

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Although Texas has a high participation in career and technical education (CTE) courses, the quality of those offerings varies widely across the state. Despite instances of excellence, the state lacks a systemic approach to encourage quality CTE statewide. With large numbers of skilled workforce likely to retire in the near future, the Texas economy will soon be facing a severe shortage of human capital. While all students need a common core of essential knowledge and skills, different students find alternative delivery methods and subject matter both relevant and rewarding. Quality CTE improves attendance rates, lowers dropout rates, increases graduate rates, and improves scores on standardized tests. It also prepares students for future workforce opportunities.

As proposed, S.B. 1313 rewards the development and taking of sequential CTE programs that align kindergarten through grade 12 with higher education and the workforce. This bill also rewards districts for students who take sequential CTE courses while taking steps to ensure that courses are relevant to student and industry needs and prepares students for college and the workforce. Finally, this bill provides a mechanism to disseminate and promote successful CTE practices and workforce opportunities.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the State Board of Education in SECTION 2 (Section 28.002, Education Code name) of this bill.

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 9 (Section 61.0663, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 7.009, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 7.009. BEST PRACTICES; CLEARINGHOUSE. (a) Requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA), in coordination with the Legislative Budget Board (LBB), to establish an online clearinghouse of information relating to best practices of campuses, school districts, and open-enrollment charter schools. Requires TEA, in addition to information required under Subsection (e), to determine the appropriate topic categories for which a campus, district, or charter school may submit best practices. Requires TEA, to the extent practicable, to ensure that information provided through the online clearinghouse is specific, actionable information relating to the best practices of high-performing and highly efficient campuses, districts, and open-enrollment charter schools and of academically acceptable campuses, districts, and open-enrollment charter schools that have demonstrated significant improvement in student achievement rather than general guidelines relating to campus, district, and open-enrollment charter school operation. Requires that the information be accessible by campuses, school districts, open-enrollment charter schools, and interested members of the public. Deletes existing text requiring TEA to establish an online clearinghouse of information relating to best practices of campuses and school districts regarding instruction, dropout prevention, public school finance, resource allocation, and business practices. Deletes existing text requiring TEA to ensure that information provided through the online clearinghouse is specific, actionable information relating to the best practices of high-performing and

highly efficient campuses and school districts, rather than general guidelines relating to campus and school district operation.

(b) Requires TEA to solicit and collect from LBB, centers for education research established under Section 1.005 (Education Research Centers; Sharing Student Information), and school districts, campuses, and open-enrollment charter schools examples of best practices as determined by TEA under Subsection (a) and as required under Subsection (e). Deletes existing text requiring TEA to solicit and collect from LBB, centers for education research established under Section 1.005, and exemplary or recognized school districts, campuses, and open-enrollment charter schools, as rated under Section 39.072 (Accreditation Standards), examples of best practices relating to instruction, dropout prevention, public school finance, resource allocation, and business practices including best practices relating to curriculum, scope and sequence, compensation and incentive systems, bilingual education and special language programs, compensatory education programs, and the effective use of instructional technology, including online courses.

(c) Makes conforming and nonsubstantive changes.

(d) Makes a conforming change.

(e) Requires the online clearinghouse to collect and provide information relating to best practices in career and technology education, including model programs that connect kindergarten through grade 12 to postsecondary employment or higher education in a seamless system that includes the use of quality internship programs, courses that teach the required curriculum under Section 28.002 (Required Curriculum) in a manner that may be applied to employment skills; models of course scheduling that allows students to participate in a coherent sequence of career and technology courses while meeting the requirement adopted under Section 28.025 (High School Diploma and Certificate; Academic Achievement Record) that students complete four courses in each subject of the foundation curriculum under Section 28.002(a)(1) (regarding the required foundation curriculum that is required in school districts); counseling that assists students in identifying high-demand, high-wage occupations appropriate for the student, diagnoses the current skills of students and determines the skills needed for those high-demand, high-wage occupations, assists students in planning courses and schedules to acquire needed skills, and connects students to employment opportunities and institutions of higher education, and the integration and use of Internet courses into the career and technology education course sequences.

(f) Provides that this subsection expires January 31, 2011. Requires TEA, not later than January 1, 2011, to report to the chair of each standing committee of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over public education recommendations regarding how to use the clearinghouse established under this section as a dynamic technical assistance and support tool. Requires that the recommendations include recommendations regarding using the online clearinghouse to provide classroom teachers, school districts, and open-enrollment charter schools with statewide access to high-quality curricula; consolidating similar state Internet web portals into a central framework; and providing students access to Internet-based academic and career counseling that includes cooperation among the relevant state agencies for the purpose of transitioning students, including students enrolled in a special education program under Subchapter A (Special Education Program), Chapter 29 (Educational Programs), from kindergarten through grade 12 to postsecondary employment or higher education.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 28.002, Education Code, by adding Subsection (d), to require the State Board of Education (SBOE), each time the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) revises the Internet database of THECB's official statewide inventory of workforce

education courses, by rule to revise the essential knowledge and skills of any corresponding career and technology education curriculum as provided by Subsection (c) (regarding the requirement that SBOE and other entities of the public by rule to identify the essential knowledge and skills of each subject of the required curriculum that all students are expected to demonstrate).

SECTION 3. Amends Subchapter F, Chapter 29, Education Code, by adding Section 29.186, as follows:

Sec. 29.186. HIGH-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS LIST. (a) Requires the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), in consultation with the Texas Workforce Investment Council (council), to develop a list of high-demand, high-wage, high-skill occupations in this state that have industry certifications. Requires TWC to provide the research and technical support for developing the list under this subsection.

(b) Requires the council to consider the list developed under Subsection (a) and approve a list for submission to the commissioner. Requires the council, on approval of the list, to deliver the list to the commissioner.

(c) Requires the commissioner, after consultation with the commissioner of higher education, to consider the list delivered under Subsection (b) and approve a final list of high-demand, high-wage, high-skill occupations in this state that have industry certifications.

(d) Requires that the list of high-demand, high-wage, high-skill occupations in this state that have industry certifications be reviewed and approved under the process provided by this section every four years.

SECTION 4. Amends Sections 29.190(a) and (c), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Provides that a student is entitled to a subsidy under this section if the student successfully completes the career and technology program of a school district in which the student receives training and instruction for employment in a high-demand, high-wage, or high-skill trade or occupation, as determined under Section 29.186, or the student is enrolled in a special education program under Subsection A, and passes a certification examination to qualify for a license or certificate for the trade or occupation. Deletes existing text providing that a demonstrated financial need entitles a student to a subsidy under this section. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(c) Requires TEA, on approval by the commissioner, to pay each eligible student an amount equal to the cost paid by the student for the certification examination. Requires a student, to obtain a subsidy under this section, to pay the fee for the examination, and submit to the commissioner a written application on a form prescribed by the commissioner the amount of the fee paid by the student for the certification examination, rather than submit to the commissioner a written application on a form prescribed by the commissioner demonstrating financial need and the amount of the fee paid by the student for the certification examination.

SECTION 5. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 33, Education Code, by adding Section 33.008, as follows:

Sec. 33.008. COUNSELING REGARDING CAREER AND TECHNOLOGY EDUCATION. (a) Requires each counselor at a middle or junior high school, including an open-enrollment charter school offering those grades, to advise students and their parents or guardians regarding the purposes of and available options for career and technology education as part of any information provided to a student for purposes of establishing a personal graduation plan.

(b) Requires a counselor, 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, to provide information about career and technology education to the student and the

student's parent or guardian as part of any information provided to a student for purposes of establishing a personal graduation plan. Requires that the career and technology information provided include information regarding obtaining an aptitude or interest assessment; available course and career options, including projected future demand for particular careers; certification and licensing requirements, including skills needed and coursework required to meet those requirements; and postsecondary education and training opportunities.

SECTION 6. Amends Section 42.154(a), Education Code, to entitle a district, for each full-time equivalent student in average daily attendance in an approved career and technology education program in grades nine through 12 or in career and technology education programs for students with disabilities in grades seven through 12, to an annual allotment equal to the adjusted basic allotment multiplied by a weight of 1.35 and \$50, if the student is enrolled in two or more advanced career and technology education classes for a total of three or more credits, or an advanced course as part of a tech-prep program under Subchapter T (Tech-Prep Education), Chapter 61 (Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board).

SECTION 7. Amends Section 54.0065(a), Education Code, to provide that a qualified student is eligible for a rebate of a portion of the undergraduate tuition the student has paid if the student has attempted no more than three hours in excess of the minimum number of semester credit hours required to complete the degree program, excluding course credit that is earned to satisfy requirements for a Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC) program or from a dual credit course for which the student received credit toward a high school diploma but that is not required to complete the degree program.

SECTION 8. Amends Section 61.0595(d), Education Code, to make conforming and nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 9. Amends Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, by adding Section 61.0663, as follows:

Sec. 61.0663. ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY. (a) Requires THECB, to assess the economic benefits and preparation for employment provided by public institutions of higher education, to identify students enrolled in the public education system and collect data on which postsecondary program, if any, the students enroll in and the type of employment the students obtain following completion of high school or the program, as applicable.

(b) Requires THECB, in consultation with TEA, TWC, and the comptroller of public accounts (comptroller), to use the education and employment data collected under Subsection (a), and any additional relevant data, to assess the economic impact of secondary and postsecondary training and education. Requires that the information be produced in a manner that demonstrates patterns of postsecondary enrollment and employment placement, provides an assessment of the economic benefits of institutions of higher education and programs at those institutions to students and the state, and provides an assessment of the economic benefit of public education programs that prepare students who transition directly to postsecondary employment.

(c) Requires that the information produced under this section be capable of electronic dissemination and made available to the public in a format that assists students in making decisions regarding education and career choices.

(d) Provides that this section does not authorize the disclosure of student information that may not be disclosed under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (20 U.S.C. Section 1232g). Requires THECB, in conjunction with the commissioner, the comptroller, and TWC, to adopt rules to protect the confidentiality of student information.

SECTION 10. Amends Section 61.0762, Education Code, as follows:

Sec. 61.0762. PROGRAMS TO ENHANCE STUDENT SUCCESS. (a) Creates this subsection from existing text.

(b) Requires THECB, as one of the programs adopted under Subsection (a)(5) (regarding other programs as determined by THECB that support the participation and success goals in "Closing the Gaps," the state's master plan for higher education), to establish education resource centers (centers) to create within school communities interest in and information concerning attendance at institutions of higher education. Requires each center to attempt to coordinate among students, parents, school counselors, and institutions of higher education in providing access to resources helpful in preparation for attendance at and admission to institutions of higher education. Requires that one or more persons associated with each center be trained and able to assist the families of high school students complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form. Requires each center to provide information concerning career and technical education, including certification and licensing requirements and available course and career options and degree programs. Authorizes a center under this subsection to be located on a high school or middle school campus or at a site within a community that is conveniently located to many students, such as a public library or local workforce or community center, or is authorized to be a mobile center that visits schools or other places where students are likely to gather.

(c) Requires THECB to conduct ongoing evaluations of programs developed under Subsection (a) and any other programs developed to provide information concerning postsecondary educational or employment opportunities to determine the effectiveness of the programs in meeting the goals of "Closing the Gaps," the state's master plan for higher education.

(d) Requires THECB, in conjunction with the comptroller, to develop an Internet website for the purpose of providing information to the public about postsecondary educational and employment opportunities. Requires the website to provide certain information regarding career and technology education, employment opportunities, and financial aid opportunities in English and Spanish.

(e) Authorizes THECB, for the purpose of developing the Internet website under Subsection (d), to require TEA to provide information on educational program and outcomes and TWC to provide information on workforce programs and outcomes.

(f) Requires THECB, as one of the programs adopted under Subsection (a)(5), in conjunction with the comptroller and TWC, to establish mobile career centers that visit schools and other places where students are likely to gather. Requires the mobile career centers to provide students certain information on various occupations including future employment demand, earning potential, skills and training needed, a list of courses applicable to the occupation, and information concerning post entry-level employment opportunities in the occupation and information concerning the education required to access those opportunities.

SECTION 11. Amends Chapter 61, Education Code, by adding Subchapter T-1, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER T-1. CAREER AND TECHNICAL EDUCATION

Sec. 61.861. DEVELOPMENT OF MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE COURSES FOR HIGH-DEMAND OCCUPATIONS. (a) Authorizes the commissioner of higher education, in consultation with the comptroller and TWC, to award a grant in an amount not to exceed \$1 million to an institution of higher education to develop advanced mathematics and science courses to prepare high school students for employment in a high-demand occupation. Requires the commissioner of higher education, the comptroller, and TWC to jointly determine what is considered a high-demand occupation for purposes of this subchapter.

(b) Requires an institution of higher education to work in partnership with at least one independent school district and a business entity in developing a course for purposes of this section.

(c) Requires that a course developed for purposes of this section meet certain criteria relating to the development of relevant skills to be prepared for employment or additional training for a high-demand occupation as well as satisfy mathematics or science requirement.

(d) Requires an institution of higher education to periodically review and revise the curriculum for a course developed for purposes of this section to accommodate changes in industry standards for the high-demand occupation.

Sec. 61.862. GRANT APPLICATION CRITERIA. Requires the commissioner of higher education, in consultation with the comptroller and TWC, to establish application criteria for a grant under this subchapter and in making an award, to give priority to courses that meet certain criteria for preparing students to enter high-demand, high-wage, and high-skill occupations; can be transferred as college credit; and are developed as part of a sequence of courses that include statewide availability of the instructional materials and training for the courses at a nominal cost to public educational institutions in this state.

Sec. 61.863. USE OF FUNDS. Authorizes an institution of higher education to use funds awarded under this section to develop, in connection with a course described by Subsection (a), curriculum; assessments; or instructional materials, including technology-based supplemental materials.

Sec.61.864. REVIEW OF COURSES. Requires that courses developed for which a grant is awarded under this subchapter be reviewed by the commissioner of higher education, in consultation with the comptroller and TWC, once every four years to determine whether the course is being used by public educational institutions in this state, and prepares high school students with the skills necessary for employment in the high-demand occupation.

Sec. 61.865. MATCHING CONTRIBUTION REQUIRED. Requires an institution of higher education awarded a grant under this subchapter to obtain from one or more business entities in the industry for which students taking courses developed under Section 61.861 are training, in a total amount equal to the amount of the state grant, gifts, grants, or donations of funds, or contributions of property that may be used in providing the courses.

Sec. 61.866. LIMITATION ON TOTAL AMOUNT OF GRANTS. Prohibits the total amount of grants awarded under this subchapter, in any state fiscal biennium, from exceeding \$10 million.

Sec. 61.867. FUNDING OF GRANTS. Requires the commissioner of higher education to administer this section using available appropriations and gifts, grants, and donations made for the purposes of this subchapter.

SECTION 12. Repealer: Section 29.190(b) (regarding the commissioner of education adopting guidelines for determining financial need consistent with the definition of financial need adopted by the College Board and Education Testing Service), Education Code.

SECTION 13. Provides that Section 54.0065(a), as amended by this Act, applies to a tuition rebate regardless of the date a student enters a general academic teaching institution as a first-time student.

SECTION 14. Provides that Section 61.0595, Education Code, as amended by this Act, applies beginning with the funding recommendations made under Section 61.059, Education Code, for the 2011-2012 academic year.

SECTION 15. Provides that Sections 4, 5, and 6 of this Act apply beginning with the 2009-2010 school year.

SECTION 16. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2009.