

BILL ANALYSIS

C.S.S.B. 850
By: Zaffirini
Higher Education
Committee Report (Substituted)

BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE

This bill would stop funding for dual credit courses that are not likely to transfer (e.g., physical education courses) and incentivize institutions to provide only those courses that will be transferable to a two-year or four-year institution. As dual credit courses have increased in popularity since 2003, courses are offered that rarely transfer, limiting the effectiveness of dual credit as a means for expanding college access and success. Current law allows institutions of higher education to receive formula funding for dual credit coursework, regardless of whether the course is in the core curriculum.

This consolidation of dual credit courses would help address some of the concerns regarding quality of dual credit coursework. With the elimination of courses that do not transfer, the state can begin to "wrap its arms" around dual credit coursework and better analyze cost and effectiveness issues.

This bill would limit formula funding for dual credit courses to: courses in the core curriculum, foreign language courses, and career and technical education courses that apply to a certificate or associate's degree at the institution providing course credit.

C.S.S.B. 850 amends current law relating to formula funding for certain semester credit hours earned for dual course credit.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution.

ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Section 61.059, Education Code, by adding Subsections (p) and (p-1) as follows:

(p) Prohibits the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in its instruction and operations formula applicable to an institution of higher education, from including any semester credit hours earned for dual course credit by a high school student for high school and college credit at the institution unless those credit hours are earned through any of the following:

(1) a course in the core curriculum of the institution providing course credit;

(2) a career and technical education course that applies to any certificate or associate's degree offered by the institution providing course credit; and

(3) a foreign language course.

(p-1) Provides that Subsection (p) does not apply to a course completed by a student as part of the early college education program established under Section 29.908, Education Code.

EFFECTIVE DATE

Upon passage, or, if the Act does not receive the necessary vote, the Act takes effect September 1, 2011.

COMPARISON OF ORIGINAL TO SUBSTITUTE

C.S.S.B. 850 contains a provision not found in the original bill which provides that Section 61.059 (p), Education Code, as created by the bill, does not apply to a course completed by a student as part of the early college education program established under Section 29.908, Education Code.