

Amend SB 286 on third reading by inserting the following appropriately numbered SECTION and renumbering the other SECTIONS of the bill accordingly:

SECTION _____ Subchapter A, Chapter 130, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 130.0012 to read as follows:

Sec. 130.0012. PILOT PROJECT: BACCALAUREATE DEGREE PROGRAMS.

(a) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall establish a pilot project to examine the feasibility and effectiveness of authorizing public junior colleges to offer baccalaureate degree programs in the fields of applied science and applied technology. Participation in the pilot project does not otherwise alter the role and mission of a public junior college.

(b) The coordinating board shall operate the pilot project at the following public junior colleges:

(1) Brazosport College;

(2) El Centro College of the Dallas County Community College District;

(3) Midland College;

(4) North Harris Montgomery Community College District;

and

(5) South Texas Community College.

(c) A public junior college participating in the pilot project must meet all applicable accreditation requirements of the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

(d) A public junior college participating in the pilot project may not offer more than five baccalaureate degree programs under the project at any time. The degree programs are subject to the continuing approval of the coordinating board. In determining what baccalaureate degree programs are to be offered, the junior college and the coordinating board shall consider:

(1) the need for the degree programs in the region served by the junior college;

(2) how those degree programs would complement the other programs and course offerings of the junior college;

(3) whether those degree programs would unnecessarily duplicate the degree programs offered by other institutions of

higher education; and

(4) the ability of the junior college to support the program and the adequacy of the junior college's facilities, faculty, administration, libraries, and other resources.

(e) Each public junior college that offers a baccalaureate degree program under the pilot project must enter into an articulation agreement with one or more general academic teaching institutions to ensure that students enrolled in the degree program have an opportunity to complete the degree if the public junior college ceases to offer the degree program. The coordinating board may require a general academic teaching institution that offers a comparable degree program to enter into an articulation agreement with the public junior college as provided by this subsection.

(f) In its recommendations to the legislature relating to state funding for public junior colleges, the coordinating board shall recommend that a public junior college receive substantially the same state support for junior-level and senior-level courses offered under the pilot project as that provided to a general academic teaching institution for substantially similar courses. In determining the contact hours attributable to students enrolled in a junior-level or senior-level course offered under the pilot project used to determine a public junior college's proportionate share of state appropriations under Section 130.003, the coordinating board shall weigh those contact hours as necessary to provide the junior college the appropriate level of state support to the extent state funds for those courses are included in the appropriations. This subsection does not prohibit the legislature from directly appropriating state funds to support junior-level and senior-level courses offered under the pilot project.

(g) Each public junior college participating in the pilot project shall prepare a biennial report on the operation and effectiveness of the junior college's baccalaureate degree programs offered under the project and shall deliver a copy of the report to the coordinating board in the form and at the time determined by the coordinating board.

(h) Not later than January 1, 2009, the coordinating board shall prepare a progress report on the pilot project. Not later

than January 1, 2011, the coordinating board shall prepare a report on the effectiveness of the pilot project, including any recommendations for legislative action regarding the offering of baccalaureate degree programs by public junior colleges. The coordinating board shall deliver a copy of each report to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the chair of the standing committee of each house of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over higher education.

(i) Unless the authority to continue offering the baccalaureate degree programs is continued by the legislature, a public junior college may not:

(1) enroll a new student in a baccalaureate degree program under the pilot project after the 2011 fall semester;

(2) offer junior-level or senior-level courses for those degree programs after the 2015 fall semester, unless the coordinating board authorizes the college to offer those courses;

or

(3) award a baccalaureate degree under the pilot project after the 2015 fall semester, unless the coordinating board approves the awarding of the degree.

(j) The coordinating board shall prescribe procedures to ensure that each public junior college that offers a degree program under the pilot project informs each student who enrolls in the degree program of:

(1) the nature of the pilot project, including the limited duration of the project; and

(2) the articulation agreement entered into under Subsection (e) for the student's degree program.

(k) This section expires January 1, 2020.