

DATE:	October 23, 2025
SUBJECT:	SB 546: Required Reporting on School Bus Seat Belt Costs
CATEGORY:	School Safety and Security
NEXT STEPS:	Obtain cost information and complete required reporting

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) is committed to supporting school systems in their efforts to improve safety and security for students, staff, and visitors. This To the Administrator Addressed (TAA) communication provides information about the mandated information collection and reporting.

Overview

Not later than the end of the 2025-2026 school year, [Senate Bill 546](#) (89th Regular Legislative Session) requires school systems that make a budget limitation determination under [Transportation Code, §547.701](#)(e)(1), to submit to TEA the estimated cost to equip each bus operated by and/or contracted for use by the district with three-point seat belts.

Reporting in Sentinel

TEA will be launching estimated cost reporting through Sentinel starting on Tuesday, November 11, 2025. Reporting will conclude at 11:59 p.m. on Friday, May 29, 2026. School systems are required to submit the information requested, with supporting documentation.

In addition to required reporting to TEA, if a school system board has determined that its budget does not permit the district to purchase or contract buses that are equipped with three-point seat belts (required in [Transportation Code, §547.701](#)), the following must be presented in a public meeting:

- The number of buses operated by or contracted for use by the school system that are not equipped with seat belts, the number that are equipped with two-point seat belts, and the number that are equipped with three-point seat belts; and
- The estimated cost to equip each bus operated by and/or contracted for use by the school system with three-point seat belts

As part of the required estimated cost reporting, **school systems will be able to participate in a grant opportunity related to seat belt installation**. Details pertaining to the grant will be the subject of a future TAA.

Guidance and Resources

TEA has created a [Guidebook for SB546 Reporting on School Seat Belt Costs](#) to help school systems prepare for the required reporting. This guidebook includes a preparation guide, data collection example, form logic chart and program contact information.

To further support school systems with the reporting process, TEA will be hosting a series of Office Hours sessions throughout the reporting period. **Office Hours attendance is optional.**

- October 30, 2025, 10:00 a.m. CST
- November 6, 2025, 10:00 a.m. CST
- November 13, 2025, 10:00 a.m. CST
- November 20, 2025, 10:00 a.m. CST
- February 5, 2026, 10:00 a.m. CST
- February 26, 2026, 10:00 a.m. CST
- April 9, 2026, 10:00 a.m. CST
- April 16, 2026, 10:00 a.m. CST
- April 23, 2026, 10:00 a.m. CST
- April 30, 2026, 10:00 a.m. CST

Registration information will be posted in Sentinel and is available here: [Zoom Registration](#)

Ensuring Sentinel Access

The Bus Reporting Module is available in Sentinel under LEA Modules. It is important that all relevant personnel are aware of the required reporting procedures and understand how to submit information in Sentinel correctly.

As part of the collection in Sentinel, school systems will be required to acknowledge that appropriate personnel have received the access and information necessary to complete the data collection.

Superintendents or designated staff should brief the Board and confirm that the appropriate team members have access to Sentinel. Transportation Directors may need to conduct student counts and gather cost estimates. To help share this information with those who need it, the agency has provided convenient options for distributing these updates.

Share with
Superintendent

Share with
Transportation Director

Share this TAA

Questions

If you have questions about the required reporting, please email safeschools@tea.texas.gov.