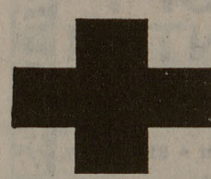


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Proposal to limit school paperwork signed into law

AUSTIN (AP) — Saying the job of teachers is to teach and not fill out forms, Gov. Mark White signed into law Monday a bill designed to reduce classroom paperwork.

Crickets begin mating frenzy by thousands

AUSTIN (AP) — By the hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, the crickets crept out of hiding about the first of September and have begun their annual mating frenzy.

Cousins of the lowly cockroach, crickets will reproduce as many as three times before the first frost, and a female will lay 150 to 400 eggs, experts say.

While crickets are harmless to humans, their numbers make them a nuisance. And when they die, there's another problem.

Bob Jenkins, who directs maintenance for the Capitol complex, which annually is overwhelmed with the insects, said, "We sweep up thousands of them every morning. The problem we're having this year is it's humid and wet, and they smell."

to an exercise in paper-pushing," White said before putting his signature on the measure. "It's the paperwork that needs to be reduced. That's the victory we will achieve today."

The bill, passed during the Legislature's special session, takes effect immediately.

It directs the State Board of Education to reduce its paperwork requirements and instructs school districts to reduce the amount of paperwork required of teachers.

Under the legislation, teachers would be required only to fill out paperwork relating to students' grades, textbooks, lesson plans and attendance, lawmakers said.

"I can't tell you how many teachers I have heard from — up in the thousands — who have said that the paperwork burden is one of the greatest daily frustrations in the profession," White said.

Lawmakers and officials of teacher organizations hailed the bill's signing.

Senate Education Committee Chairman Carl Parker, D-Port Arthur, said one advantage of the new law is that it prohibits unnecessary paperwork from being imposed.

"The state does not require any more paperwork than is absolutely necessary to account for students and deliver their grades and report their progress," Parker said.

John Cole, president of the Texas Federation of Teachers, said the new law will give teachers "the tools to stem this flow of paper."

Beaumont teacher opposes drug testing

BEAUMONT (AP) — A proposed program calling for mandatory drug testing of all Beaumont Independent School District employees and students is unconstitutional, those opposing the program say.

"I don't do drugs or like drugs," said Marie Easley, an eighth-grade teacher. "I won't agree to be tested. If it ever came down to it, I would be willing to become a test case to fight it in court."

"It's not going to happen," said Easley, who is secretary of the Beaumont Teachers Association. "There's no reason for teachers to get upset, because it's not legal," she said.

Last week, Superintendent Mike Taylor proposed the program calling for periodic urine tests for 10,000 students in the sixth through

12th grades and 2,400 employees, including himself, school trustees and administrators.

In making the announcement, Taylor said Beaumont's schools have no more of a drug problem than other schools.

According to the program, those who test positive for drugs will be retested and then put into special counseling programs. Those not rehabilitated will be fired or expelled, he said.

Leon Stertz, president of the Beaumont chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, said his group is prepared to challenge the program in court. He said mandatory testing of people not suspected of taking drugs violates the U.S. Constitution.

Drug-related arrests on rise in Houston school districts

HOUSTON (AP) — The number of drug-related arrests at Houston schools more than doubled during the first six months of the 1985-86 school year, Houston Independent School District records show.

But Superintendent Joan Raymond said the increase is evidence of the heightened public awareness of the drug problem.

"In some ways this shows the district is taking a far more active, protective role," Raymond said. "We're

more aware of it (the drug problem)."

The superintendent said that a more informed public has made it easier for teachers and school officials to recognize students who have drug problems.

From September through February, 97 people were arrested by school district security personnel for drug- and alcohol-related offenses — up from 38 arrests during the previous year.

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