

By: Campbell

S.B. No. 18

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to state savings and government efficiency achieved through a taxpayer savings grant program.

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

SECTION 1. Section 42.253, Education Code, is amended by adding Subsection (b-1) to read as follows:

(b-1) Notwithstanding Subsection (b), the commissioner shall adjust enrollment estimates and entitlement for each school district for each school year based on information provided by the comptroller under Section 42.501(f). This subsection expires September 1, 2018.

SECTION 2. Chapter 42, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter J to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER J. TAXPAYER SAVINGS GRANTS

Sec. 42.501. TAXPAYER SAVINGS GRANT PROGRAM. (a) In this section, "eligible student" means a school-age child who resides in the state and who:

(1) is entering kindergarten or first grade;

(2) attended a public school for all of the academic year immediately preceding initial participation in the Taxpayer Savings Grant Program; or

(3) participated in the program in a preceding academic year.

(b) A parent or legal guardian of an eligible student who

1 agrees to accept reimbursement in an amount that is less than the  
2 state average amount of maintenance and operations expenditures per  
3 student may receive reimbursement from the state for the tuition  
4 paid for the enrollment of the eligible student at a private school  
5 in an amount that is the lesser of:

6 (1) the tuition paid; or

7 (2) 60 percent of the state average maintenance and  
8 operations expenditures per student.

9 (c) Money from the available school fund and federal funds  
10 may not be used for reimbursement under this section.

11 (d) A private school voluntarily selected by a parent for  
12 the parent's child to attend, with or without governmental  
13 assistance, may not be required to comply with any state law or rule  
14 governing the school's educational program that was not in effect  
15 on January 1, 2013.

16 (e) The comptroller shall provide reimbursement to a parent  
17 or legal guardian of an eligible student as authorized by this  
18 section.

19 (f) Not later than October 1 of each year, the comptroller  
20 shall notify the commissioner and the Legislative Budget Board of  
21 the number of eligible students likely to participate in the  
22 program, disaggregated by the school district or open-enrollment  
23 charter school the eligible students would otherwise attend. Not  
24 later than March 1 of each year, the comptroller shall provide final  
25 information to the commissioner and the Legislative Budget Board  
26 regarding the number of students participating in the program,  
27 disaggregated in the same manner as the initial information.

1       SECTION 3. As soon as practicable, but not later than the  
2 45th day after the effective date of this Act, the comptroller, in  
3 coordination with the commissioner of education, shall adopt rules  
4 to implement the Taxpayer Savings Grant Program under Section  
5 42.501, Education Code, as added by this Act, including rules to  
6 prevent fraud in financial transactions under the program and to  
7 determine the net savings resulting from implementation of the  
8 program.

9       SECTION 4. Notwithstanding Section 42.501(f), Education  
10 Code, as added by this Act, the comptroller of public accounts shall  
11 provide the specified information otherwise due under that  
12 subsection not later than October 1, 2013, on the earliest date  
13 before January 1, 2014, that the information is available,  
14 considering the effective date of this Act and the effective date of  
15 rules implementing this Act.

16       SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2013, if it  
17 receives a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each  
18 house, as provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution.  
19 If this Act does not receive the vote necessary for effect on that  
20 date, this Act takes effect on the 91st day after the last day of the  
21 legislative session.