

Senate Bill (SB) 57

Sen. Judith Zaffirini



Emergency Preparedness for Students with Disabilities

SB 57 would require a student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 plan to address any necessary accommodations that the student will need during mandatory school drills for a disaster or emergency situation. It would also require the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to establish guidelines for the consideration and recommendations of such accommodations.



While school districts are currently required to consider the needs of individuals with disabilities in their emergency operation plans, those plans might not include individualized accommodations matching a student's particular disability.



IEPs and Section 504 plans are developed by collaborative teams of school staff, related service providers, parents, and others to identify specific needs of students with disabilities and ensure they have the support and accommodations necessary to participate in their learning environment.



In 2023, supporters of similar legislation included the Arc of Texas, Coalition of Texans with Disabilities, Texas Association of School Boards, Texas Classroom Teachers Association, and Texas Parent to Parent.

"Schools are required to carry out six different types of emergency drills a year. Each of these emergency scenarios requires a specific response to ensure the safety of students. Therefore, the IEP team should coordinate a plan appropriate for each scenario given the needs of each student with a disability."

Public comment to the House Select Committee on Youth Health and Safety, March 2023

