

By: Janek

S.B. No. 1516

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1
2 relating to authorizing certain public junior colleges to offer
3 baccalaureate degree programs.

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

5 SECTION 1. Section 130.0012, Education Code, is amended to
6 read as follows:

7 Sec. 130.0012. [~~PILOT PROJECT:~~] BACCALAUREATE DEGREE
8 PROGRAMS. (a) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall
9 authorize [~~establish a pilot project to examine the feasibility and~~
10 ~~effectiveness of authorizing~~] Brazosport College, Midland College
11 and South Texas College to offer baccalaureate degree programs [~~in~~
12 ~~the fields of applied science and applied technology~~]. Offering a
13 baccalaureate degree program under this section [~~Participation in~~
14 ~~the pilot project~~] does not otherwise alter the role and mission of
15 a public junior college.

16 (b) The coordinating board shall authorize [~~operate the~~
17 ~~pilot project at three public junior~~] baccalaureate degree programs
18 at additional public junior colleges as provided by Subsection (h)
19 [~~colleges, as determined by the coordinating board~~].

20 (c) A public junior college offering a baccalaureate degree
21 program under this section [~~participating in the pilot project~~]
22 must meet all applicable accreditation requirements of the
23 Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and
24 Schools.

1 (d) Unless otherwise provided by coordinating board rule, a
2 [A] public junior college offering a baccalaureate degree program
3 under Subsection (b) [~~participating in the pilot project~~] may not
4 offer more than five baccalaureate degree programs [~~under the~~
5 ~~project~~] at any time. The degree programs are subject to the
6 continuing approval of the coordinating board. In determining what
7 baccalaureate degree programs are to be offered, the junior college
8 and the coordinating board shall consider:

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

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

13 (3) whether those degree programs would unnecessarily
14 duplicate the degree programs offered by other institutions of
15 higher education; and

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

19 (e) Each public junior college that offers a baccalaureate
20 degree program under Subsection (b) [~~the pilot project~~] must enter
21 into an articulation agreement with one or more general academic
22 teaching institutions to ensure that students enrolled in the
23 degree program have an opportunity to complete the degree if the
24 public junior college ceases to offer the degree program. The
25 coordinating board may require a general academic teaching
26 institution that offers a comparable degree program to enter into
27 an articulation agreement with the public junior college as

1 provided by this subsection.

2 (f) Junior-level and senior-level courses offered by [~~In~~
3 ~~its recommendations to the legislature relating to state funding~~
4 ~~for public junior colleges, the coordinating board shall recommend~~
5 ~~that~~] a public junior college under a baccalaureate degree program
6 under this section must be funded at the same formula rate as
7 ~~[receive substantially the same state support for junior-level and~~
8 ~~senior-level courses offered under the pilot project as that~~
9 ~~provided to a general academic teaching institution for]~~
10 substantially similar courses offered by a general academic
11 teaching institution that provides tenured faculty to teach those
12 course and utilizing the General Academic Formula methodology. [~~In~~
13 ~~determining the contact hours attributable to students enrolled in~~
14 ~~a junior-level or senior-level course offered under the pilot~~
15 ~~project used to determine a public junior college's proportionate~~
16 ~~share of state appropriations under Section 130.003, the~~
17 ~~coordinating board shall weigh those contact hours as necessary to~~
18 ~~provide the junior college the appropriate level of state support~~
19 ~~to the extent state funds for those courses are included in the~~
20 ~~appropriations. This subsection does not prohibit the legislature~~
21 ~~from directly appropriating state funds to support junior-level and~~
22 ~~senior-level courses offered under the pilot project.]~~

23 (g) Each public junior college offering a baccalaureate
24 degree program under Subsection (b) [~~participating in the pilot~~
25 ~~project~~] shall prepare a biennial report on the operation and
26 effectiveness of the junior college's baccalaureate degree
27 programs [~~offered under the project~~] and shall deliver a copy of the

1 report to the coordinating board in the form and at the time
2 determined by the coordinating board.

3 (h) The [~~Not later than January 1, 2009, the~~] coordinating
4 board in consultation with junior college representatives shall
5 conduct a study to examine the feasibility and benefits of
6 increasing the number of public junior colleges that offer
7 baccalaureate degree programs under this section and the number of
8 baccalaureate degree programs offered by each of those public
9 junior colleges [~~prepare a progress report on the pilot project~~].
10 The study must include a determination, based on the criteria
11 prescribed by Subsection (d), of which public junior colleges and
12 baccalaureate degree programs would serve the most need. The
13 coordinating board shall complete the study not later than November
14 1, 2008.

15 (i) Not later than January 1, 2009 [~~2011~~], the coordinating
16 board shall establish an application process to select the
17 additional public junior colleges that will be authorized to offer
18 baccalaureate degree programs under this section. In making the
19 selections, the coordinating board shall give priority to programs
20 that would have the most substantial effect on meeting the unmet
21 need for baccalaureate degree programs in this state [~~prepare a~~
22 ~~report on the effectiveness of the pilot project, including any~~
23 ~~recommendations for legislative action regarding the offering of~~
24 ~~baccalaureate degree programs by public junior colleges. The~~
25 ~~coordinating board shall deliver a copy of each report to the~~
26 ~~governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of~~
27 ~~representatives, and the chair of the standing committee of each~~

1 ~~house of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over higher~~
2 ~~education].~~

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

6 ~~[(1) enroll a new student in a baccalaureate degree~~
7 ~~program under the pilot project after the 2011 fall semester,~~

8 ~~[(2) offer junior-level or senior-level courses for~~
9 ~~those degree programs after the 2015 fall semester, unless the~~
10 ~~coordinating board authorizes the college to offer those courses,~~
11 ~~or~~

12 ~~[(3) award a baccalaureate degree under the pilot~~
13 ~~project after the 2015 fall semester, unless the coordinating board~~
14 ~~approves the awarding of the degree.]~~

15 (j) The coordinating board shall prescribe procedures to
16 ensure that each public junior college that offers a degree program
17 under Subsection (b) ~~[the pilot project]~~ informs each student who
18 enrolls in the degree program of ~~[+~~

19 ~~[(1) the nature of the pilot project, including the~~
20 ~~limited duration of the project, and~~

21 ~~[(2)]~~ the articulation agreement entered into under
22 Subsection (e) for the student's degree program.

23 ~~[(k) This section expires January 1, 2020.]~~

24 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
25 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
26 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
27 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this

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1 Act takes effect September 1, 2007.