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## CALALLEN INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT BOARD OF TRUSTEES AGENDA ITEM

**MEETING DATE:** April 20, 2026

**AGENDA ITEM TITLE:** Discuss and make determination regarding District’s ability to purchase School Buses equipped with three-point seat belts in compliance with Senate Bill 546 and Texas Transportation Code §547.701(e)(1) and (f)

**PRESENTER:** Kelsey Ramos, Assistant Superintendent of Finance & Operations

- |  |                                       |  |
|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Presentation/Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Consent      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Action |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Informational Report        | <input type="checkbox"/> Old Business | <input type="checkbox"/> Discussion Only   |

**SUMMARY:** Senate Bill 546, passed during the 89th Texas Legislature, strengthens standards for school buses transporting students in Texas. The bill amends Texas Transportation Code §547.701, with the addition of subsection (f), requiring that all school buses operated by or contracted for use by a school district be equipped with three-point seat belts for every passenger, including the driver. Additionally, the board is responsible for determining whether the district’s budget can support purchasing buses equipped with three-point seat belts, as required by Texas Transportation Code §547.701(e)(1). As part of this legislation, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) will gather data from each school district regarding their current bus fleet and the estimated cost to retrofit those buses with three-point seat belts.

### TEA SB 546 Reporting on School Bus Seat Belt Costs

Step 1: Board Determines Financial Feasibility - The board must first decide whether purchasing buses equipped with 3-point seat belts fits within the district’s budget and plan for the purchase.

### Summary of District Bus Fleet & Seat Belts

- Number of district owned school buses: 29
- Fully equipped with 3-point seat belts for drivers: 29
- Fully equipped with passenger 3-point (lap) seat belts: 16
- Fully equipped with passenger 2-point (lap) seat belts: 1
- Fully equipped with combination of passenger seat belts: 3
- No passenger seat belts: 9

## **Financial Feasibility Information**

District Administration estimates the current bus replacement cost to be \$170,000 per bus. To replace the 13 buses not in compliance with passenger three-point seat belts as required by Texas Transportation Code §547.701(f) would cost the district approximately \$2,210,000.

The 2025-26 adopted budget, nor board approved budget amendment #1 and budget amendment #2, allocate monies for the purchase of new buses.

Additionally, spending \$2,210,000 of fund balance would reduce the estimated ending fund balance from \$14,850,622 to \$12,640,622. Board Policy CE (Local) requires the district to maintain a total fund balance in the general operating fund equal to or exceeding three months of the total annual operating expenditures, or \$11,816,919 currently.

Step 2: Seat Belt Inventory - The district shall identify the number of buses in the fleet that fall into each category: fully equipped with 3-point seat belts, equipped only with 2-point lap belts, mix of 3-point and lap belts, some seats with 3-point seat belts, and other with no seat belts.

### ***Summary of District Bus Fleet & Seat Belts***

- ***Fully equipped with 3-point seat belts: 16***
- ***Equipped only with lap belts (2-point): 1***
- ***No passenger seat belts: 9***
- ***Mix of 3-point and lap belts: 3***
- ***Some seats with 3-point, others with no seat belts: 0***
- ***Some seats with lap belts, others with no seat belts: 0***

Step 2a: Retrofit Cost Estimate - The district shall request an itemized estimate to retrofit buses that require installation of 3-point seat belts to comply with Texas Transportation Code §547.701 (f). Additionally, determine whether any buses remain covered by a manufacturer or other warranty, and confirm if installing 3-point seat belts would void that warranty.

***Summary of Retrofit Cost Estimate: \$536,966.48***

***Number of buses affected if warranty voided: 0***

Step 2b: Cost Estimate (Contracted Bus Services) - The district shall confirm that the bus service contract explicitly requires all buses used for student transportation to have every seat equipped with 3-point seat belts.

***Not Applicable to Calallen ISD***

Step 3: Present to Board – In a public board meeting, the district shall present:

- The number of buses operated by or contracted for use by the district that:
  - Are not equipped with seat belts
  - Are equipped with only 2-point seat belts
  - Are equipped with 3-point seat belts
- The estimated cost to equip all buses with 3-point seat belts

***All required information has been provided in Step 2, 2a, and 3 above.***

Step 4: Report to Agency – The district shall report counts, costs, and board documentation in Sentinel by May 30, 2026.

***District Administration will submit timely after the board meeting.***

**DISTRICT PRIORITIES:**

PRIORITY 1: Building and Sustaining a Culture of Performance and Preparedness for Life Beyond High School	1.4 Student Safety and Well-Being
PRIORITY 2: Building and Sustaining a Culture of Faculty and Staff Commitment	N/A
PRIORITY 3: Increasing Community Engagement and Commitment	N/A
PRIORITY 4: Ensuring Effective and Efficient Operations	4.1 Strong Financial Stewardship 4.3 Safety and Security

**RECOMMENDATION:** Administration recommends the approve the motion language as presented.

**MOTION LANGUAGE:**  No specific language required.

***I move that the Board determine, in accordance with Texas Transportation Code §547.701(e)(1), as amended by Senate Bill 546 of the 89th Texas Legislature, that the District does not have the financial feasibility in the District's budget to support the purchase of thirteen (13) new school buses equipped with 3-point seat belts.***

**FUNDING SOURCE AND FINANCIAL IMPACT:**  Not Applicable