

By: Keffer of Eastland

H.B. No. 2109

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the adoption of the 21st Century Technology College and Careers Act.

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

SECTION 1. Subtitle B, Title 4, Labor Code, is amended by adding Chapter 312 to read as follows:

CHAPTER 312. 21ST CENTURY TECHNOLOGY COLLEGE AND CAREERS GRANT PROGRAM

Sec. 312.001. SHORT TITLE. This chapter may be cited as the 21st Century Technology College and Careers Act.

Sec. 312.002. PURPOSE; CONSTRUCTION. (a) The purpose of this chapter is to strengthen and sustain existing partnerships in each region of the state by providing planning, coordination, and grant funding to participants so that the partnerships may better serve the academic and career interests of students and their parents, the workforce needs of employers, and the economic development goals of communities in the 21st century.

(b) This chapter may not be construed to provide a partnership with any regulatory authority or control over a decision of a state or local agency or an institution of higher education regarding the implementation of a partnership initiative.

Sec. 312.003. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

(1) "Educational institution" includes an institution

1 of higher education and a secondary school operated by a public
2 school district of this state.

3 (2) "Institution of higher education" has the meaning
4 assigned by Section 61.003, Education Code.

5 (3) "Participant" means a school district,
6 institution of higher education, employer or employer
7 organization, chamber of commerce, industry group or trade
8 association, local workforce development board, tech-prep
9 consortium, labor organization, or other entity that participates
10 in a partnership.

11 (4) "Partnership" means a regional collaboration of
12 participants who work together to promote educational improvement
13 and workforce development opportunities primarily for secondary
14 and postsecondary students.

15 (5) "Region" means a geographic state planning region
16 established by the governor under Chapter 391, Local Government
17 Code.

18 (6) "Tech-prep consortium" has the meaning assigned by
19 Section 61.851, Education Code, as added by Chapter 1422, Acts of
20 the 76th Legislature, Regular Session, 1999.

21 Sec. 312.004. GRANT PROGRAM. (a) The commission shall
22 establish a grant program to assist partnerships in promoting
23 voluntary educational improvement and workforce development
24 opportunities primarily for secondary and postsecondary students.

25 (b) The commission shall award grants as provided by
26 Subsection (c) to one or more partnerships in each region.

27 (c) Each state fiscal year, the commission shall award a

1 base allocation of \$100,000 to one or more partnerships in each
2 region. The commission shall distribute any additional grant money
3 to partnerships under this chapter in accordance with an equitable
4 allocation formula that is determined by the commission and based
5 on the amount of matching funds identified by the commission from
6 participants in each region.

7 (d) A partnership receiving grant money under this chapter
8 shall:

9 (1) develop initiatives to improve the transition from
10 educational institutions to the workforce, including:

11 (A) voluntary student internships and work-based
12 learning;

13 (B) the use of labor market information to
14 predict future workforce opportunities;

15 (C) broad-based career awareness development;

16 (D) professional development and support of
17 teachers and counselors at educational institutions, including
18 industry tours and teacher externships;

19 (E) student mentoring programs; and

20 (F) scholarship funding;

21 (2) emphasize postsecondary education;

22 (3) provide students with opportunities to apply their
23 academic work to authentic problems outside of the school
24 environment;

25 (4) emphasize mathematics, science, engineering, and
26 technology while stressing the importance of all foundation and
27 enrichment curricula;

- 1 (5) emphasize high-wage and high-skill jobs;
2 (6) encourage students to take rigorous academic
3 courses and to complete the recommended high school program; and
4 (7) emphasize activities that are supportive of and
5 compliant with the essential knowledge and skills curriculum.

6 Sec. 312.005. STUDENT SAFEGUARDS. (a) Student
7 participation in an activity sponsored by a partnership is
8 voluntary.

9 (b) If an activity sponsored by a partnership requires
10 significant student involvement, the partnership shall require
11 parental consent in a form and manner prescribed by the local school
12 board as a condition to a student's participation in the activity.

13 (c) An internship or other job opportunity sponsored by a
14 partnership may not displace existing workers or require a student
15 to work excessive or late hours.

16 Sec. 312.006. GRANT APPLICATION. A partnership that seeks
17 to obtain a grant under this chapter must submit an application to
18 the commission at the time and in a manner prescribed by commission
19 rule.

20 Sec. 312.007. INTERAGENCY ADVISORY COMMITTEE. The
21 commission shall appoint an interagency advisory committee to
22 assist the commission in implementing this chapter. The
23 interagency advisory committee shall be composed of one
24 representative from each of the following state agencies:

- 25 (1) the Texas Education Agency;
26 (2) the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board;
27 (3) the Texas Department of Economic Development;

1 (4) the Council on Workforce and Economic
2 Competitiveness;
3 (5) the Texas Rehabilitation Commission;
4 (6) the Texas Commission for the Blind; and
5 (7) any other state agency the commission considers
6 appropriate.

7 Sec. 312.008. REPORT. A partnership that receives a grant
8 under this chapter shall prepare and deliver to the commission an
9 annual report on the effectiveness of the partnership's activities.

10 Sec. 312.009. RULES. The commission shall adopt rules as
11 necessary to implement this chapter.

12 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2004.

13 SECTION 3. (a) The legislature may not appropriate money
14 specifically for the implementation of this Act, but may redirect
15 for the implementation of this Act money previously appropriated by
16 the legislature for purposes related to those described by Chapter
17 312, Labor Code, as added by this Act.

18 (b) The Texas Workforce Commission shall distribute any
19 appropriations received by the commission under Subsection (a) of
20 this section as additional grant money under Section 312.004(c),
21 Labor Code, as added by this Act.

22 (c) To provide base allocations to partnerships under
23 Section 312.004(c), Labor Code, as added by this Act, the Texas
24 Workforce Commission shall use any money available to the
25 commission from gifts, grants, donations, interagency contracts,
26 or any permissible source of federal funding, including funding
27 from the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. Section 2801 et

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1 seq.).