(B) the child is enrolled in a Job Corps training program under the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. Section 2801 et seq.);

(7) is at least 16 years of age and is enrolled in a high school diploma program under Chapter [18](#);

(8) is enrolled in the Texas Academy of Mathematics and Science under Subchapter G, Chapter [105](#);

(9) is enrolled in the Texas Academy of Leadership in the Humanities;

(10) is enrolled in the Texas Academy of Mathematics

and Science at The University of Texas at Brownsville;

(11) is enrolled in the Texas Academy of International Studies; or

(12) is specifically exempted under another law.

(b) This section does not relieve a school district in which a child eligible to participate in the district's special education program resides of its fiscal and administrative responsibilities under Subchapter A, Chapter 29, or of its responsibility to provide a free appropriate public education to a child with a disability.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1015, Sec. 1, eff. June 19, 1997; Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 1019, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 1997;

Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 1282, Sec. 2, eff. June 18, 1999.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 377 (S.B. 1395), Sec. 3, eff. June 17, 2005.

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 887 (S.B. 1452), Sec. 2, eff. June 17, 2005.

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 1339 (S.B. 151), Sec. 6, eff. June 18, 2005.

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 921 (H.B. 3167), Sec. 4.003, eff. September 1, 2007.

Sec. 25.087. EXCUSED ABSENCES. (a) A person required to attend school, including a person required to attend school under Section 25.085(e), may be excused for temporary absence resulting from any cause acceptable to the teacher, principal, or superintendent of the school in which the person is enrolled.

(b) A school district shall excuse a student from attending school for:

(1) the following purposes, including travel for those purposes:

(A) observing religious holy days;

(B) attending a required court appearance;

(C) appearing at a governmental office to complete paperwork required in connection with the student's application for United States citizenship;

(D) taking part in a United States naturalization oath ceremony;

(E) serving as an election clerk; or

(F) if the student is in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services, participating, as determined and documented by the department, in an activity:

(i) ordered by a court under Chapter 262 or 263, Family Code, provided that it is not practicable to schedule the participation outside of school hours; or

(ii) required under a service plan under Subchapter B, Chapter 263, Family Code; or

(2) a temporary absence resulting from an appointment with health care professionals for the student or the student's child if the student commences classes or returns to school on the same day of the appointment.

(b-1) A school district may adopt a policy excusing a student from attending school for service as a student early voting clerk in an election.

(b-2) A school district may excuse a student from attending school to visit an institution of higher education accredited by a generally recognized accrediting organization during the student's junior and senior years of high school for the purpose of determining the student's interest in attending the institution of higher education, provided that:

(1) the district may not excuse for this purpose more than two days during the student's junior year and two days during the student's senior year; and

(2) the district adopts:

(A) a policy to determine when an absence will be excused for this purpose; and

(B) a procedure to verify the student's visit at the institution of higher education.

(b-3) A temporary absence for purposes of Subsection (b)(2) includes the temporary absence of a student diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder on the day of the student's appointment with a health care practitioner, as described by Section 1355.015(b), Insurance Code, to receive a generally recognized service for

persons with autism spectrum disorder, including applied behavioral analysis, speech therapy, and occupational therapy.

(b-4) A school district shall excuse a student whose parent, stepparent, or legal guardian is an active duty member of the uniformed services as defined by Section 162.002 and has been called to duty for, is on leave from, or immediately returned from continuous deployment of at least four months outside the locality where the parent, stepparent, or guardian regularly resides, to visit with the student's parent, stepparent, or guardian. A school district may not excuse a student under this subsection more than five days in a school year. An excused absence under this subsection must be taken:

(1) not earlier than the 60th day before the date of deployment; or

(2) not later than the 30th day after the date of return from deployment.

(b-5) A school district shall excuse a student who is 17 years of age or older from attending school to pursue enlistment in a branch of the armed services of the United States or the Texas National Guard, provided that:

(1) the district may not excuse for this purpose more than four days of school during the period the student is enrolled in high school; and

(2) the district verifies the student's activities related to pursuing enlistment in a branch of the armed services or the Texas National Guard.

(b-6) Each school district shall adopt procedures to verify a student's activities as described by Subsection (b-5).

(c) A school district may excuse a student in grades 6 through 12 for the purpose of sounding "Taps" at a military honors funeral held in this state for a deceased veteran.

(d) A student whose absence is excused under Subsection (b), (b-1), (b-2), (b-4), (b-5), or (c) may not be penalized for that absence and shall be counted as if the student attended school for purposes of calculating the average daily attendance of students in the school district. A student whose absence is excused under Subsection (b), (b-1), (b-2), (b-4), (b-5), or (c) shall be allowed

a reasonable time to make up school work missed on those days. If the student satisfactorily completes the school work, the day of absence shall be counted as a day of compulsory attendance.

(e) A school district may excuse a student for the purposes provided by Subsections (b)(1)(E) and (b-1) for a maximum of two days in a school year.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 651, Sec. 1, eff. June 18, 1999; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 711, Sec. 2, eff. June 18, 1999.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 479 (H.B. [2455](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 16, 2007.

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 660 (H.B. [1187](#)), Sec. 2, eff. June 15, 2007.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 87 (S.B. [1969](#)), Sec. 7.002(a), eff. September 1, 2009.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 87 (S.B. [1969](#)), Sec. 7.002(b), eff. September 1, 2009.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 455 (H.B. [2542](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 19, 2009.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 455 (H.B. [2542](#)), Sec. 2, eff. June 19, 2009.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 517 (S.B. [1134](#)), Sec. 3, eff. September 1, 2009.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 595 (H.B. [192](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 19, 2009.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 91 (S.B. [1303](#)), Sec. 7.005, eff. September 1, 2011.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 249 (H.B. [455](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 404 (S.B. [260](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 542 (S.B. [553](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 688 (H.B. [2619](#)), Sec. 11, eff. September 1, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1354 (S.B. [1404](#)), Sec. 2, eff.

June 14, 2013.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 944 (S.B. 206), Sec. 2, eff. September 1, 2015.

Acts 2017, 85th Leg., R.S., Ch. 213 (S.B. 1152), Sec. 1, eff. May 28, 2017.

Sec. 25.088. SCHOOL ATTENDANCE OFFICER. The school attendance officer may be selected by:

- (1) the county school trustees of any county;
- (2) the board of trustees of any school district or the boards of trustees of two or more school districts jointly; or
- (3) the governing body of an open-enrollment charter school.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1504, Sec. 21, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Sec. 25.089. COMPENSATION OF ATTENDANCE OFFICER; DUAL SERVICE. (a) An attendance officer may be compensated from the funds of the county, independent school district, or open-enrollment charter school, as applicable.

(b) An attendance officer may be the probation officer or an officer of the juvenile court of the county.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1504, Sec. 22, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Sec. 25.090. ATTENDANCE OFFICER NOT SELECTED. (a) In those counties and independent school districts where an attendance officer has not been selected, the duties of attendance officer shall be performed by the school superintendents and peace officers of the counties and districts.

(b) If the governing body of an open-enrollment charter school has not selected an attendance officer, the duties of attendance officer shall be performed by the peace officers of the county in which the school is located.

(c) Additional compensation may not be paid for services

performed under this section.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1504, Sec. 23, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Sec. 25.091. POWERS AND DUTIES OF PEACE OFFICERS AND OTHER ATTENDANCE OFFICERS.

(a) A peace officer serving as an attendance officer has the following powers and duties concerning enforcement of compulsory school attendance requirements:

(1) to investigate each case of a violation of compulsory school attendance requirements referred to the peace officer;

(2) to enforce compulsory school attendance requirements by:

(A) applying truancy prevention measures adopted under Section 25.0915 to the student; and

(B) if the truancy prevention measures fail to meaningfully address the student's conduct:

(i) referring the student to a truancy court if the student has unexcused absences for the amount of time specified under Section 65.003(a), Family Code; or

(ii) filing a complaint in a county, justice, or municipal court against a parent who violates Section 25.093;

(3) to serve court-ordered legal process;

(4) to review school attendance records for compliance by each student investigated by the officer;

(5) to maintain an investigative record on each compulsory school attendance requirement violation and related court action and, at the request of a court, the board of trustees of a school district, or the commissioner, to provide a record to the individual or entity requesting the record; and

(6) to make a home visit or otherwise contact the parent of a student who is in violation of compulsory school attendance requirements, except that a peace officer may not enter a residence without the permission of the parent of a student

required under this subchapter to attend school or of the tenant or owner of the residence except to lawfully serve court-ordered legal process on the parent.

(b) An attendance officer employed by a school district who is not commissioned as a peace officer has the following powers and duties with respect to enforcement of compulsory school attendance requirements:

(1) to investigate each case of a violation of the compulsory school attendance requirements referred to the attendance officer;

(2) to enforce compulsory school attendance requirements by:

(A) applying truancy prevention measures adopted under Section [25.0915](#) to the student; and

(B) if the truancy prevention measures fail to meaningfully address the student's conduct:

(i) referring the student to a truancy court if the student has unexcused absences for the amount of time specified under Section [65.003\(a\)](#), Family Code; and

(ii) filing a complaint in a county, justice, or municipal court against a parent who violates Section [25.093](#);

(3) to monitor school attendance compliance by each student investigated by the officer;

(4) to maintain an investigative record on each compulsory school attendance requirement violation and related court action and, at the request of a court, the board of trustees of a school district, or the commissioner, to provide a record to the individual or entity requesting the record;

(5) to make a home visit or otherwise contact the parent of a student who is in violation of compulsory school attendance requirements, except that the attendance officer may not enter a residence without permission of the parent or of the owner or tenant of the residence; and

(6) at the request of a parent, to escort a student from any location to a school campus to ensure the student's compliance with compulsory school attendance requirements.

(b-1) A peace officer who has probable cause to believe that a child is in violation of the compulsory school attendance law under Section 25.085 may take the child into custody for the purpose of returning the child to the school campus of the child to ensure the child's compliance with compulsory school attendance requirements.

(c) In this section:

(1) "Parent" includes a person standing in parental relation.

(2) "Peace officer" has the meaning assigned by Article 2.12, Code of Criminal Procedure.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1514, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 2001; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 137, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 1058 (H.B. 2237), Sec. 5, eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1098 (S.B. 1489), Sec. 9, eff. September 1, 2011.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 935 (H.B. 2398), Sec. 8, eff. September 1, 2015.

Sec. 25.0915. TRUANCY PREVENTION MEASURES. (a) A school district shall adopt truancy prevention measures designed to:

(1) address student conduct related to truancy in the school setting before the student engages in conduct described by Section 65.003(a), Family Code; and

(2) minimize the need for referrals to truancy court for conduct described by Section 65.003(a), Family Code.

(a-1) As a truancy prevention measure under Subsection (a), a school district shall take one or more of the following actions:

(1) impose:

(A) a behavior improvement plan on the student that must be signed by an employee of the school, that the school district has made a good faith effort to have signed by the student and the student's parent or guardian, and that includes:

(i) a specific description of the behavior

that is required or prohibited for the student;

(ii) the period for which the plan will be effective, not to exceed 45 school days after the date the contract becomes effective; or

(iii) the penalties for additional absences, including additional disciplinary action or the referral of the student to a truancy court; or

(B) school-based community service; or

(2) refer the student to counseling, mediation, mentoring, a teen court program, community-based services, or other in-school or out-of-school services aimed at addressing the student's truancy.

(a-2) A referral made under Subsection (a-1)(2) may include participation by the child's parent or guardian if necessary.

(a-3) A school district shall offer additional counseling to a student and may not refer the student to truancy court if the school determines that the student's truancy is the result of:

(1) pregnancy;

(2) being in the state foster program;

(3) homelessness; or

(4) being the principal income earner for the student's family.

(a-4) If a student fails to attend school without excuse on three or more days or parts of days within a four-week period but does not fail to attend school for the time described by Section [25.0951\(a\)](#), the school district shall initiate truancy prevention measures under this section on the student.

(b) Each referral to truancy court for conduct described by Section [65.003\(a\)](#), Family Code, must:

(1) be accompanied by a statement from the student's school certifying that:

(A) the school applied the truancy prevention measures adopted under Subsection (a) or (a-4) to the student; and

(B) the truancy prevention measures failed to meaningfully address the student's school attendance; and

(2) specify whether the student is eligible for or receives special education services under Subchapter A, Chapter [29](#).

(c) A truancy court shall dismiss a petition filed by a truant conduct prosecutor under Section [65.054](#), Family Code, if the court determines that the school district's referral:

(1) does not comply with Subsection (b);

(2) does not satisfy the elements required for truant conduct;

(3) is not timely filed, unless the school district delayed the referral under Section [25.0951](#)(d); or

(4) is otherwise substantively defective.

(d) Except as provided by Subsection (e), a school district shall employ a truancy prevention facilitator or juvenile case manager to implement the truancy prevention measures required by this section and any other effective truancy prevention measures as determined by the school district or campus. At least annually, the truancy prevention facilitator shall meet to discuss effective truancy prevention measures with a case manager or other individual designated by a truancy court to provide services to students of the school district in truancy cases.

(e) Instead of employing a truancy prevention facilitator, a school district may designate an existing district employee or juvenile case manager to implement the truancy prevention measures required by this section and any other effective truancy prevention measures as determined by the school district or campus.

(f) The agency shall adopt rules:

(1) creating minimum standards for truancy prevention measures adopted by a school district under this section; and

(2) establishing a set of best practices for truancy prevention measures.

(g) The agency shall adopt rules to provide for sanctions for a school district found to be not in compliance with this section.

Added by Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1098 (S.B. [1489](#)), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2011.

Amended by:

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1407 (S.B. [393](#)), Sec. 8, eff. September 1, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1409 (S.B. [1114](#)), Sec. 2, eff.

September 1, 2013.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 935 (H.B. 2398), Sec. 9, eff. September 1, 2015.

For expiration of this section, see Subsection (i).

Sec. 25.0916. UNIFORM TRUANCY POLICIES IN CERTAIN COUNTIES.

(a) This section applies only to a county with two or more courts hearing truancy cases and two or more school districts.

(b) A committee shall be established to recommend a uniform truancy policy for each school district located in the county.

(c) Unless the county has already adopted a uniform truancy policy under this section, not later than January 1, 2016, the county judge or the county judge's designee and the mayor of the municipality in the county with the greatest population or the mayor's designee shall each appoint one member to serve on the committee as a representative of each of the following:

- (1) a juvenile court;
- (2) a municipal court;
- (3) the office of a justice of the peace;
- (4) the superintendent or designee of an independent school district;
- (5) an open-enrollment charter school, if one exists in the county;
- (6) the office of the prosecutor with original truancy jurisdiction in the county; and
- (7) the general public.

(c-1) In addition to the members listed in Subsection (c), the chief juvenile probation officer or the officer's designee serves on the committee. The county judge or the county judge's designee and the mayor of the municipality in the county with the greatest population or the mayor's designee may make additional appointments as needed.

(d) Repealed by Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 935, Sec. 41(2), eff. September 1, 2015.

(e) The county judge and mayor of the municipality in the county with the greatest population shall:

- (1) both serve on the committee or appoint

representatives to serve on their behalf; and

(2) jointly appoint a member of the committee to serve as the presiding officer.

(f) Unless a county has already adopted a uniform truancy policy under this section, not later than May 1, 2016, the committee shall recommend:

(1) a uniform process for filing truancy cases with truancy courts;

(2) uniform administrative procedures;

(3) uniform deadlines for processing truancy cases;

(4) a local plan with strategies to address truancy, including effective prevention, intervention, and diversion methods to reduce truancy and referrals to a truancy court;

(5) a system for tracking truancy information and sharing truancy information among school districts, open-enrollment charter schools, truancy courts, juvenile courts, and juvenile probation departments in the county; and

(6) any changes to statutes or state agency rules the committee determines are necessary to address truancy.

(g) Compliance with the committee recommendations is voluntary.

(h) The committee's presiding officer shall issue a report not later than December 1, 2017, to the county judge and mayor of the municipality with the greatest population in the county on the implementation of the recommendations and compliance with state truancy laws by a school district located in the county.

(i) This section expires January 1, 2018.

Added by Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 923 (H.B. [1479](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Amended by:

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 935 (H.B. [2398](#)), Sec. 10, eff. September 1, 2015.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 935 (H.B. [2398](#)), Sec. 41(2), eff. September 1, 2015.

Sec. 25.092. MINIMUM ATTENDANCE FOR CLASS CREDIT OR FINAL GRADE. (a) Except as provided by this section, a student in any

grade level from kindergarten through grade 12 may not be given credit or a final grade for a class unless the student is in attendance for at least 90 percent of the days the class is offered.

(a-1) A student who is in attendance for at least 75 percent but less than 90 percent of the days a class is offered may be given credit or a final grade for the class if the student completes a plan approved by the school's principal that provides for the student to meet the instructional requirements of the class. A student under the jurisdiction of a court in a criminal or juvenile justice proceeding may not receive credit or a final grade under this subsection without the consent of the judge presiding over the student's case.

(a-2) Subsection (a) does not apply to a student who receives credit by examination for a class as provided by Section [28.023](#).

(b) The board of trustees of each school district shall appoint one or more attendance committees to hear petitions for class credit or a final grade by students who are in attendance fewer than the number of days required under Subsection (a) and have not earned class credit or a final grade under Subsection (a-1). Classroom teachers shall comprise a majority of the membership of the committee. A committee may give class credit or a final grade to a student because of extenuating circumstances. Each board of trustees shall establish guidelines to determine what constitutes extenuating circumstances and shall adopt policies establishing alternative ways for students to make up work or regain credit or a final grade lost because of absences. The alternative ways must include at least one option that does not require a student to pay a fee authorized under Section [11.158\(a\)\(15\)](#). A certified public school employee may not be assigned additional instructional duties as a result of this section outside of the regular workday unless the employee is compensated for the duties at a reasonable rate of pay.

(c) A member of an attendance committee is not personally liable for any act or omission arising out of duties as a member of an attendance committee.

(d) If a student is denied credit or a final grade for a

class by an attendance committee, the student may appeal the decision to the board of trustees. The decision of the board may be appealed by trial de novo to the district court of the county in which the school district's central administrative office is located.

(e) This section does not affect the provision of Section [25.087\(b\)](#) regarding a student's excused absence from school to observe religious holy days.

(f) The availability of the option developed under Subsection (b) must be substantially the same as the availability of the educational program developed under Section [11.158\(a\)\(15\)](#).

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.
Amended by Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 698, Sec. 2, eff. June 18, 1999.

Amended by:

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 850 (H.B. [1137](#)), Sec. 3, eff. June 15, 2007.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 211 (H.B. [5](#)), Sec. 6(a), eff. June 10, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 211 (H.B. [5](#)), Sec. 7(a), eff. June 10, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1029 (H.B. [2694](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Acts 2013, 83rd Leg., R.S., Ch. 1203 (S.B. [1365](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2013.

Sec. 25.093. PARENT CONTRIBUTING TO NONATTENDANCE. (a) If a warning is issued as required by Section [25.095\(a\)](#), the parent with criminal negligence fails to require the child to attend school as required by law, and the child has absences for the amount of time specified under Section [65.003\(a\)](#), Family Code, the parent commits an offense.

(b) The attendance officer or other appropriate school official shall file a complaint against the parent in:

(1) the constitutional county court of the county in which the parent resides or in which the school is located, if the county has a population of 1.75 million or more;

(2) a justice court of any precinct in the county in which the parent resides or in which the school is located; or

(3) a municipal court of the municipality in which the parent resides or in which the school is located.

(c) An offense under Subsection (a) is a misdemeanor, punishable by fine only, in an amount not to exceed:

(1) \$100 for a first offense;

(2) \$200 for a second offense;

(3) \$300 for a third offense;

(4) \$400 for a fourth offense; or

(5) \$500 for a fifth or subsequent offense.

(c-1) Each day the child remains out of school may constitute a separate offense. Two or more offenses under Subsection (a) may be consolidated and prosecuted in a single action. If the court orders deferred disposition under Article [45.051](#), Code of Criminal Procedure, the court may require the defendant to provide personal services to a charitable or educational institution as a condition of the deferral.

(d) A fine collected under this section shall be deposited as follows:

(1) one-half shall be deposited to the credit of the operating fund of, as applicable:

(A) the school district in which the child attends school;

(B) the open-enrollment charter school the child attends; or

(C) the juvenile justice alternative education program that the child has been ordered to attend; and

(2) one-half shall be deposited to the credit of:

(A) the general fund of the county, if the complaint is filed in the justice court or the constitutional county court; or

(B) the general fund of the municipality, if the complaint is filed in municipal court.

(e) At the trial of any person charged with violating this section, the attendance records of the child may be presented in court by any authorized employee of the school district or

open-enrollment charter school, as applicable.

(f) The court in which a conviction, deferred adjudication, or deferred disposition for an offense under Subsection (a) occurs may order the defendant to attend a program for parents of students with unexcused absences that provides instruction designed to assist those parents in identifying problems that contribute to the students' unexcused absences and in developing strategies for resolving those problems if a program is available.

(g) If a parent refuses to obey a court order entered under this section, the court may punish the parent for contempt of court under Section [21.002](#), Government Code.

(h) It is an affirmative defense to prosecution for an offense under Subsection (a) that one or more of the absences required to be proven under Subsection (a) was excused by a school official or should be excused by the court. The burden is on the defendant to show by a preponderance of the evidence that the absence has been or should be excused. A decision by the court to excuse an absence for purposes of this section does not affect the ability of the school district to determine whether to excuse the absence for another purpose.

(i) In this section, "parent" includes a person standing in parental relation.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.
Amended by Acts 1997, 75th Leg., ch. 865, Sec. 2, eff. Sept. 1, 1997; Acts 1999, 76th Leg., ch. 1403, Sec. 1, eff. Sept. 1, 1999; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1504, Sec. 24, eff. Sept. 1, 2001; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1514, Sec. 3, eff. Sept. 1, 2001; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 137, Sec. 4, 5, eff. Sept. 1, 2003; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 283, Sec. 38, eff. Sept. 1, 2003; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1276, Sec. 6.001, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2011, 82nd Leg., R.S., Ch. 148 (H.B. [734](#)), Sec. 1, eff. September 1, 2011.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 935 (H.B. [2398](#)), Sec. 11, eff. September 1, 2015.

Sec. 25.095. WARNING NOTICES. (a) A school district or

open-enrollment charter school shall notify a student's parent in writing at the beginning of the school year that if the student is absent from school on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year:

(1) the student's parent is subject to prosecution under Section [25.093](#); and

(2) the student is subject to referral to a truancy court for truant conduct under Section [65.003\(a\)](#), Family Code.

(b) A school district shall notify a student's parent if the student has been absent from school, without excuse under Section [25.087](#), on three days or parts of days within a four-week period. The notice must:

(1) inform the parent that:

(A) it is the parent's duty to monitor the student's school attendance and require the student to attend school; and

(B) the student is subject to truancy prevention measures under Section [25.0915](#); and

(2) request a conference between school officials and the parent to discuss the absences.

(c) The fact that a parent did not receive a notice under Subsection (a) or (b) does not create a defense under Section [25.093](#) or under Section [65.003\(a\)](#), Family Code.

(d) In this section, "parent" includes a person standing in parental relation.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1504, Sec. 25, eff. Sept. 1,

2001; Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1514, Sec. 5, eff. Sept. 1, 2001;

Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 1276, Sec. 6.002, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 935 (H.B. [2398](#)), Sec. 12, eff. September 1, 2015.

Sec. 25.0951. SCHOOL DISTRICT COMPLAINT OR REFERRAL FOR FAILURE TO ATTEND SCHOOL. (a) If a student fails to attend school without excuse on 10 or more days or parts of days within a six-month period in the same school year, a school district shall

within 10 school days of the student's 10th absence refer the student to a truancy court for truant conduct under Section [65.003\(a\)](#), Family Code.

(b) If a student fails to attend school without excuse as specified by Subsection (a), a school district may file a complaint against the student's parent in a county, justice, or municipal court for an offense under Section [25.093](#) if the school district provides evidence of the parent's criminal negligence. In this subsection, "parent" includes a person standing in parental relation.

(c) A court shall dismiss a complaint made by a school district under Subsection (b) that:

- (1) does not comply with this section;
- (2) does not allege the elements required for the offense;
- (3) is not timely filed, unless the school district delayed the referral under Subsection (d); or
- (4) is otherwise substantively defective.

(d) Notwithstanding Subsection (a), a school district may delay a referral of a student for truant conduct, or may choose to not refer a student for truant conduct, if the school district:

- (1) is applying truancy prevention measures to the student under Section [25.0915](#); and
- (2) determines that the truancy prevention measures are succeeding and it is in the best interest of the student that a referral be delayed or not be made.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1514, Sec. 6, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Amended by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 137, Sec. 9, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2005, 79th Leg., Ch. 949 (H.B. [1575](#)), Sec. 37, eff. September 1, 2005.

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 908 (H.B. [2884](#)), Sec. 31, eff. September 1, 2007.

Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 984 (S.B. [1161](#)), Sec. 1, eff. June 15, 2007.

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 87 (S.B. [1969](#)), Sec. 7.003,

eff. September 1, 2009.

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 935 (H.B. 2398), Sec. 13, eff. September 1, 2015.

Sec. 25.0952. PROCEDURES APPLICABLE TO PARENT CONTRIBUTING TO NONATTENDANCE OFFENSE. In a proceeding based on a complaint under Section 25.093, the court shall, except as otherwise provided by this chapter, use the procedures and exercise the powers authorized by Chapter 45, Code of Criminal Procedure.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 1514, Sec. 6, eff. Sept. 1, 2001.

Amended by Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 137, Sec. 10, eff. Sept. 1, 2003; Acts 2003, 78th Leg., ch. 283, Sec. 40, eff. Sept. 1, 2003.

Amended by:

Acts 2015, 84th Leg., R.S., Ch. 935 (H.B. 2398), Sec. 14, eff. September 1, 2015.

SUBCHAPTER D. STUDENT/TEACHER RATIOS; CLASS SIZE

Sec. 25.111. STUDENT/TEACHER RATIOS. Except as provided by Section 25.112, each school district must employ a sufficient number of teachers certified under Subchapter B, Chapter 21, to maintain an average ratio of not less than one teacher for each 20 students in average daily attendance.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Sec. 25.112. CLASS SIZE. (a) Except as otherwise authorized by this section, a school district may not enroll more than 22 students in a kindergarten, first, second, third, or fourth grade class. That limitation does not apply during:

(1) any 12-week period of the school year selected by the district, in the case of a district whose average daily attendance is adjusted under Section 42.005(c); or

(2) the last 12 weeks of any school year in the case of any other district.

(b) Not later than the 30th day after the first day of the 12-week period for which a district whose average daily attendance is adjusted under Section 42.005(c) is claiming an exemption under

Subsection (a), the district shall notify the commissioner in writing that the district is claiming an exemption for the period stated in the notice.

(c) In determining the number of students to enroll in any class, a school district shall consider the subject to be taught, the teaching methodology to be used, and any need for individual instruction.

(d) On application of a school district, the commissioner may except the district from the limit in Subsection (a) if the commissioner finds the limit works an undue hardship on the district. An exception expires at the end of the school year for which it is granted.

(e) A school district seeking an exception under Subsection (d) shall notify the commissioner and apply for the exception not later than the later of:

(1) October 1; or

(2) the 30th day after the first school day the district exceeds the limit in Subsection (a).

(f) If a school district repeatedly fails to comply with this section, the commissioner may take any appropriate action authorized to be taken by the commissioner under Section 39.131.

(g) Expired.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.

Amended by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 889, Sec. 1, eff. June 14, 2001.

Amended by:

Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 1347 (S.B. 300), Sec. 2, eff. June 19, 2009.

Sec. 25.113. NOTICE OF CLASS SIZE. (a) A campus or district that is granted an exception under Section 25.112(d) from class size limits shall provide written notice of the exception to the parent of or person standing in parental relation to each student affected by the exception. The notice must be in conspicuous bold or underlined print and:

(1) specify the class for which an exception from the limit imposed by Section 25.112(a) was granted;

(2) state the number of children in the class for which the exception was granted; and

(3) be included in a regular mailing or other communication from the campus or district, such as information sent home with students.

(b) The notice required by Subsection (a) must be provided not later than the 31st day after:

(1) the first day of the school year; or

(2) the date the exception is granted, if the exception is granted after the beginning of the school year.

Added by Acts 2001, 77th Leg., ch. 889, Sec. 2, eff. June 14, 2001.

Sec. 25.114. STUDENT/TEACHER RATIOS IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES; CLASS SIZE. (a) In implementing the curriculum for physical education under Section 28.002(a)(2)(C), each school district shall establish specific objectives and goals the district intends to accomplish through the curriculum, including, to the extent practicable, student/teacher ratios that are small enough to enable the district to:

(1) carry out the purposes of and requirements for the physical education curriculum as provided under Section 28.002(d); and

(2) ensure the safety of students participating in physical education.

(b) If a district establishes a student to teacher ratio greater than 45 to 1 in a physical education class, the district shall specifically identify the manner in which the safety of the students will be maintained.

Added by Acts 2009, 81st Leg., R.S., Ch. 773 (S.B. 891), Sec. 2, eff. June 19, 2009.

SUBCHAPTER E. STUDENT EXPRESSION OF RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINTS

Sec. 25.151. STUDENT EXPRESSION. A school district shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the district treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or

other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 261 (H.B. 3678), Sec. 2, eff. June 8, 2007.

Sec. 25.152. LIMITED PUBLIC FORUM; SCHOOL DISTRICT POLICY.

(a) To ensure that the school district does not discriminate against a student's publicly stated voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, and to eliminate any actual or perceived affirmative school sponsorship or attribution to the district of a student's expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, a school district shall adopt a policy, which must include the establishment of a limited public forum for student speakers at all school events at which a student is to publicly speak. The policy regarding the limited public forum must also require the school district to:

(1) provide the forum in a manner that does not discriminate against a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject;

(2) provide a method, based on neutral criteria, for the selection of student speakers at school events and graduation ceremonies;

(3) ensure that a student speaker does not engage in obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent speech; and

(4) state, in writing, orally, or both, that the student's speech does not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position, or expression of the district.

(b) The school district disclaimer required by Subsection (a)(4) must be provided at all graduation ceremonies. The school district must also continue to provide the disclaimer at any other event in which a student speaks publicly for as long as a need exists to dispel confusion over the district's nonsponsorship of the student's speech.

(c) Student expression on an otherwise permissible subject may not be excluded from the limited public forum because the subject is expressed from a religious viewpoint.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 261 (H.B. 3678), Sec. 2, eff. June 8, 2007.

Sec. 25.153. RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION IN CLASS ASSIGNMENTS. Students may express their beliefs about religion in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from discrimination based on the religious content of their submissions. Homework and classroom assignments must be judged by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance and against other legitimate pedagogical concerns identified by the school district. Students may not be penalized or rewarded on account of the religious content of their work.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 261 (H.B. 3678), Sec. 2, eff. June 8, 2007.

Sec. 25.154. FREEDOM TO ORGANIZE RELIGIOUS GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES. Students may organize prayer groups, religious clubs, "see you at the pole" gatherings, or other religious gatherings before, during, and after school to the same extent that students are permitted to organize other noncurricular student activities and groups. Religious groups must be given the same access to school facilities for assembling as is given to other noncurricular groups without discrimination based on the religious content of the students' expression. If student groups that meet for nonreligious activities are permitted to advertise or announce meetings of the groups, the school district may not discriminate against groups that meet for prayer or other religious speech. A school district may disclaim school sponsorship of noncurricular groups and events in a manner that neither favors nor disfavors groups that meet to engage in prayer or religious speech.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 261 (H.B. 3678), Sec. 2, eff. June 8, 2007.

Sec. 25.155. ADOPTION OF POLICY. A school district shall adopt and implement a local policy regarding a limited public forum and voluntary student expression of religious viewpoints. If a school district voluntarily adopts and follows the model policy

governing voluntary religious expression in public schools as provided by Section 25.156, the district is in compliance with the provisions of this subchapter covered by the model policy.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 261 (H.B. 3678), Sec. 2, eff. June 8, 2007.

Sec. 25.156. MODEL POLICY GOVERNING VOLUNTARY RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS. In this section, "model policy" means a local policy adopted by the school district that is substantially identical to the following:

ARTICLE I

STUDENT EXPRESSION OF RELIGIOUS VIEWPOINTS

The school district shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the district treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

ARTICLE II

STUDENT SPEAKERS AT NONGRADUATION EVENTS

The school district hereby creates a limited public forum for student speakers at all school events at which a student is to publicly speak. For each speaker, the district shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion. Student speakers shall introduce:

- (1) football games;
- (2) any other athletic events designated by the district;
- (3) opening announcements and greetings for the school day; and
- (4) any additional events designated by the district, which may include, without limitation, assemblies and pep rallies.

The forum shall be limited in the manner provided by this article.

Only those students in the highest two grade levels of the school and who hold one of the following positions of honor based on

neutral criteria are eligible to use the limited public forum: student council officers, class officers of the highest grade level in the school, captains of the football team, and other students holding positions of honor as the school district may designate.

An eligible student shall be notified of the student's eligibility, and a student who wishes to participate as an introducing speaker shall submit the student's name to the student council or other designated body during an announced period of not less than three days. The announced period may be at the beginning of the school year, at the end of the preceding school year so student speakers are in place for the new year, or, if the selection process will be repeated each semester, at the beginning of each semester or at the end of the preceding semester so speakers are in place for the next semester. The names of the volunteering student speakers shall be randomly drawn until all names have been selected, and the names shall be listed in the order drawn. Each selected student will be matched chronologically to the event for which the student will be giving the introduction. Each student may speak for one week at a time for all introductions of events that week, or rotate after each speaking event, or otherwise as determined by the district. The list of student speakers shall be chronologically repeated as needed, in the same order. The district may repeat the selection process each semester rather than once a year.

The subject of the student introductions must be related to the purpose of the event and to the purpose of marking the opening of the event, honoring the occasion, the participants, and those in attendance, bringing the audience to order, and focusing the audience on the purpose of the event. The subject must be designated, a student must stay on the subject, and the student may not engage in obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent speech. The school district shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the district treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student

on an otherwise permissible subject.

For as long as there is a need to dispel confusion over the nonsponsorship of the student's speech, at each event in which a student will deliver an introduction, a disclaimer shall be stated in written or oral form, or both, such as, "The student giving the introduction for this event is a volunteering student selected on neutral criteria to introduce the event. The content of the introduction is the private expression of the student and does not reflect the endorsement, sponsorship, position, or expression of the school district."

Certain students who have attained special positions of honor in the school have traditionally addressed school audiences from time to time as a tangential component of their achieved positions of honor, such as the captains of various sports teams, student council officers, class officers, homecoming kings and queens, prom kings and queens, and the like, and have attained their positions based on neutral criteria. Nothing in this policy eliminates the continuation of the practice of having these students, irrespective of grade level, address school audiences in the normal course of their respective positions. The school district shall create a limited public forum for the speakers and shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the district treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

ARTICLE III

STUDENT SPEAKERS AT GRADUATION CEREMONIES

The school district hereby creates a limited public forum consisting of an opportunity for a student to speak to begin graduation ceremonies and another student to speak to end graduation ceremonies. For each speaker, the district shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion.

The forum shall be limited in the manner provided by this article.

Only students who are graduating and who hold one of the

following neutral criteria positions of honor shall be eligible to use the limited public forum: student council officers, class officers of the graduating class, the top three academically ranked graduates, or a shorter or longer list of student leaders as the school district may designate. A student who will otherwise have a speaking role in the graduation ceremonies is ineligible to give the opening and closing remarks. The names of the eligible volunteering students will be randomly drawn. The first name drawn will give the opening and the second name drawn will give the closing.

The topic of the opening and closing remarks must be related to the purpose of the graduation ceremony and to the purpose of marking the opening and closing of the event, honoring the occasion, the participants, and those in attendance, bringing the audience to order, and focusing the audience on the purpose of the event.

In addition to the students giving the opening and closing remarks, certain other students who have attained special positions of honor based on neutral criteria, including, without limitation, the valedictorian, will have speaking roles at graduation ceremonies. For each speaker, the school district shall set a maximum time limit reasonable and appropriate to the occasion and to the position held by the speaker. For this purpose, the district creates a limited public forum for these students to deliver the addresses. The subject of the addresses must be related to the purpose of the graduation ceremony, marking and honoring the occasion, honoring the participants and those in attendance, and the student's perspective on purpose, achievement, life, school, graduation, and looking forward to the future.

The subject must be designated for each student speaker, the student must stay on the subject, and the student may not engage in obscene, vulgar, offensively lewd, or indecent speech. The school district shall treat a student's voluntary expression of a religious viewpoint, if any, on an otherwise permissible subject in the same manner the district treats a student's voluntary expression of a secular or other viewpoint on an otherwise permissible subject and may not discriminate against the student

based on a religious viewpoint expressed by the student on an otherwise permissible subject.

A written disclaimer shall be printed in the graduation program that states, "The students who will be speaking at the graduation ceremony were selected based on neutral criteria to deliver messages of the students' own choices. The content of each student speaker's message is the private expression of the individual student and does not reflect any position or expression of the school district or the board of trustees, or the district's administration, or employees of the district, or the views of any other graduate. The contents of these messages were prepared by the student volunteers, and the district refrained from any interaction with student speakers regarding the student speakers' viewpoints on permissible subjects."

ARTICLE IV

RELIGIOUS EXPRESSION IN CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

Students may express the students' beliefs about religion in homework, artwork, and other written and oral assignments free from discrimination based on the religious content of the students' submission. Homework and classroom work shall be judged by ordinary academic standards of substance and relevance and against other legitimate pedagogical concerns identified by the school. Students may not be penalized or rewarded on account of religious content. If a teacher's assignment involves writing a poem, the work of a student who submits a poem in the form of a prayer (for example, a psalm) should be judged on the basis of academic standards, including literary quality, and not penalized or rewarded on account of its religious content.

ARTICLE V

FREEDOM TO ORGANIZE RELIGIOUS GROUPS AND ACTIVITIES

Students may organize prayer groups, religious clubs, "see you at the pole" gatherings, and other religious gatherings before, during, and after school to the same extent that students are permitted to organize other noncurricular student activities and groups. Religious groups must be given the same access to school facilities for assembling as is given to other noncurricular groups, without discrimination based on the religious content of

the group's expression. If student groups that meet for nonreligious activities are permitted to advertise or announce the groups' meetings, for example, by advertising in a student newspaper, putting up posters, making announcements on a student activities bulletin board or public address system, or handing out leaflets, school authorities may not discriminate against groups that meet for prayer or other religious speech. School authorities may disclaim sponsorship of noncurricular groups and events, provided they administer the disclaimer in a manner that does not favor or disfavor groups that meet to engage in prayer or other religious speech.

Added by Acts 2007, 80th Leg., R.S., Ch. 261 (H.B. 3678), Sec. 2, eff. June 8, 2007.

SUBCHAPTER Z. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS RELATING TO STUDENTS

Sec. 25.901. EXERCISE OF CONSTITUTIONAL RIGHT TO PRAY. A public school student has an absolute right to individually, voluntarily, and silently pray or meditate in school in a manner that does not disrupt the instructional or other activities of the school. A person may not require, encourage, or coerce a student to engage in or refrain from such prayer or meditation during any school activity.

Added by Acts 1995, 74th Leg., ch. 260, Sec. 1, eff. May 30, 1995.