

By: Turner

H.B. No. 3486

Substitute the following for H.B. No. 3486:

By: Kuempel

C.S.H.B. No. 3486

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to higher education curricula, including course enrollment and credit and degree and certificate programs.

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

SECTION 1. Section 29.908(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) The program must:

(1) provide for a course of study that enables a participating student to combine high school courses and college-level courses during grade levels 9 through 12;

(2) allow a participating student to complete high school and enroll in a program at an institution of higher education that will enable the student to, on or before the fifth anniversary of the date of the student's first day of high school, receive a high school diploma and either:

(A) an applied associate degree, as defined by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board rule; or

(B) an academic associate degree, as defined by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board rule, with a completed field of study curriculum developed under Section 61.823 that is transferable [~~at least 60 semester credit hours~~] toward a baccalaureate degree at one or more general academic teaching institutions, as defined by Section 61.003;

(3) include articulation agreements with colleges,

1 universities, and technical schools in this state to provide a  
2 participating student access to postsecondary educational and  
3 training opportunities at a college, university, or technical  
4 school; and

5 (4) provide a participating student flexibility in  
6 class scheduling and academic mentoring.

7 SECTION 2. Section 51.4033, Education Code, is amended to  
8 read as follows:

9 Sec. 51.4033. REPORT OF NONTRANSFERABLE CREDIT. (a) Not  
10 later than May [~~March~~] 1 of each year and in the form prescribed by  
11 the coordinating board, each general academic teaching institution  
12 shall provide to the coordinating board and the legislature a  
13 report describing any courses in the Lower-Division Academic Course  
14 Guide Manual or its successor adopted by the coordinating board for  
15 which a student who transfers to the institution from another  
16 institution of higher education is not granted:

17 (1) academic credit at the receiving institution; or

18 (2) if the student has declared a major and has not  
19 changed majors, academic credit toward the student's major at the  
20 receiving institution.

21 (b) A report required by this section must indicate:

22 (1) the course name and type;

23 (2) which institution of higher education provided  
24 academic credit for the course; and

25 (3) the reason why the receiving institution did not  
26 grant academic credit for the course as described by Subsection  
27 (a), including whether the institution complied with the dispute

1 resolution process under Section 61.826.

2 SECTION 3. Section 51.4034(a), Education Code, is amended  
3 to read as follows:

4 (a) Not later than May [~~March~~] 1 of each year and in the form  
5 prescribed by the coordinating board, each public junior college  
6 shall provide to the coordinating board and the legislature a  
7 report on courses taken by students who, during the preceding  
8 academic year, transferred to a general academic teaching  
9 institution or earned an associate degree at the college.

10 SECTION 4. Sections 61.003(11) and (12), Education Code,  
11 are amended to read as follows:

12 (11) "Degree program" means any grouping of subject  
13 matter courses which, when satisfactorily completed by a student,  
14 will entitle the student [~~him~~] to:

15 (A) a degree from a public senior college or  
16 university or a medical or dental unit; or

17 (B) an academic associate degree, as defined by  
18 board rule, or baccalaureate degree from a public junior college.

19 (12) "Certificate program" means a grouping of  
20 subject-matter courses which, when satisfactorily completed by a  
21 student, will entitle the student [~~him~~] to:

22 (A) a certificate;

23 (B) an [~~7~~] associate degree, other than an  
24 academic associate degree, as defined by board rule, from a  
25 technical institute or junior college; or

26 (C) [~~7~~ ~~or~~] documentary evidence, other than a  
27 degree, of completion of a course of study at the postsecondary

1 level.

2 SECTION 5. Sections 61.822(b) and (c), Education Code, are  
3 amended to read as follows:

4 (b) Each institution of higher education shall adopt a core  
5 curriculum of no less than 42 semester credit hours, including  
6 specific courses comprising the curriculum. The core curriculum  
7 shall be consistent with the common course numbering system  
8 approved by the board and with the statement, recommendations, and  
9 rules issued by the board. An institution may have a core  
10 curriculum of other than 42 semester credit hours only if approved  
11 by the board. The board by rule may approve a core curriculum of  
12 fewer than 42 semester credit hours for an associate degree program  
13 if the board determines that the approval would facilitate the  
14 award of a degree or transfer of credit consistent with this  
15 subchapter.

16 (c) If a student successfully completes the [~~42-hour~~] core  
17 curriculum at an institution of higher education, that block of  
18 courses may be transferred to any other institution of higher  
19 education and must be substituted for the receiving institution's  
20 core curriculum. A student shall receive academic credit for each  
21 of the courses transferred and may not be required to take  
22 additional core curriculum courses at the receiving institution  
23 unless the board has approved a larger core curriculum at the  
24 institution.

25 SECTION 6. Section 61.823, Education Code, is amended by  
26 adding Subsection (a-1) and amending Subsection (b) to read as  
27 follows:

1       (a-1) The board by rule may authorize a general academic  
2 teaching institution to adopt, for each field of study curriculum  
3 developed by the board for which the institution offers a degree  
4 program, a set of courses specific to that field of study, not to  
5 exceed a total of six semester credit hours or the equivalent, that  
6 must be completed as part of the field of study curriculum for that  
7 institution. Each general academic teaching institution that  
8 adopts a set of courses for a field of study curriculum under this  
9 subsection shall post on the institution's Internet website in a  
10 manner easily accessible to students the set of courses with the  
11 associated course numbers under the common course numbering system.

12       (b) If a student successfully completes a field of study  
13 curriculum developed by the board, that block of courses may be  
14 transferred to a general academic teaching institution and, subject  
15 to completion of the set of courses adopted by the institution for  
16 that field of study under Subsection (a-1), must be substituted for  
17 that institution's lower division requirements for the degree  
18 program for the field of study into which the student transfers, and  
19 the student shall receive full academic credit toward the degree  
20 program for the block of courses transferred.

21       SECTION 7. Sections 61.826(c), (d), and (e), Education  
22 Code, are amended to read as follows:

23       (c) If an institution of higher education proposes to deny  
24 the application toward a student's degree requirements of ~~[does not~~  
25 ~~accept]~~ course credit earned by the ~~[a]~~ student at another  
26 institution of higher education in the other institution's core  
27 curriculum or in a field of study curriculum developed by the board

1 under Section 61.823, that institution must:

2           (1) ~~[shall]~~ give written notice to the student and the  
3 other institution of that institution's intent to deny ~~[that]~~ the  
4 application ~~[transfer]~~ of the course credit to the student's degree  
5 requirements and the reasons for the proposed denial;

6           (2) ~~[is denied. The two institutions and the student~~  
7 ~~shall]~~ attempt to resolve the application ~~[transfer]~~ of the course  
8 credit to the student's degree requirements with the other  
9 institution and the student in accordance with board rules;

10           (3) resolve the dispute not later than the 45th day  
11 after the date on which the student enrolls in that institution; and

12           (4) if ~~[. If]~~ the ~~[transfer]~~ dispute is not resolved  
13 to the satisfaction of the student or the institution at which the  
14 credit was earned, ~~[within 45 days after the date the student~~  
15 ~~received written notice of the denial, the institution that denies~~  
16 ~~the transfer of the course credit shall]~~ notify the commissioner of  
17 higher education of its denial to apply the course credit to the  
18 student's degree requirements and the reasons for the denial.

19           (d) Not later than the 20th business day after the date the  
20 commissioner of higher education receives notice of a dispute  
21 concerning the application of course credit to a student's degree  
22 requirements under Subsection (c)(4), the ~~[The]~~ commissioner ~~[of~~  
23 ~~higher education]~~ or the commissioner's designee shall make the  
24 final determination about the ~~[a]~~ dispute ~~[concerning the transfer~~  
25 ~~of course credit]~~ and give written notice of the determination to  
26 the involved student and institutions. If the commissioner or the  
27 commissioner's designee determines that the institution may not

1 deny the application of course credit described by Subsection (c)  
2 to the student's degree requirements, the institution shall apply  
3 that course credit toward the student's degree requirements. A  
4 determination by the commissioner or the commissioner's designee  
5 under this subsection is final and may not be appealed.

6 (e) The board shall:

7 (1) collect data on the types of transfer disputes  
8 that are reported and the disposition of each case that is  
9 considered by the commissioner of higher education or the  
10 commissioner's designee; and

11 (2) post on the board's Internet website a list of each  
12 case that is considered by the commissioner of higher education or  
13 the commissioner's designee under this section, including the  
14 disposition of the case.

15 SECTION 8. Section 61.827(b), Education Code, is amended to  
16 read as follows:

17 (b) In adopting rules regarding the recommended core  
18 curriculum developed under Section 61.822, the board shall appoint  
19 a committee to advise the board [~~use the negotiated rulemaking~~  
20 ~~procedures~~] under Section 2001.031 [~~Chapter 2008~~], Government  
21 Code.

22 SECTION 9. Subchapter S, Chapter 61, Education Code, is  
23 amended by adding Section 61.834 to read as follows:

24 Sec. 61.834. TEXAS DIRECT ASSOCIATE DEGREE. An institution  
25 of higher education shall award a student a "Texas Direct"  
26 associate degree and include an appropriate notation on the  
27 student's transcript if the student completes a field of study

1 curriculum developed by the board under Section 61.823 and:

2 (1) the institution's core curriculum; or

3 (2) an abbreviated core curriculum related to a  
4 specific approved field of study curriculum transferable to one or  
5 more general academic teaching institutions.

6 SECTION 10. This Act applies beginning with the 2023-2024  
7 academic year.

8 SECTION 11. This Act takes effect immediately if it  
9 receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each  
10 house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution.  
11 If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate  
12 effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2023.