

- SUBJECT:** Authorizing charter schools to employ certain security officers
- COMMITTEE:** Public Education — favorable, without amendment
- VOTE:** 10 ayes — Huberty, Bernal, Allison, Ashby, K. Bell, M. González, K. King, Meyer, Talarico, VanDeaver
- 1 nay — Allen
- 2 absent — Dutton, Sanford
- SENATE VOTE:** On final passage, April 11 — 31-0, On Local and Uncontested Calendar
- WITNESSES:** For — None
- Against — None
- On — (*Registered, but did not testify*: Eric Marin, Texas Education Agency)
- BACKGROUND:** Education Code sec. 37.081 authorizes the board of trustees of a school district to employ security personnel and to commission peace officers. Commissioned peace officers are authorized to carry a weapon and hold the same powers, privileges, and immunities of peace officers. School district peace officers are required to perform law enforcement duties for the school district as determined by the board of trustees. Their duties include protecting the safety and welfare of any person in the jurisdiction of the peace officer and the property of the school district.
- Some have suggested that open-enrollment charter schools be given similar authority.
- DIGEST:** SB 372 would grant the governing body of an open-enrollment charter school the power to employ security personnel and commission peace officers in the same manner as a board of trustees of a school district. The governing body also could enter into a memorandum of understanding

with a local law enforcement agency to assign a school resource officer to the school.

The bill would establish that a reference in law to a peace officer would include a peace officer commissioned by an open-enrollment charter school and that a charter school peace officer would have the same powers, duties, and immunities as a peace officer commissioned by a public school district.

This bill would take immediate effect if finally passed by a two-thirds record vote of the membership of each house. Otherwise, it would take effect September 1, 2019.