



85th Texas Legislature

Foster Care & Related Updates



School gave me more than just an education.

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Please contact me with questions, concerns, ideas and input. We greatly value your insights and feedback!

Foster Care

HB 2537


Requirement for public schools to provide information to certain students on the availability of financial assistance for postsecondary education

Effective: June 9, 2017

Counselors must provide students with information regarding the availability of education and training vouchers and tuition and fee waivers to attend a Texas institution of higher education (IHE), including enrollment in dual credit courses, for students who are or were previously in the conservatorship of the Department of Family and Protective Services.

Currently, school counselors are required to provide the following information to students during the first year they are enrolled at the high school level and again during each year of a student's enrollment at the high school level:

- The importance of postsecondary education
- The advantages of earning an endorsement and performance acknowledgment and completing the distinguished level of achievement under the Foundation High School Program
- The disadvantages of taking courses to prepare for a high school equivalency examination relative to the benefits of taking courses leading to a high school diploma
- Financial aid eligibility
- Instruction on how to apply for financial aid
- The state center for financial aid information
- The rules for automatic admission to institutions of higher education
- Eligibility and requirements for the TEXAS Grant
- Availability of programs for students to earn college credit, including advanced placement (AP), dual credit, joint high school
- College credit, and international baccalaureate programs



HB 928


Assisting certain children who are in foster care or who have been adopted in the process of applying to institutions of higher education

Effective: June 1, 2017

An employee of the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) who is a member of a community resource coordination group must inform the group about the tuition and fee waivers for institutions of higher education (IHEs) that are available to eligible children in foster care.

Each school district, in coordination with DFPS, must facilitate the transition to an IHE of each child enrolled in the district who is eligible for a tuition and fee waiver, and who is likely to be in the conservatorship of DFPS on the day preceding the child's 18th birthday by doing the following:

- Assisting the child with the completion of any applications for admission or for financial aid
- Arranging and accompanying the child on campus visits
- Assisting the child in researching and applying for private or institution-sponsored scholarships
- Identifying whether the child is a candidate for appointment to a military academy
- Assisting the child in registering and preparing for college entrance examinations, including, subject to the availability of funds, arranging for the payment of any examination fees by DFPS
- Coordinating contact between the child and a liaison officer for students who were formerly in DFPS conservatorship



SB 1220

Ensuring continuity of education and access to higher education, career information, and skills certification for foster care youth and former foster care youth

Effective: June 1, 2017

TEA must assist transition of students who are homeless or in substitute care from one school to another by

- 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; and
- providing comparable services to a student who was receiving special education services at the previous school during the referral process or until the new school develops an individualized education program for the student.

The commissioner is permitted to establish rules to facilitate the transition between schools of children who are homeless or in substitute care.



SB 1220

Career Development and Education Program

The Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) must collaborate with local workforce development boards, foster care transition centers, community and technical colleges, schools, and any other appropriate workforce industry resources to create a program that

- assists foster care youth and former foster care youth in obtaining a high school diploma or a high school equivalency certificate and industry certifications that are necessary for occupations that are in high demand;
- provides career guidance to foster care youth and former foster care youth; and
- informs foster care youth and former foster care youth about the tuition and fee waivers for institutions of higher education that are available.

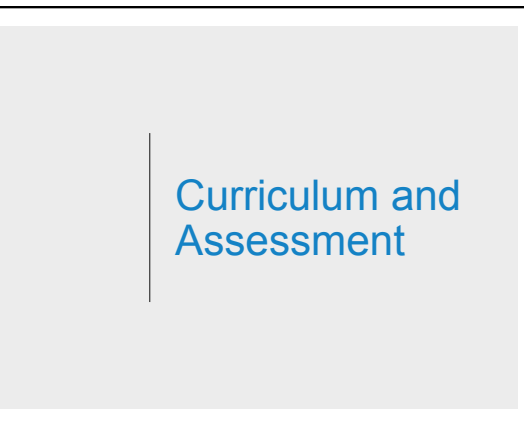
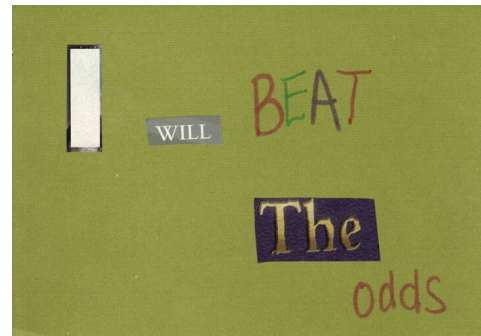
Not later than September 1, 2018, DFPS, in collaboration with TEA, must produce and submit to the governor and the legislature a report on the program. The report must include recommendations for legislative or other action to further develop the program.



HB1556

Authorizes a foster parent, or surrogate parent, the right to make decisions regarding their foster child's education, unless prohibited from doing so by the court.

Lists required duties and training for all school district appointed surrogate parents and foster parents for children receiving special education services.



HB 3706

Certain alternative education programs designed to address workforce development needs for at risk students

Effective: June 15, 2017

Applies beginning with the 2017-2018 school year

- Currently, a school district may use a private or public community-based dropout recovery education program to provide alternative education programs for students at risk of dropping out of school.
- The program may now be offered at a campus or through the use of an Internet online program that leads to a high school diploma and prepares the student to enter the workforce.
- A school district that meets application requirements for an optional flexible school day program may allow a student to enroll in a dropout recovery program in which courses are conducted online.



HB 3706

An Internet online dropout recovery education program must do all of the following:

- Include as a part of its curriculum credentials, certifications, or other course offerings that relate directly to employment opportunities in the state
- Employ as faculty and administrators persons with baccalaureate or advanced degrees
- Provide an academic coach and local advocate for each student
- Use an individual learning plan to monitor each student's progress
- Establish satisfactory requirements for the monthly progress of students according to standards set by the commissioner
- Provide a monthly report to the student's school district regarding the student's progress
- Perform satisfactorily according to performance indicators and accountability standards adopted for alternative education programs by the commissioner
- Comply with public education laws and rules except as otherwise provided by the authorizing statute

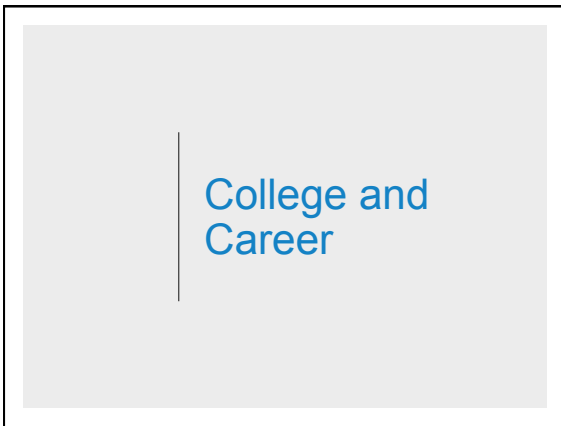


SB 463

Use of individual graduation committees to satisfy certain public high school graduation requirements

Effective: June 9, 2017

- TEC §28.0258 allows eligible students who have met curriculum requirements for graduation but who have not yet performed satisfactorily on no more than two of the required state end-of-course assessments to be considered by an individual graduation committee for graduation under certain circumstances. This option would have expired on September 1, 2017.
- The option now expires September 1, 2019.



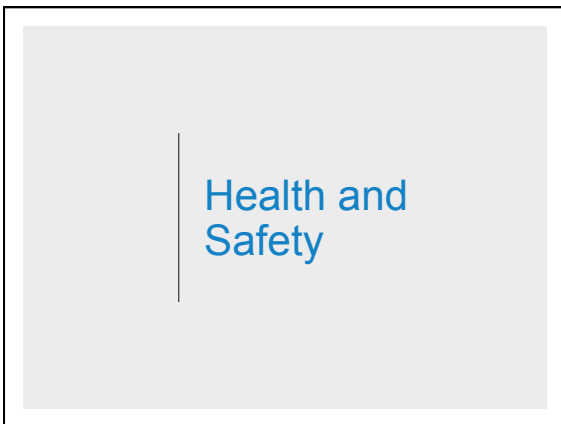
HB 1638

Statewide goals for dual credit programs provided by school districts

Effective: May 23, 2017

Not later than August 31, 2018, TEA and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board must jointly develop statewide goals for dual credit programs, including early college high school programs, CTE dual credit programs, and joint high school and college credit programs to provide uniform standards for evaluating those programs. The goals must address, at a minimum the following:

- A dual credit program's achievement of enrollment in and acceleration through postsecondary education
- Performance in college-level coursework
- The development of an effective bridge between secondary and postsecondary education in the state



SB 2039

Development of a program and training for public schools on the prevention of sexual abuse and sex trafficking and participation by the human trafficking prevention task force in that development

Effective: June 12, 2017

Applies beginning with the 2017-2018 school year.

- The commissioner, in cooperation with the human trafficking prevention task force and any other persons the commissioner considers appropriate, must develop one or more sexual abuse and sex trafficking instructional modules that a school district may use in the district's health curriculum.
- The module or modules must emphasize compassion for victims of sexual abuse or sex trafficking and the creation of a positive reentry experience for survivors of sexual abuse or sex trafficking into schools.



SB 2039

The modules may include the following:

- Information on the different forms of sexual abuse and assault, sex trafficking, and risk factors for sex trafficking
- The procedures for reporting sexual abuse and sex trafficking or suspected sexual abuse or sex trafficking
- Strategies for sexual abuse and assault prevention and overcoming peer pressure
- Information on establishing healthy boundaries for relationships, recognizing potentially abusive or harmful relationships, and avoiding high-risk activities



Texas CASA 85th Legislative Video Updates:

Changes to Educational Services for Texas Foster Youth:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nv9Xh4yFY-U&list=PLh_S653NgjSjkt7b_FKCZrrAW1mCoblBq&index=3

Major Changes to Child Protection Law:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9Kje7ZF4USU&list=PLh_S653NgjSjkt7b_FKCZrrAW1mCoblBq&index=8

Expanding Texas Foster Care Capacity:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cNo8UQqrzio&list=PLh_S653NgjSjkt7b_FKCZrrAW1mCoblBq&index=4

Advances in Transitioning Youth Policy:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2kkAUuT_FGk&list=PLh_S653NgjSjkt7b_FKCZrrAW1mCoblBq&index=2



New Foster Care & Education Resources:

NEW -

[Information Sharing Between Child Welfare and Schools: Maintaining Privacy and Promoting Educational Success \(PDF\)](#)

NEW -

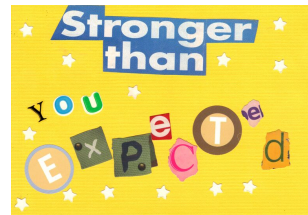
[Transition Planning Guide for Students in Foster Care Receiving Special Education Services \(PDF\)](#)

NEW - [Texas Higher Education Foster Care Liaisons](#)



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Committed to Transforming the Education outcomes of students experiencing foster care!

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