

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

H.B. 3718  
By: Parker  
Public Education  
Committee Report (Unamended)

### **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

Trauma can pose a significant threat to a child's physical, behavioral, and academic development, often affecting the child's ability to engage productively in the classroom. It has been suggested that trauma-informed approaches in schools could help mitigate the impact of trauma on children, improve behavioral and academic outcomes for all students, and allow teachers to more efficiently deliver quality instruction. H.B. 3718 seeks to address this issue by providing for a trauma-informed care policy for public school districts and open-enrollment charter schools and the inclusion of trauma-informed training in existing continuing education hours for teachers.

### **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

It is the committee's opinion that rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 3 of this bill.

### **ANALYSIS**

H.B. 3718 amends the Education Code to require each public school district and open-enrollment charter school to adopt and implement a policy requiring the utilization of trauma-informed practices in each school environment. The bill requires the policy to address the following:

- using resources developed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), methods for increasing staff and parent awareness of trauma-informed care and implementation of trauma-informed practices and care by district and campus staff; and
- available counseling options for students affected by trauma or toxic stress.

H.B. 3718 requires the methods for increasing awareness and implementation of trauma-informed care under the policy to include training that:

- must be provided through an evidence-based, evidence-informed, or promising practices training program that addresses the effects of trauma and is approved by TEA and provided as part of any new employee orientation for all new district and charter school educators or coaches; and
- may be provided to existing district and charter school educators and coaches on a schedule recommended by commissioner of education rule.

H.B. 3718 requires each district and charter school to maintain records for any such training that

include the name of each staff member who participated in the training. The bill requires a district or charter school that determines that it does not have sufficient resources to provide the training to make reasonable efforts to collaborate with a community organization to provide training that meets the bill's requirements at no cost to the district or charter school. The bill requires the commissioner to adopt rules as necessary to administer the bill's provisions regarding the trauma-informed care policy.

H.B. 3718 requires each district improvement plan to include provisions for the bill's trauma-informed care policy. The bill revises the provision authorizing continuing education requirements for a classroom teacher to include certain instruction relating to students affected by grief and trauma as follows:

- by requiring such continuing education to include the instruction;
- by including the instruction in the portion of the statutorily prescribed continuing education requirements that are required every five years; and
- by requiring the instruction to be a commissioner-approved training program that complies with the bill's other requirements for trauma-informed care training.

H.B. 3718 applies beginning with the 2019-2020 school year.

**EFFECTIVE DATE**

On passage, or, if the bill does not receive the necessary vote, September 1, 2019.