

Update on Senate Bill 546

1. Background:

Texas Senate Bill 546 (89th Legislature) mandates that school buses operated or contracted by school districts be equipped with three-point seat belts for every passenger and the driver by September 1, 2029, while requiring districts unable to meet this standard due to budget constraints to report their compliance status and estimated costs to the Texas Education Agency by the end of the 2025-2026 school year. Currently, SWISD has 66 buses out of compliance without three-point seat belts and seventy-five buses equipped with three-point seat belts.

2. Process:

The purpose of the Agenda Item is both informational and for approval to retrofit existing school buses in our current fleet with three-point seat belts to meet Senate Bill 546 requirements by September 1, 2029

3. Fiscal Impact:

Based on the one hundred forty-one buses in SWISD bus fleet, twenty-one buses meet the eligibility criteria for seatbelt retrofit. The estimated cost to retrofit 21 buses with three-point seat belts to meet SB 546 by September 1, 2029, is \$840,000. Upon completion of retrofit, approximately forty-five buses will be out of compliance and are not eligible for retrofit. After reviewing the remaining fleet not eligible for retrofit, the Transportation department has already purchased 19 school buses this school year. These buses will arrive between June 2026 and November 2026. To replace the out of compliance buses in order to meet SB 546 by September 1, 2029.

4. Recommendation:

N/A

5. Required:

N/A.