

AN ACT

relating to establishing the Applied Sciences Pathway program.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter 7, Chapter 29, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 29.914 to read as follows:

Sec. 29.914. APPLIED SCIENCES PATHWAY PROGRAM. (a) In this section:

(1) "Certificate program" and "institution of higher education" have the meanings assigned by Section 61.003.

(2) "Program" means the Applied Sciences Pathway program established under this section.

(b) The commissioner shall establish and administer the Applied Sciences Pathway program to provide opportunities for students to concurrently earn high school diplomas and certificates from institutions of higher education.

(c) The commissioner shall approve for participation in the program partnerships between school districts or open-enrollment charter schools and institutions of higher education to provide courses in a non-duplicative sequence of progressive achievement that lead to:

(1) a high school diploma; and

(2) completion of a certificate program with a successful job placement rate in high-wage, high-growth jobs in one of the following industries:

- 1 (A) plumbing and pipe fitting;
- 2 (B) electrical;
- 3 (C) welding;
- 4 (D) sheet metal;
- 5 (E) carpentry;
- 6 (F) masonry;
- 7 (G) diesel and heavy equipment;
- 8 (H) aviation maintenance;
- 9 (I) heating, ventilation, and air conditioning;
- 10 (J) construction management and inspection;
- 11 (K) mechanical and aerospace engineering;
- 12 (L) industrial maintenance and processes;
- 13 (M) robotics and automation;
- 14 (N) information technology and cybersecurity;
- 15 (O) oil and gas exploration and production;
- 16 (P) refining and chemical processes;
- 17 (Q) transportation distribution and logistics;
- 18 (R) manufacturing and industrial technology;
- 19 (S) electronics technology; or
- 20 (T) automotive technology.

21 (c-1) Beginning with the 2027-2028 school year, the
22 commissioner may revise the industries approved for purposes of
23 Subsection (c)(2) once every five years to reflect current labor
24 market trends.

25 (d) A partnership participating in the program must:

26 (1) enable the school district or open-enrollment
27 charter school to provide at least one course of study described by

1 Subsection (c) through a partnership with an institution of higher
2 education under the program;

3 (2) provide for a course of study described by
4 Subsection (c) that enables a participating student in grade level
5 11 or 12 to concurrently:

6 (A) enroll in a certificate program described by
7 Subsection (c)(2) at the partnering institution of higher education
8 under which the student may receive instruction from an instructor
9 employed by the institution and any appropriate work-based learning
10 opportunities from the institution and earn:

11 (i) a level one or level two certificate, as
12 defined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board; or

13 (ii) a credential recognized as a
14 credential of value by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
15 rule and approved by the commissioner for purposes of the program;
16 and

17 (B) satisfy high school graduation requirements
18 and receive a high school diploma;

19 (3) require the partnering school district or
20 open-enrollment charter school to permit all district or school
21 students in grade level 11 or 12 to enroll in a course of study
22 provided under Subdivision (2);

23 (4) be governed by an institutional agreement between
24 the partnering school district or open-enrollment charter school
25 and institution of higher education that meets the requirements for
26 a dual credit partnership adopted by Texas Higher Education
27 Coordinating Board rule; and

1 (5) meet any other requirements established by
2 commissioner rule.

3 (e) Except as provided by Subsection (e-1), the
4 commissioner may approve the substitution of a credit in a subject
5 area required for high school graduation under Section 28.025 with
6 a credit in a career and technology education course provided by an
7 institution of higher education under the program that
8 substantially covers the essential knowledge and skills of the
9 course for which it is substituted. This subsection may not be
10 construed to limit the number of substituted credits a student may
11 earn while participating in the program.

12 (e-1) Before a student may earn substituted credit under
13 Subsection (e) for a secondary-level course in a subject described
14 by Section 28.025(b-1)(1), (2), (3), or (4), the student must
15 perform satisfactorily on each end-of-course assessment instrument
16 required for courses in the corresponding subject that precede the
17 course for which the student seeks substituted credit in the
18 district's prescribed course sequence.

19 (f) A career and technology education course authorized as a
20 substitute credit under Subsection (e) may not count:

21 (1) for more than one credit toward the student's high
22 school graduation requirements; or

23 (2) as a credit for more than one subject area.

24 (g) Time that a student spends participating in the program
25 is counted as part of the minimum number of instructional hours
26 required for a student to be considered a full-time student in
27 average daily attendance for purposes of Section 48.005.

1 (h) This section may not be construed to:

2 (1) prevent a student's participation in career and
3 technology education or dual credit courses before the student
4 begins participating in the program; or

5 (2) authorize the commissioner to require approval by
6 the commissioner for partnerships between school districts or
7 open-enrollment charter schools and institutions of higher
8 education for purposes other than the program, including
9 partnerships to provide dual credit courses.

10 (i) The commissioner shall adopt rules as necessary to
11 administer the program.

12 (j) This section expires September 1, 2031.

13 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2025-2026
14 school year.

15 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
16 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
17 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
18 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
19 Act takes effect September 1, 2025.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 20 was passed by the House on April 16, 2025, by the following vote: Yeas 144, Nays 1, 1 present, not voting; and that the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 20 on May 30, 2025, by the following vote: Yeas 134, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 20 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 29, 2025, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: _____

Date

Governor