

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

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AN ACT

relating to a master plan for higher education in this state.

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

SECTION 1. Subsections (a-1) and (a-2), Section 61.051, Education Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a-1) To ensure that students enrolled at institutions of higher education are sufficiently prepared to meet the challenges associated with participation in the public affairs of the state and in the global economy, the ~~[The]~~ board shall develop a ~~[five-year]~~ master plan for higher education in this state for a period of years determined by the board. The ~~[five-year]~~ plan must ~~[shall]~~ take into account the resources of private or independent institutions of higher education in this state and must include:

(1) reexamination of the purposes, needs, and goals of higher education in this state;

(2) consideration of methods for defining the roles and missions of institutions of higher education in a way that is consistent with this state's needs and goals;

(3) consideration of more effective methods for funding higher education;

(4) consideration of methods for establishing a coherent long-term student financial aid strategy that takes into account both student financial need and student achievement;

(5) recommendations for strengthening collaboration

1 between two-year and four-year institutions of higher education;

2 (6) recommendations for developing and reinforcing
3 long-term collaboration between and among primary, secondary, and
4 postsecondary educational institutions;

5 (7) consideration of:

6 (A) the state's current and needed allocation of
7 resources for medical education, including graduate medical
8 education;

9 (B) the current and needed geographic
10 distribution of those resources; and

11 (C) the value of associating a medical school
12 with a general academic teaching institution;

13 (8) in consultation with the state demographer and at
14 least one general academic teaching institution, medical and dental
15 unit, private or independent institution of higher education, and
16 public junior college, assessment of:

17 (A) the number of new faculty members needed to
18 achieve the goals of the master plan, and the academic disciplines
19 in which the new faculty members are or will be needed;

20 (B) the number of qualified persons available to
21 serve as faculty members in this state and throughout the nation and
22 the demand for the services of those persons in this state and
23 throughout the nation; and

24 (C) the capacity of public and private
25 institutions of higher education in this state to prepare persons
26 who are qualified to serve as faculty members at institutions in
27 this state and across a broad spectrum of academic disciplines;

1 (9) identification of appropriate incentives,
2 including concurrent enrollment and dual credit, and requirements
3 to facilitate seamless student transitions between and among high
4 schools, public junior colleges, public technical institutes,
5 public state colleges, general academic teaching institutions, and
6 medical and dental units;

7 (10) consideration of concerns regarding the current
8 and projected student enrollment and enrollment capacity of The
9 University of Texas at Austin and Texas A&M University and of
10 methods for ensuring that those institutions maintain
11 competitiveness with other public and private flagship
12 institutions of higher education;

13 (11) consideration of the value of creating additional
14 four-year flagship public research institutions of higher
15 education, including consideration of methods for:

16 (A) selecting the location of those
17 institutions; and

18 (B) ensuring that those institutions admit a
19 qualified and diverse student body;

20 (12) analysis of alternative methods of funding
21 institutions of higher education, with emphasis on the research
22 components of those institutions; and

23 (13) consideration of whether to add new components to
24 the TEXAS Grant program and other state financial aid programs for
25 higher education, including a component that specifically
26 addresses the needs of students at the preschool and primary and
27 secondary school levels, ensures that those students commit to and

1 succeed in postsecondary education, and includes a work-study
2 requirement.

3 (a-2) The board shall periodically review and revise the
4 [~~five-year~~] master plan developed under Subsection (a-1). As a
5 specific element of its review, the board shall identify and
6 analyze the degree to which the plan reflects the continuing higher
7 education needs of this state, as well as any policy changes
8 necessary to improve overall implementation of the plan and the
9 fiscal impact of those changes. The board shall establish
10 procedures for monitoring the board's implementation of the plan,
11 including an analysis of the degree to which its current activities
12 support implementation of the plan and any change in board rules or
13 practices necessary to improve implementation of the plan. The
14 board shall identify additional strategies necessary to achieve the
15 goals of the plan, emphasizing implementation by institutions of
16 higher education and specific recommendations for the different
17 regions of the state. The board shall notify each institution of
18 higher education of all strategies for implementing the plan.

19 SECTION 2. Subsections (a) and (i-1), Section 61.059,
20 Education Code, are amended to read as follows:

21 (a) To finance a system of higher education and to secure an
22 equitable distribution of state funds deemed to be available for
23 higher education, the board shall perform the functions described
24 in this section. Funding policies shall:

25 (1) allocate resources efficiently and provide
26 incentives for programs of superior quality and for institutional
27 diversity;

1 (2) provide incentives for supporting the [~~five-year~~]
2 master plan developed and revised under Section 61.051; and

3 (3) discourage unnecessary duplication of course
4 offerings between institutions and unnecessary construction on any
5 campus.

6 (i-1) Not later than January 1 of each odd-numbered year,
7 the board shall make and submit to the legislature findings and
8 recommendations regarding the degree to which the current higher
9 education funding system, including formula funding and any other
10 transfers of legislative appropriations to institutions of higher
11 education, supports the implementation of the [~~five-year~~] master
12 plan developed and revised under Section 61.051. The board may
13 include its findings and recommendations in the biennial report
14 submitted to the legislature under Section 61.051. In its
15 findings, the board must:

16 (1) identify funding incentives that would encourage
17 implementation of the [~~five-year~~] master plan by institutions of
18 higher education; and

19 (2) assess the accountability of institutions of
20 higher education with respect to legislative appropriations to
21 evaluate institutional allocation of financial resources in
22 accordance with the [~~five-year~~] master plan.

23 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
24 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
25 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
26 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
27 Act takes effect September 1, 2007.