

NAVIGATING SENATE BILL 13:

A Comprehensive Look at SB 13 and Bookmarked's OnShelf Solution

This brochure provides Texas school districts and Education Service Centers with essential information on navigating the complexities of Senate Bill 13.

Learn about the key requirements of this new law and how Bookmarked's OnShelf platform offers a timely and critical solution to support your compliance efforts and streamline library operations.

Summary of Senate Bill 13

Senate Bill 13 primarily focuses on the regulation of school district library materials and catalogs, parental rights regarding these materials, and the establishment of local school library advisory councils.

Key provisions of the bill include:

Parental Access and Restrictions:

It amends the Education Code to grant parents access to their child's school records, specifically including library materials. Parents are also given the right to restrict their child's access to certain materials and receive records of their child's library usage

Content Standards:

The bill defines terms like "harmful material," "indecent content," "library material," and "profane content." It establishes standards for school library collections, explicitly prohibiting certain types of content.

Local School Library Advisory Councils:

The legislation mandates the creation of these councils to ensure community values are reflected in library catalogs. These councils will advise on the acquisition and removal of library materials, with their recommendations being considered by the board of trustees.

Acquisition and Challenge Process:

The bill details the procedures for acquiring new library materials and for challenging existing materials..

Policy and Standards:

The Texas Education Agency is required to adopt a model policy for library material acquisition, which school districts must then adopt. Additionally, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission must adopt standards for school library collection development.

The Act is scheduled to begin with the 2025-2026 school year and will take effect immediately if it passes with a two-thirds vote in each house, or on September 1, 2025, otherwise.



School District Compliance Actions for SB 13

To help districts navigate Senate Bill 13, here's a breakdown of the key steps and activities they'll need to consider for compliance

Adopt and Implement Policies & Standards

- **Adopt a Model Policy:** School districts must adopt a model policy for the acquisition of library materials, as developed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA).
- **Comply with Collection Development Standards:** School districts must adhere to standards for school library collection development adopted by the Texas State Library and Archives Commission.
- **Prohibit Certain Content:** Implement policies to prohibit "harmful material," "indecent content," and "profane content" in school library collections, as defined by the bill.

Establish and Utilize Local School Library Advisory Councils

- **Create Councils:** Each school district must establish local school library advisory councils.
- **Reflect Community Values:** Ensure these councils are structured to reflect community values in their recommendations for library catalogs.
- **Consider Recommendations:** The board of trustees must consider the recommendations made by these advisory councils regarding the acquisition and removal of library materials.

Manage Library Material Acquisition and Challenges

- **Implement Acquisition Process:** Follow the detailed acquisition process outlined in the bill for all new library materials.
- **Implement Challenge Process:** Establish and follow a defined process for challenging existing library materials within the school district.

Facilitate Parental Rights and Access

- **Provide Catalog Access:** Ensure parents have access to their child's school library catalog.
- **Enable Restriction Requests:** Allow parents to request and implement restrictions on their child's access to specific library materials.
- **Provide Usage Records:** Furnish parents with records of their child's library usage upon request.
- **Grant Access to Records:** Ensure parents have access to their child's school records, specifically those pertaining to library materials obtained from the school library.

School District Compliance Actions for SB 13

Training and Awareness

While not explicitly stated as a direct "action," implied compliance would require training staff (librarians, administrators) on the new definitions of prohibited content, the new acquisition and challenge processes, and how to facilitate parental access and restriction requests

Funding Update

Cunningham amendment to C.S.S.B. 13 is as follows: (d) Notwithstanding Section 31.0211(c), a school district or open-enrollment charter school may use funds from the district's or school's instructional materials and technology allotment under Section 31.0211 for costs associated with complying with this section



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Navigating the complexities introduced by SB 13 presents significant challenges for Texas school districts. Implementing the mandated policy updates, establishing and utilizing advisory councils, revising acquisition and challenge processes with strict timelines, and facilitating expanded parental rights demand effective tools and strategic support. This is where a specialized, Texas-based technology partner can be invaluable in providing the necessary tools and expertise.

Bookmarked is positioned to help districts and regions navigate this new era by offering practical, technology-driven solutions grounded in an understanding of the Texas educational landscape. Bookmarked, a Texas-based company, was co-founded by a Texas superintendent, providing a deep understanding of Texas districts' needs. This expertise is critical for interpreting and addressing the specific requirements of Texas legislation like SB 13.

Bookmarked's OnShelf platform is an AI-powered solution, informed by feedback from librarians and superintendents, that provides data-driven insights to automate, streamline, and safeguard library operations within K-12 schools.

It provides capabilities that support SB 13 in the following areas:

Supporting Policy & Standards Compliance

OnShelf aggregates challenged and banned data nationally on a daily basis using AI to identify titles within a district's collection that may not align with legislative requirements or community standards. This provides objective data and potential flags based on criteria developed with Texas librarians, supporting alignment with state requirements, including the prohibition of certain content. OnShelf makes current information on challenge and ban trends readily available—similar to sources like PEN or ALA, but more frequently updated. This "at your fingertips" access to real-time data on how districts are handling specific titles enhances efficiency for book review committees, supports informed decision-making, and ultimately helps protect the school board and superintendents by ensuring policy adherence.

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Informing Advisory Council Decisions

The objective content data and challenge history provided by OnShelf are essential for informed decision-making by the school board and the mandated local school library advisory councils. It offers transparency and data-driven insights to support their recommendations. While future updates will include LSLAC input and board vote management, OnShelf currently benefits book review committees by providing access to this same information, and a function to upload and manage related documentation

Streamlining Acquisition and Challenge Management

OnShelf enhances manual reviews, reducing risk and improving efficiency by providing key book information like challenge and ban data, summaries, and discovery questions, supporting compliance with the bill's requirements for material acquisition reviews and challenge processes. The platform's content scanner includes detailed tags, to help navigate the bill's challenge process, informing decisions about temporarily restricting materials under review. It helps make book selection smarter, clearer, and policy-aligned. These tags can also serve as flags for the book review committee, prompting further review to ensure the book's content meets community standards and aligns with their comfort level. In the future, OnShelf will track formal challenges with SB 13-compliant workflows, a process that will be informed by client input to ensure optimal design and functionality.

Facilitating Parental Access and Rights

OnShelf supports administrators, librarians, and parents in making informed decisions. It provides data needed for processes required by the bill. A key feature allows parents to restrict books for their individual students, potentially helping to avoid broader reconsideration processes as allowed under SB 13's expanded parental rights. OnShelf also automates grade-level filtering and parental opt-outs.

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Saving Time and Resources

OnShelf's Content Scanner is a centralized platform that provides key book information for review—summaries, tags, discovery questions, daily-updated national challenge and banned data, a document repository, checkout history, and parental approval controls—significantly reducing manual work. This saves librarians and book review committees time and reduces district labor costs while facilitating the implementation of SB 13's detailed procedures and strict timelines.

Providing Data and Protection

Not knowing the content within a collection can present risks and potentially lead to significant negative publicity. OnShelf Content Scanner, acts as an "AI-powered safeguard" or "insurance policy" by providing content data and facilitating policy alignment, helping prevent controversy. It offers superintendents visibility into at-risk titles

Partnering with Bookmarked

Bookmarked is already partnered with other ESCs across the state, demonstrating its commitment to supporting Texas districts through regional leadership. For ESCs, offering OnShelf to their districts provides a timely and critical solution to help ISDs navigate SB 13's complexities and mandated changes. This positions ESCs as proactive leaders by offering valuable support and tools ahead of the 2025-2026 compliance deadlines. Bookmarked provides support and resources for ESCs with a comprehensive ESC Partner Program Kit.

Offering Free Early Access to OnShelf

Bookmarked is offering ISDs FREE early access to OnShelf until September 30, 2025, as a limited-time pilot offer. This includes an easy onboarding process: gain platform access, upload your catalog, and review titles with challenge/ban associations. Districts can onboard and get training now, during the summer months. The streamlined process requires only standard agreements (MSA and DSA) – no purchase order is needed for the free trial, allowing immediate onboarding. While SB 13 presents new requirements, utilizing OnShelf can significantly ease the compliance burden. Acting now helps districts navigate these changes with greater confidence and clarity.

Navigate SB 13 with confidence and clarity.

Bookmarked OnShelf provides the essential support your need.

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