

By: Grusendorf

H.B. No. 1554

Substitute the following for H.B. No. 1554:

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C.S.H.B. No. 1554

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a virtual charter school administered by a public senior college or university.

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

SECTION 1. Section 12.002, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 12.002. CLASSES OF CHARTER. The classes of charter under this chapter are:

(1) a home-rule school district charter as provided by Subchapter B;

(2) a campus or campus program charter as provided by Subchapter C; ~~[or]~~

(3) an open-enrollment charter as provided by Subchapter D; or

(4) a college or university charter as provided by Subchapter E.

SECTION 2. Sections 12.151-12.153, Education Code, are amended to read as follows:

Sec. 12.151. DEFINITIONS ~~[DEFINITION]~~. In this subchapter:

(1) "Educational activity" means an activity of a student enrolled in a virtual charter school that is considered for purposes of a student's minimum hours of instruction required by a charter granted under this subchapter or rules adopted under this subchapter.

1           (2) "Public [~~,"public~~] senior college or university"  
2 has the meaning assigned by Section 61.003.

3           (3) "Virtual charter school" means a charter school  
4 authorized and operating under this subchapter that uses  
5 technology, including the Internet, to deliver a significant  
6 portion of the school's instruction outside of a central campus.

7           Sec. 12.152. AUTHORIZATION. [~~(a)~~] In accordance with this  
8 subchapter and Subchapter D, the State Board of Education may grant  
9 a charter on the application of a public senior college or  
10 university for:

11           (1) an open-enrollment charter school to operate on  
12 the campus of the public senior college or university or in the same  
13 county in which the campus of the public senior college or  
14 university is located; or

15           (2) a virtual charter school administered by a public  
16 senior college or university to operate from an administrative  
17 office in the same county in which the campus of the college or  
18 university is located.

19           Sec. 12.153. RULES. (a) The commissioner may adopt rules  
20 to implement this subchapter.

21           (b) The commissioner shall adopt rules to administer  
22 virtual charter schools under this subchapter. For purposes of  
23 charter school funding under Section 12.106, the commissioner shall  
24 determine the number of hours of virtual charter school  
25 educational activities that are the equivalent of one day of school  
26 attendance.

27           SECTION 3. Subchapter E, Chapter 12, Education Code, is

1 amended by adding Section 12.157 to read as follows:

2 Sec. 12.157. VIRTUAL CHARTER SCHOOL. (a) A virtual charter  
3 school must:

4 (1) provide each student enrolled in the school with  
5 access to a secular curriculum that meets or exceeds state academic  
6 standards;

7 (2) allow each student to work at a grade level other  
8 than the grade level in which the student is enrolled;

9 (3) an average of at least once each week during the  
10 school year, assess each student's performance in each subject in  
11 the foundation curriculum in which the student is enrolled;

12 (4) ensure that a parent or legal guardian of each  
13 student verifies the number of hours of educational activities  
14 completed by the student each school year;

15 (5) make available to the parent or legal guardian of  
16 each student:

17 (A) a computer and printer;

18 (B) physical copies of any instructional  
19 materials related to the student's curriculum; and

20 (C) reimbursement for any fees related to  
21 Internet access used for educational activities; and

22 (6) maintain a student/teacher ratio of not less than  
23 one teacher for each 60 students in average daily attendance.

24 (b) A student enrolled in a virtual charter school shall  
25 complete:

26 (1) at least 720 hours of educational activities each  
27 school year if the student is enrolled in grade two or lower; and

1           (2) at least 900 hours of educational activities each  
2 school year if the student is enrolled in grade three or higher.

3           (c) A teacher employed by a virtual charter school:

4           (1) must be appropriately certified under Subchapter  
5 B, Chapter 21; and

6           (2) shall, at least four times each school year, be  
7 available to meet with the parent or legal guardian of each student  
8 enrolled in the teacher's class.

9           (d) A virtual charter school is entitled for each student in  
10 average daily attendance to funding at a level equal to an  
11 open-enrollment charter school.

12           (e) A public senior college or university that holds a  
13 charter for a virtual charter school shall annually conduct an  
14 evaluation of the school, including an analysis of:

15           (1) any increase in student achievement, as measured  
16 using state academic standards and standards described by the  
17 charter;

18           (2) the academic, fiscal, and operational performance  
19 of the school; and

20           (3) the performance of any students who are assessed  
21 using an assessment instrument adopted under Section 39.023.

22           SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
23 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
24 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
25 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
26 Act takes effect September 1, 2003.