

By: Button

H.B. No. 1615

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to strategies to increase the availability of child-care and prekindergarten programs.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter A, Chapter 302, Labor Code, is amended by adding Sections 302.0051 and 302.0063 to read as follows:

Sec. 302.0051. PREKINDERGARTEN PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM. (a)

The commission shall establish and administer a prekindergarten partnership program to assist Texas Rising Star program providers who meet the definition of an eligible private provider under Section 29.171, Education Code, in partnering with local school districts and open-enrollment charter schools to provide the prekindergarten classes required under Section 29.153, Education Code.

(b) Using existing funds, the commission shall coordinate with the Texas Education Agency to develop joint strategies to expand the availability of prekindergarten partnership programs, including by:

(1) establishing and maintaining a database of Texas Rising Star program providers within the boundaries of each school district and open-enrollment charter school;

(2) assisting in negotiating and administering contracts between school districts or open-enrollment charter

1 schools, as applicable, and Texas Rising Star program providers to
2 provide prekindergarten classes; and

3 (3) annually establishing guidelines for funding
4 amounts per child to be provided by a school district or
5 open-enrollment charter school, as applicable, to a Texas Rising
6 Star program provider with which the district or charter school
7 partners to provide prekindergarten classes.

8 Sec. 302.0063. CHILD-CARE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
9 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM. (a) In this section, "program" means the
10 professional development scholarship program established under
11 this section.

12 (b) From funds appropriated for the purpose, the commission
13 shall establish and administer a professional development
14 scholarship program for current and prospective child-care
15 workers.

16 (c) A scholarship under the program may be used to pay an
17 individual's costs related to:

18 (1) earning:

19 (A) a Child Development Associate (CDA)
20 credential; or

21 (B) an associate's degree or bachelor's degree in
22 early childhood education or another related field from a public or
23 private institution of higher education; and

24 (2) participation in a registered child-care
25 apprenticeship program.

26 (d) The program may be used to pay for other ancillary costs
27 for child-care workers who are enrolled in an educational program

1 or apprenticeship program described by Subsection (c), including:

2 (1) books and supplies;

3 (2) release time or stipends to attend classes;

4 (3) costs related to the examination for the Child
5 Development Associate (CDA) credential;

6 (4) travel to attend classes or attend a hands-on
7 practicum training; and

8 (5) stipends for mentors or master teachers who
9 provide hands-on training at a child-care program.

10 SECTION 2. Section 2308.256(a), Government Code, is amended
11 to read as follows:

12 (a) A board is composed as follows:

13 (1) representatives of the private sector, who:

14 (A) constitute a majority of the membership of
15 the board; and

16 (B) are owners of business concerns, chief
17 executives or chief operating officers of nongovernmental
18 employers, or other private sector executives who have substantial
19 management or policy responsibilities;

20 (2) representatives of organized labor and
21 community-based organizations, who constitute not less than 15
22 percent of the membership of the board; and

23 (3) representatives of each of the following:

24 (A) educational agencies, including community
25 colleges and secondary and postsecondary practitioners
26 representing vocational education, that are representative of all
27 educational agencies in the service delivery area;

- 1 (B) vocational rehabilitation agencies;
- 2 (C) public assistance agencies;
- 3 (D) economic development agencies;
- 4 (E) the public employment service;
- 5 (F) local literacy councils; ~~and~~
- 6 (G) adult basic and continuing education
- 7 organizations; and
- 8 (H) the child-care workforce.

9 SECTION 3. Section [2308.256\(g\)](#), Government Code, is
10 repealed.

11 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2023.