

By: Wentworth, et al.

S.B. No. 320

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to admission to certain public institutions of higher education.

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

SECTION 1. Section 33.007(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) During the first school year a student is enrolled in a high school or at the high school level in an open-enrollment charter school, and again during a student's senior year, a counselor shall provide information about higher education to the student and the student's parent or guardian. The information must include information regarding:

(1) the importance of higher education;

(2) the advantages of completing the recommended or advanced high school program adopted under Section 28.025(a);

(3) the disadvantages of taking courses to prepare for a high school equivalency examination relative to the benefits of taking courses leading to a high school diploma;

(4) financial aid eligibility;

(5) instruction on how to apply for federal financial aid;

(6) the center for financial aid information established under Section 61.0776;

~~(7) the automatic admission of certain students to~~

1 ~~general academic teaching institutions as provided by Section~~
2 ~~51.803,~~] and

3 (7) [~~(8)~~] the eligibility and academic performance
4 requirements for the TEXAS Grant as provided by Subchapter M,
5 Chapter 56 [~~, as added by Chapter 1590, Acts of the 76th Legislature,~~
6 ~~Regular Session, 1999~~].

7 SECTION 2. The heading to Section 51.805, Education Code,
8 is amended to read as follows:

9 Sec. 51.805. UNDERGRADUATE [~~OTHER~~] ADMISSIONS.

10 SECTION 3. Sections 51.805(a) and (b), Education Code, are
11 amended to read as follows:

12 (a) [~~A graduating student who does not qualify for admission~~
13 ~~under Section 51.803 or 51.804 may apply to any general academic~~
14 ~~teaching institution.~~

15 [~~(b) The general academic teaching institution, after~~
16 ~~admitting students under Sections 51.803 and 51.804, shall admit~~
17 ~~other applicants for admission as undergraduate students.] It is
18 the intent of the legislature that all institutions of higher
19 education pursue academic excellence by considering students'
20 academic achievements in decisions related to admissions.~~

21 (b) Because of changing demographic trends, diversity, and
22 population increases in the state, each general academic teaching
23 institution shall also consider all of, any of, or a combination of
24 the following socioeconomic indicators or factors in making
25 first-time freshman admissions decisions:

- 26 (1) the applicant's academic record;
- 27 (2) the socioeconomic background of the applicant,

1 including the percentage by which the applicant's family is above
2 or below any recognized measure of poverty, the applicant's
3 household income, and the applicant's parents' level of education;

4 (3) whether the applicant would be the first
5 generation of the applicant's family to attend or graduate from an
6 institution of higher education;

7 (4) whether the applicant has bilingual proficiency;

8 (5) the financial status of the applicant's school
9 district;

10 (6) the performance level of the applicant's school as
11 determined by the school accountability criteria used by the Texas
12 Education Agency;

13 (7) the applicant's responsibilities while attending
14 school, including whether the applicant has been employed, whether
15 the applicant has helped to raise children, or other similar
16 factors;

17 (8) the applicant's region of residence;

18 (9) whether the applicant is a resident of a rural or
19 urban area or a resident of a central city or suburban area in the
20 state;

21 (10) the applicant's performance on standardized
22 tests;

23 (11) the applicant's performance on standardized tests
24 in comparison with that of other students from similar
25 socioeconomic backgrounds;

26 (12) whether the applicant attended any school while
27 the school was under a court-ordered desegregation plan;

- 1 (13) the applicant's involvement in community
2 activities;
- 3 (14) the applicant's extracurricular activities;
- 4 (15) the applicant's commitment to a particular field
5 of study;
- 6 (16) the applicant's personal interview;
- 7 (17) the applicant's admission to a comparable
8 accredited out-of-state institution; and
- 9 (18) any other consideration the institution
10 considers necessary to accomplish the institution's stated
11 mission.

12 SECTION 4. Section 51.806, Education Code, is amended to
13 read as follows:

14 Sec. 51.806. REPORT TO COORDINATING BOARD. Each general
15 academic teaching institution shall provide a report annually to
16 the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board describing the
17 composition of the entering class of students admitted under this
18 subchapter. The report must [~~shall~~] include a demographic
19 breakdown, including a breakdown by race, ethnicity, and economic
20 status, of the students admitted under this subchapter [~~Sections~~
21 ~~51.803, 51.804, and 51.805~~].

22 SECTION 5. Section 51.842(a), Education Code, is amended to
23 read as follows:

24 (a) A graduate or professional program of a general academic
25 teaching institution or medical or dental unit may consider the
26 following factors in making an admissions or scholarship decision
27 for admissions into or competitive scholarships for the graduate or

1 professional program:

2 (1) an applicant's academic record as a high school
3 student and undergraduate student;

4 (2) the socioeconomic background of the applicant
5 while the applicant attended elementary and secondary school and
6 was an undergraduate student, including any change in that
7 background;

8 (3) whether the applicant would be the first
9 generation of the applicant's family to attend or graduate from an
10 undergraduate program or from a graduate or professional program;

11 (4) whether the applicant has multilingual
12 proficiency;

13 (5) the applicant's responsibilities while attending
14 elementary and secondary school and as an undergraduate student,
15 including whether the applicant was employed, whether the applicant
16 helped to raise children, and other similar factors;

17 (6) to achieve geographic diversity, the applicant's
18 region of residence at the time of application and, if the applicant
19 graduated from a public high school in this state within the
20 preceding 20 years, the region in which the applicant's school
21 district is located;

22 (7) the applicant's involvement in community
23 activities;

24 (8) the applicant's demonstrated commitment to a
25 particular field of study;

26 (9) for admission into a professional program, the
27 current comparative availability of members of that profession in

1 the applicant's region of residence while the applicant attended
2 elementary and secondary school;

3 ~~[(10) whether the applicant was automatically~~
4 ~~admitted to a general academic teaching institution as an~~
5 ~~undergraduate student under Section 51.803,]~~ and

6 (10) ~~[(11)]~~ the applicant's personal interview.

7 SECTION 6. Sections 28.026, 51.803, 51.804, and 51.8045,
8 Education Code, are repealed.

9 SECTION 7. The change in law made by this Act applies
10 beginning with admissions to a general academic teaching
11 institution for the 2006-2007 academic year. Admissions for an
12 academic period preceding that academic year are covered by the law
13 in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act, and the
14 prior law is continued in effect for that purpose.

15 SECTION 8. This Act takes effect September 1, 2005.