

CHAPTER 898

H.B. No. 1304

An Act relating to computers and computer-related equipment for public schools.

Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas:

SECTION 1. Title 2, Education Code, is amended by adding Chapter 14 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 14. COMPUTERS AND COMPUTER-RELATED EQUIPMENT

SUBCHAPTER A. COMPUTER SOFTWARE ADVISORY GROUP

Sec. 14.001. ESTABLISHMENT. The computer software advisory group is established.

Sec. 14.002. COMPOSITION AND APPOINTMENT. (a) The group is composed of one member appointed from each State Board of Education district.

(b) Annually at a meeting of the State Board of Education held on a date specified by the board, the commissioner of education shall recommend to the board for appointment to the group one person from each district.

(c) The board shall approve or reject each nominee. If a person is rejected, the commissioner of education shall nominate another person from the same district until the position from each district is filled.

Sec. 14.003. ELIGIBILITY. To be eligible for appointment to the group, a person must be a classroom teacher or other school district employee with experience in using computers for instructional purposes in the classroom.

Sec. 14.004. POWERS AND DUTIES OF GROUP. The group shall:

(1) develop and implement a system under which the group continuously evaluates computer software for use in public school classrooms;

(2) make recommendations to the board concerning the computer software that should be approved and acquired for use in the classroom; and

(3) cooperate with designers and publishers of computer software in developing and making available computer software suited to classroom use.

[Sections 14.005-14.020 reserved for expansion]

SUBCHAPTER B. POWERS AND DUTIES OF STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION RELATING TO ELECTRONIC INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNOLOGY AND COMPUTER-RELATED EQUIPMENT

Sec. 14.021. DEVELOPMENT OF LONG-RANGE PLAN. (a) The State Board of Education shall develop a long-range plan for:

(1) using technology-based systems for instructional purposes in the classroom;

(2) evaluating, developing, and acquiring computer software for use in the classroom; and

(3) fostering computer literacy among public school students.

(b) The board shall update as necessary the plan developed under Subsection (a) of this section.

Sec. 14.022. APPROVAL OF SOFTWARE BY BOARD. (a) To ensure that current computer software is available for use in the classroom, the board shall develop and implement a cycle for approving computer software for use in the classroom. The cycle may not exceed one year.

(b) The board shall base its approval of software for use in the classroom on recommendations made by the computer software advisory group.

(c) *The board shall publish and make available to each school district a list and a description of all computer software currently approved by the board for acquisition for use in the classroom.*

Sec. 14.023. APPROVAL NOT REQUIRED. A school district is not required by this subchapter to acquire only computer software for classroom use that has been approved by the board.

Sec. 14.024. BOARD AUTHORITY TO CONTRACT. (a) The board may contract with developers of computer software to supply software for use in the classroom by school districts throughout this state.

(b) A contract for computer software may provide for the developer of the software to update over a specified period of time software acquired under the contract.

Sec. 14.025. DISTRIBUTION. The board may provide for acquiring software and distributing the software to school districts throughout the state or for school districts to acquire their own software.

Sec. 14.026. STATEWIDE AVAILABILITY. The board shall take reasonable action to ensure that all school districts in this state, regardless of a district's economic situation, have equal access to software approved or contracted for by the board.

SECTION 2. The importance of this legislation and the crowded condition of the calendars in both houses create an emergency and an imperative public necessity that the constitutional rule requiring bills to be read on three several days in each house be suspended, and this rule is hereby suspended, and that this Act take effect and be in force from and after its passage, and it is so enacted.

Passed by the House on May 17, 1985, by a non-record vote; House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 1304 on May 27, 1985, by a non-record vote; passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 26, 1985, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Approved: June 15, 1985

Effective: August 26, 1985