

By: Pitts

H.B. No. 2440

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the creation of a Texas Junior College System office.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 130, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter K to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER K. TEXAS JUNIOR COLLEGE SYSTEM OFFICE

Sec. 130.301. APPLICABILITY. This subchapter supersedes a conflicting statute outside this subchapter unless this subchapter or the outside statute expressly provides otherwise.

Sec. 130.302. TEXAS JUNIOR COLLEGE SYSTEM; ROLE AND MISSION. (a) The Texas Junior College System office oversees Texas public junior colleges.

(b) Public junior colleges are two-year institutions primarily serving the residents of their local taxing districts and service areas in Texas and offering vocational, technical, and academic courses for certification or associate degrees. A public junior college shall also provide continuing education, remedial and compensatory education consistent with open-admission policies, and programs of counseling and guidance.

(c) The Texas Junior College System shall contribute to the educational and economic development of the State of Texas by ensuring that each institution in the system insists on excellence in all academic pursuits, including instruction, research, and public service. Faculty research, using the facilities provided

1 for and consistent with the primary function of each institution in  
2 the system, shall be encouraged. Funding for research should be  
3 obtained from private sources, competitively acquired sources,  
4 local taxes, and other local resources.

5 Sec. 130.303. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

6 (1) "Coordinating board" means the Texas Higher  
7 Education Coordinating Board.

8 (2) "Director" means the executive director of the  
9 Texas Junior College System office.

10 (3) "General academic teaching institution,"  
11 "institution of higher education," and "private or independent  
12 institution of higher education" have the meanings assigned by  
13 Section 61.003.

14 (4) "System" means the Texas Junior College System.

15 Sec. 130.304. FUNDING; GIFTS AND GRANTS. (a) The  
16 legislature shall appropriate funds for administration of the Texas  
17 Junior College System.

18 (b) The system may solicit and accept gifts and grants from  
19 any public or private source.

20 (c) Notwithstanding Section 61.059, the system shall devise  
21 and establish funding formulas to guide the legislature in making  
22 appropriations to public junior colleges in a manner that balances  
23 the amount of state funding provided to public junior colleges with  
24 the benefits contributed by public junior colleges to the state.  
25 Funding shall be allocated to junior college districts in  
26 accordance with the extent to which those districts meet the goals  
27 in the system's strategic plan. The director must ensure that the

1 measurements used to allocate funds are predictable and clearly  
2 communicated.

3 Sec. 130.305. SYSTEM OFFICE; EXECUTIVE OFFICER. (a) The  
4 system office shall provide oversight and coordination of the  
5 activities of each public junior college.

6 (b) The coordinating board shall appoint an executive  
7 director of the system and determine the executive director's  
8 tenure, salary, and duties.

9 (c) The director shall recommend a plan for the organization  
10 of the system and employ not more than 10 full-time employees to  
11 administer the system.

12 (d) The director is responsible to the coordinating board  
13 for the general management and success of the system, and the  
14 coordinating board shall cooperate with the director to carry out  
15 that responsibility.

16 (e) In addition to other powers and duties provided by this  
17 code or other law, the system office shall recommend necessary  
18 policies and rules to the coordinating board and to the governing  
19 board of each junior college district to ensure compliance with all  
20 laws and to provide uniformity in data collection and financial  
21 reporting procedures.

22 Sec. 130.306. DUTIES OF SYSTEM OFFICE. The system office  
23 shall:

24 (1) formulate a comprehensive strategic plan for  
25 junior college districts that clearly links statewide goals to  
26 specific targets for each district;

27 (2) establish common transfer standards between

- 1 public junior colleges and general academic teaching institutions;  
2 (3) develop common core courses that are completely  
3 transferable to all general academic teaching institutions;  
4 (4) oversee dual credit agreements to ensure  
5 transferability to upper level institutions of higher education;  
6 (5) allocate the state's formula funds to junior  
7 college districts in a manner consistent with statute;  
8 (6) define clear goals and milestones for junior  
9 college districts and allocate any available performance funding in  
10 pursuit of those goals;  
11 (7) provide direct training or facilitate the  
12 provision of training to junior college district board members and  
13 executive staff on matters ranging from best practices for fiscal  
14 accountability to increasing transparency;  
15 (8) represent the interests of junior college  
16 districts before the legislature and the governor, including  
17 funding requests, and represent the state's interests to the  
18 districts;  
19 (9) establish and enforce rules of fiscal  
20 accountability for junior college districts, including minimum  
21 internal audit standards;  
22 (10) represent junior college districts officially in  
23 all negotiations with state and federal entities;  
24 (11) be responsible for the allocation of all or part  
25 of federal financial aid for public junior colleges;  
26 (12) act as an information resource to the  
27 legislature, including providing the legislature with impact

1 statements and fiscal note data on the effects of proposed  
2 legislation, as well as analysis of proposed substantive policy  
3 actions affecting public junior colleges;

4 (13) conduct research, using system office resources  
5 or by contract, on issues critical to public junior colleges and the  
6 state, including transfer facilitation and dual credit programs;  
7 and

8 (14) recommend changes to junior college district  
9 service areas and taxing district boundaries as necessary to  
10 reflect statewide interests.

11 Sec. 130.307. CONTRACTS WITH INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER  
12 EDUCATION. The system may enter into a contract or other agreement  
13 with an institution of higher education or a private or independent  
14 institution of higher education for joint participation in any  
15 program that may benefit the State of Texas.

16 Sec. 130.308. POSTSECONDARY WORKFORCE EDUCATION WORKGROUP.  
17 The system office may establish and coordinate a workgroup composed  
18 of representatives of the Texas Workforce Commission, the Texas  
19 Education Agency, the coordinating board, and industry to make  
20 recommendations regarding curriculum alignment and consistency in  
21 postsecondary workforce education.

22 SECTION 2. Section 130.0011, Education Code, is repealed.

23 SECTION 3. (a) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating  
24 Board shall establish the Texas Junior College System office not  
25 later than January 1, 2013.

26 (b) Beginning with the state fiscal biennium beginning  
27 September 1, 2013, all functions of the Texas Junior College System

1 office described by Subchapter K, Chapter 130, Education Code, as  
2 added by this Act, performed by the Texas Higher Education  
3 Coordinating Board before the effective date of this Act are  
4 transferred to the Texas Junior College System office if not  
5 previously transferred to that office.

6 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect September 1, 2011.