

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
86R32923 JES-D

C.S.H.B. 1026
By: Bohac; Allison (Hughes)
Education
5/14/2019
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Section 29.906, Education Code, allows school districts to provide on a voluntary basis a character education program that teaches positive character traits such as courage, trustworthiness, integrity, respect and courtesy, responsibility, fairness, caring, good citizenship, and school pride. This well-conceived voluntary course is worthy of general application in public schools, and H.B. 1026 directs the State Board of Education (SBOE) to integrate this character curriculum into the essential knowledge and skills for public school students.

Under the bill, SBOE would prepare and make available online a report identifying the ways in which positive character traits have been integrated into the essential knowledge and skills. Each public school would adopt a character education program and submit the program annually to the Texas Education Agency. Schools would be recognized as "Character Plus Schools" if they have a character education program that meets the requirements of the bill and demonstrates a correlation between the character program, increased attendance, and decreased disciplinary incidents. (Original Author's/Sponsor's Statement of Intent)

C.S.H.B. 1026 amends current law relating to instruction in positive character traits in public schools.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the State Board of Education in SECTION 2 (Section 29.906, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends the heading to Section 29.906, Education Code, to read as follows:

Sec. 29.906. CHARACTER TRAITS INSTRUCTION.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 29.906, by amending Subsections (a), (b), and (c) and adding Subsection (g), as follows:

(a) Requires the State Board of Education (SBOE) to integrate positive character traits into the essential knowledge and skills adopted for kindergarten through grade 12, as appropriate. Deletes existing text authorizing a school district to provide a character education program.

(b) Makes nonsubstantive changes. Requires SBOE to include the following positive character traits, rather than requiring a character education program under this section to stress positive character tracts, such as:

(1) redesignates existing Paragraphs (A)-(I) as Subdivisions (1)-(9);

(2)-(7) makes no further changes to these subdivisions;

(8)-(9) makes nonsubstantive changes to these subdivisions; and

(10) gratitude.

Deletes text requiring a character education program to use integrated teaching strategies and be age appropriate.

(c) Requires each school district and open-enrollment charter school to adopt a character education program that includes the positive character traits listed in Subsection (b).

(g) Authorizes SBOE to adopt rules as necessary to implement this section.

SECTION 3. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2019–2020 school year.

SECTION 4. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2019.