

House Bill 2910
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 61.0905 to read as follows:

Sec. 61.0905. AGREEMENTS AND GRANTS TO INCREASE DEGREE COMPLETION RATES. (a) The board may, in partnership with institutions of higher education, enter into an agreement with a nonprofit organization to assist the board in identifying and implementing effective methods for increasing degree completion rates at institutions of higher education, including by:

(1) identifying and promoting innovative models, emerging technology platforms, and best practices for increasing degree completion rates in areas including:

(A) developmental education;

(B) financial assistance;

(C) student support services; and

(D) transfer or articulation agreements;

(2) providing data, research, and evaluation support to assist the board in assessing the effectiveness of pilot programs in increasing degree completion rates;

(3) coordinating ongoing local, state, federal, and philanthropic initiatives to increase degree completion rates; and

(4) determining the extent of implementation of degree completion rate improvement models across a region or the state and the effectiveness of the models as student population increases.

(b) The board by rule may establish a grant program to fund projects, including the award of a grant to a nonprofit organization that enters into an agreement with the board under this section, related to the improvement of degree completion rates. If the board establishes a grant program

SENATE VERSION (IE)

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CONFERENCE

House Bill 2910
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

under this section, the board by rule shall prescribe the application procedure and criteria for awarding a grant.

(c) Grants awarded by the board under this section may be funded by:

(1) appropriations; and

(2) gifts, grants, or other donations.

SECTION 2. 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.

No equivalent provision.

SENATE VERSION (IE)

under this section, the board by rule shall prescribe the application procedure and criteria for awarding a grant.

(c) Grants awarded by the board under this section may be funded by:

(1) appropriations; and

(2) gifts, grants, or other donations.

(d) Not later than January 1, 2012, the board shall report to the Joint Oversight Committee on Higher Education Governance, Excellence, and Transparency a description of:

(1) the types of nonprofit organizations eligible for a grant under this section;

(2) grants awarded under this section; and

(3) a survey of partnerships between other states and nonprofit organizations to increase degree completion rates, including identification of best practices.

(e) This section expires September 1, 2013.

SECTION 2. Same as House version.

FA1(S1)-(S2)SECTION __. Chapter 61, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter GG to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER GG. TEXAS SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY, ENGINEERING, AND MATHEMATICS (T-STEM) CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Sec. 61.9791. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "STEM program" means a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics program.

Sec. 61.9792. SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM. The board shall

CONFERENCE

House Bill 2910
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SENATE VERSION (IE)

CONFERENCE

establish and administer, in accordance with this subchapter and board rules, the Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (T-STEM) Challenge Scholarship program under which the board provides a scholarship to a student who meets the eligibility criteria prescribed by Section 61.9793.

Sec. 61.9793. ELIGIBLE STUDENT. (a) To receive an initial scholarship under this subchapter, a student must:

(1) graduate from high school with a grade point average of at least 3.0 on a four-point scale in mathematics and science courses;

(2) enroll in a STEM program at an eligible institution; and

(3) agree to work no more than 15 hours a week for a business participating in the STEM program.

(b) To continue to qualify for a scholarship under this subchapter, a student must:

(1) remain enrolled in a STEM program at an eligible institution;

(2) maintain an overall grade point average of at least 3.0 on a four-point scale;

(3) complete at least 80 percent of all semester credit hours attempted for each semester;

(4) complete at least 30 semester credit hours per academic year; and

(5) work no more than 15 hours a week for a business participating in the STEM program.

Sec. 61.9794. ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION. (a) To qualify as an eligible institution under this subchapter, an institution must:

(1) be a public junior college or public technical institute;

(2) admit at least 50 students into a STEM program each academic year; and

(3) develop partnerships with business and industry to:

House Bill 2910
Senate Amendments
Section-by-Section Analysis

HOUSE VERSION

SENATE VERSION (IE)

CONFERENCE

(A) identify local employment needs in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) fields; and

(B) provide part-time employment for students enrolled in a STEM program.

(b) To maintain eligibility, beginning with the second year following implementation of a scholarship program under this subchapter, an institution must demonstrate to the board that at least 70 percent of the institution's T-STEM Challenge Scholarship graduates, within three months after graduation, are:

(1) employed by a business in a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) field; or

(2) enrolled in upper-division courses leading to a baccalaureate degree in a Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) field.

Sec. 61.9795. AMOUNT; FUNDING. (a) Subject to available funding, the board shall award scholarships, with at least 50 percent of the amount awarded from private funds.

(b) An eligible student may receive a scholarship awarded under this subchapter for not more than two academic years.

(c) The board may use any available revenue, including legislative appropriations, and may solicit and accept gifts and grants for purposes of this subchapter. [FA1]

No equivalent provision.

SECTION __. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall award scholarships under Subchapter GG, Chapter 61, Education Code, as added by this Act, beginning with the 2011-2012 academic year. The coordinating board shall adopt the rules required by that subchapter as soon as practicable after this Act takes effect. [FA1]