

By: Villarreal

H.B. No. 4405

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to establishment of the TEXAS Grant early enrollment guarantee program.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter M, Chapter 56, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 56.312 to read as follows:

Sec. 56.312. TEXAS GRANT EARLY ENROLLMENT GUARANTEE PROGRAM. (a) Following enrollment in seventh grade and prior to enrollment in twelfth grade in a Texas Public School, a student who is a resident of this state as determined by coordinating board rules may apply for the TEXAS Grant early enrollment guarantee program.

(b) A student is eligible to enroll in the TEXAS Grant early enrollment guarantee program if the Higher Education Coordinating Board certifies that the student demonstrates financial need for purposes of the TEXAS Grant early enrollment guarantee program.

(c) A student who is eligible for the TEXAS Grant early enrollment guarantee program may enroll by signing a contract with the state of Texas stipulating that the state will provide TEXAS Grants to the person if he or she complies with the TEXAS Grant eligibility requirements in place at the time the student enrolls in an undergraduate degree program or certificate program at an eligible institution.

(d) The coordinating board shall adopt rules that require

1 students who enroll in the TEXAS Grant early enrollment guarantee
2 program to apply for any available financial aid or assistance in
3 the manner typically required for students eligible to received a
4 TEXAS grant.

5 (e) Notwithstanding the financial need of the student at the
6 time her or she enrolls in an undergraduate degree program or
7 certificate program at an eligible institution, a student who has
8 enrolled in the TEXAS Grant Early enrollment guarantee program, is
9 enrolled full-time in an eligible institution, and is otherwise
10 eligible to received a grant under this subchapter shall received a
11 minimum awards of at least the amount provided to a student enrolled
12 full-time at a public junior college.

13 (f) The coordinating board may adopt rules that allow the
14 coordinating board to increase or decrease, in proportion to the
15 number of semester credit hours in which a student is enrolled, the
16 minimum grant award provided to students who have enrolled in the
17 TEXAS Grant early enrollment program.

18 (g) The coordinating board shall administer the TEXAS Grant
19 early enrollment guarantee program and shall adopt any rules
20 necessary to implement the program, including:

21 (1) a streamlined financial need assessment tool for
22 determining eligibility for the TEXAS Grant early guarantee
23 enrollment program, based on information ordinarily provided to the
24 Internal Revenue Service of the Unites States on the income tax
25 forms of dependent students and their parents or guardians.

26 (2) the contract in part (c)

27 (3) an outreach program to notify students, parents

1 and teachers of the TEXAS Grant early enrollment guarantee program,
2 with an emphasis on outreach to schools with disproportionately
3 high numbers of economically disadvantaged students or students who
4 have traditionally underserved by higher education.

5 (4) an annual statement to be distributed to students
6 who participate in the program which includes, but is not limited to
7 information about:

8 (A) the importance of academic preparation for
9 higher education,

10 (B) financial aid,

11 (C) college savings options available throughout
12 the state of Texas, federal financial aid programs, differences in
13 projected earning for students who complete high school diplomas,
14 associate, baccalaureate, professional, or graduate degrees, and a
15 statement of what enrollees' minimum and possible maximum TEXAS
16 Grant awards are projected to be based on the most current year.

17 (D) and to the extent practicable, the report
18 should reflect students' individual progress in their academic
19 programs including coursework and test scores.

20 (E) provide students and their families with the
21 option to have relevant academic and contact information released
22 to accredited public and private higher education institutions for
23 recruitment purposes.

24 (5) an annual report on the program starting with the
25 first year students enrolled in the TEXAS Grant early enrollment
26 guarantee program matriculate into higher education

27 SECTION 2. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

1 shall adopt rules to implement the TEXAS grant early enrollment
2 guaranteed program as required by Section 56.312, Education Code,
3 as added by this Act, beginning with the 2010-2011 school year.

4 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
5 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
6 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
7 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
8 Act takes effect September 1, 2009.