By: Duncan S.B. No. 1620

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COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR S.B. No. 1620 By: Patrick

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

relating to substitution of certain career and technology courses for certain mathematics and science courses otherwise required under the recommended high school program.

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

SECTION 1. Section 21.044, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 21.044. EDUCATOR PREPARATION. (a) The board shall propose rules establishing the training requirements a person must accomplish to obtain a certificate, enter an internship, or enter an induction-year program. The board shall specify the minimum academic qualifications required for a certificate.

(b) In proposing rules under this section, the board shall specify that to obtain a certificate to teach an "applied STEM course," as that term is defined by Section 28.027, at a secondary school, a person must:

(1) pass the certification test administered by the recognized national or international business and industry group that created the curriculum the applied STEM course is based on; and

(2) have at a minimum:

(A) an associate degree from an accredited institution of higher education; and

(B) three years of work experience in an occupation for which the applied STEM course is intended to prepare the student.

SECTION 2. Subchapter B, Chapter 28, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 28.027 to read as follows:

Sec. 28.027. APPLIED SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS COURSES. (a) In this section, "applied STEM course" means an applied science, technology, engineering, or mathematics course offered as part of a school district's career and technology education curriculum.

(b) The State Board of Education shall establish a process under which an applied STEM course may be reviewed and approved for purposes of satisfying the mathematics and science curriculum requirements for the recommended high school program imposed under Section 28.025(b-1)(1)(A) through substitution of the applied STEM course for a specific mathematics or science course otherwise required under the recommended high school program and completed during the student's fourth year of mathematics or science course work.

(c) The process must provide that an applied STEM course is entitled to be approved for the purpose described by Subsection (b) if the course meets the following requirements:

(1) the applied STEM course is part of a curriculum created by a recognized national or international business and industry group to prepare a student for a national or international business and industry certification or license;

(2) the applied STEM course qualifies as:

(A) a dual credit course; or

(B) an articulated postsecondary course provided for local credit or articulated postsecondary advanced technical credit course provided for state credit;

(3) the essential knowledge and skills covered in the applied STEM course are equivalent to the essential knowledge and skills covered in the mathematics or science course for which the

applied STEM course is proposed to be approved for substitution; and

(4) the applied STEM course:

(A) provides substantial mathematics content or science content, as applicable, taught in an applied or symbolic format, that enables a student to develop relevant critical thinking skills necessary for preparation for employment or additional training in a career identified by the Texas Workforce Commission as a high-demand or emerging occupation; and

(B) incorporates college and career readiness skills.

(d) If an applied STEM course approved under this section is part of a coherent sequence of career and technology courses, a student is eligible to enroll in the applied STEM course for the purpose described in Subsection (b) only if the student has completed the prerequisite course work, if any, for the applied STEM course.

(e) Notwithstanding Section 39.023(c) or 39.025, a student who enrolls in an applied STEM course approved under this section as a substitute for a course for which an end-of-course assessment instrument is adopted under Section 39.023(c) shall be assessed using the assessment instrument developed for the applied STEM course by the recognized national or international business and industry group that created the applied STEM course curriculum. The calculation of the student's performance on the assessment instrument must comply with all applicable rules.

SECTION 3. Subsection (b-2), Section 28.025, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b-2) In adopting rules under Subsection (b-1), the State Board of Education shall allow a student to comply with the curriculum requirements for a mathematics [~~course under Subsection (b-1)(1) taken after the successful completion of an Algebra II course~~] or science course under Subsection (b-1)(1) [~~taken after the successful completion of a physics course~~] by successfully completing an advanced career and technical course designated by the State Board of Education as containing substantively similar and rigorous academic content. The rules may not require Algebra II as a prerequisite for an applied STEM course that is permitted to be substituted for a mathematics course under Section 28.027 or a physics course as a prerequisite for an applied STEM course that is permitted to be substituted for a science course under Section 28.027 [~~A student may use the option provided by this subsection for not more than two courses~~].

SECTION 4. Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 61.0517 to read as follows:

Sec. 61.0517. APPLIED STEM COURSES. (a) In this section, "applied STEM course" means an applied science, technology, engineering, or mathematics course offered as part of a school district's career and technology education curriculum and approved, as provided by Section 28.027, by the State Board of Education for purposes of satisfying the mathematics and science curriculum requirements for the recommended high school program imposed under Section 28.025(b-1)(1)(A).

(b) The board shall ensure that academic credit for an applied STEM course is freely transferable among all institutions of higher education in this state.

(c) The board shall include applied STEM courses in the board's listing of courses approved for offer by a public junior college or public technical institute.

SECTION 5. Not later than September 1, 2012, the commissioner of education shall establish and implement the process required by Section 28.027, Education Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 6. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this Act takes effect September 1, 2011.

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