

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 158
By: Ellis
Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The purpose of S.B. 158 is to notify parents of public school students and others in parental relation to students if the public school attended by those students does not have a full-time school nurse assigned to the campus for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year.

According to the Texas Education Agency, for the 2007-2008 school year, there were 8,195 campuses in Texas, but the full-time equivalent count for nurses working in public schools was only about 5,612. This left more than 2,583 campuses without a full-time school nurse. There is an average of 0.7 nurses per campus and 832 students per nurse. Federal guidelines recommend that schools employ one nurse for every 750 healthy students.

Many parents do not realize that a school nurse listed in a school's personnel directory is only a part-time nurse, and there is usually no indication of the days and hours that the nurse is assigned to be at a campus.

As proposed, S.B. 158 would require school principals to provide written notice to parents not later than the 30th instructional day after the first day that the school does not have a full-time school nurse assigned to the campus.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 38, Education Code, by adding Section 38.021, as follows:

Sec. 38.021. PARENTAL NOTIFICATION CONCERNING SCHOOL NURSES. (a) Requires that a public school that does not have a full-time school nurse assigned to the campus for more than 30 consecutive instructional days during the same school year provide written notice of the absence of a nurse to the parent of or other person standing in parental relation to each student enrolled in the school.

(b) Requires the principal of the school to provide the notice required by Subsection (a) not later than the 30th instructional day after the first day the school does not have a full-time school nurse assigned to the campus.

(c) Requires the school to make a good faith effort to ensure that the notice required by this section is provided in a bilingual form to any parent or other person standing in parental relation whose primary language is not English and to retain a copy of any notice provided under this section.

SECTION 2. Makes application of this Act prospective to the 2009-2010 school year.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.