

By: Turner

H.B. No. 3486

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT
2 relating to the requirements for the early college education
3 program and the transfer of course credit among public institutions
4 of higher education.

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

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

8 (b) The program must:

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

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

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

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

1 (3) include articulation agreements with colleges,
2 universities, and technical schools in this state to provide a
3 participating student access to postsecondary educational and
4 training opportunities at a college, university, or technical
5 school; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

23 (1) the course name and type;

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

26 (3) the reason why the receiving institution did not
27 grant academic credit for the course as described by Subsection

1 (a) including whether the institution complied with the dispute
2 resolution process under Section 61.826.

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

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

11 SECTION 4. Section 61.823, Education Code, is amended by
12 adding Subsection (a-1) and amending Subsection (b) to read as
13 follows:

14 (a-1) The board by rule may authorize a general academic
15 teaching institution to adopt, for each field of study curriculum
16 developed by the board for which the institution offers a degree
17 program, a set of courses specific to that field of study, not to
18 exceed a total of six semester credit hours or the equivalent, that
19 must be completed as part of the field of study curriculum for that
20 institution. Each general academic teaching institution that
21 adopts a set of courses for a field of study curriculum under this
22 subsection shall post on the institution's Internet website in a
23 manner easily accessible to students the set of courses with the
24 associated course numbers under the common course numbering system.

25 (b) If a student successfully completes a field of study
26 curriculum developed by the board, that block of courses may be
27 transferred to a general academic teaching institution and, subject

1 to completion of the set of courses adopted by the institution for
2 that field of study under Subsection (a-1), must be substituted for
3 that institution's lower division requirements for the degree
4 program for the field of study into which the student transfers, and
5 the student shall receive full academic credit toward the degree
6 program for the block of courses transferred.

7 SECTION 5. Sections 61.826(c), (d), and (e), Education
8 Code, are amended to read as follows:

9 (c) If an institution of higher education proposes to deny
10 the application toward a student's degree requirements of ~~[does not~~
11 ~~accept]~~ course credit earned by the ~~[a]~~ student at another
12 institution of higher education in the other institution's core
13 curriculum or in a field of study curriculum developed by the board
14 under Section 61.823, that institution must:

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

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

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

25 (4) if ~~[. If]~~ the ~~[transfer]~~ dispute is not resolved
26 to the satisfaction of the student or the institution at which the
27 credit was earned, ~~[within 45 days after the date the student~~

1 ~~received written notice of the denial, the institution that denies~~
2 ~~the transfer of the course credit shall~~] notify the commissioner of
3 higher education of its denial to apply the course credit to the
4 student's degree requirements and the reasons for the denial.

5 (d) Not later than the 20th business day after the date the
6 commissioner of higher education receives notice of a dispute
7 concerning the application of course credit to a student's degree
8 requirements under Subsection (c)(4), the [The] commissioner [~~of~~
9 ~~higher education~~] or the commissioner's designee shall make the
10 final determination about the [a] dispute [~~concerning the transfer~~
11 ~~of course credit~~] and give written notice of the determination to
12 the involved student and institutions. If the commissioner or the
13 commissioner's designee determines that the institution may not
14 deny the application of course credit described by Subsection (c)
15 to the student's degree requirements, the institution shall apply
16 that course credit toward the student's degree requirements. A
17 determination by the commissioner or the commissioner's designee
18 under this subsection is final and may not be appealed.

19 (e) The board shall:

20 (1) collect data on the types of transfer disputes
21 that are reported and the disposition of each case that is
22 considered by the commissioner of higher education or the
23 commissioner's designee; and

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

1 SECTION 6. Subchapter S, Chapter 61, Education Code, is
2 amended by adding Section 61.834 to read as follows:

3 Sec. 61.834. TEXAS DIRECT ASSOCIATE DEGREE. An institution
4 of higher education shall award a student a "Texas Direct"
5 associate degree and include an appropriate notation on the
6 student's transcript if the student completes a field of study
7 curriculum developed by the board under Section 61.823 and:

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

9 (2) 42 semester credit hours of lower-division courses
10 transferable to one or more general academic teaching institutions.

11 SECTION 7. This Act applies beginning with the 2023-2024
12 academic year.

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