

By: Zaffirini

S.B. No. 43

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1  
2 relating to the institutions of higher education eligible to  
3 participate in the Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and  
4 Mathematics (T-STEM) Challenge Scholarship program.

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

6 SECTION 1. Section 61.9792, Education Code, is amended to  
7 read as follows:

8 Sec. 61.9792. SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM. The board shall  
9 establish and administer, in accordance with this subchapter and  
10 board rules, the Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and  
11 Mathematics (T-STEM) Challenge Scholarship program under which the  
12 board provides a grant to an eligible institution for the purpose of  
13 providing a scholarship to a student who meets the eligibility  
14 criteria prescribed by Section 61.9793.

15 SECTION 2. Section 61.9794, Education Code, is amended to  
16 read as follows:

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

19 (1) be one of the following:

20 (A) a public junior college, public junior  
21 college district, or public technical institute that admits~~+~~

22 [~~(2) admit~~] at least 50 students into a STEM program  
23 each academic year; or

24 (B) a general academic teaching institution that

1 admits into a STEM program each academic year eligible students  
2 who:

3 (i) previously participated in a T-STEM  
4 Challenge Scholarship program at a public junior college or public  
5 technical institute; and

6 (ii) completed at least 45 semester credit  
7 hours at the college or institute before enrolling in the general  
8 academic teaching institution; and

9 (2) [~~3~~] develop partnerships with business and  
10 industry to:

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

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

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

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

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

25 SECTION 3. Section [61.9795](#), Education Code, is amended to  
26 read as follows:

27 Sec. 61.9795. AMOUNT; FUNDING. (a) Subject to available

1 funding, the board shall award a grant to an eligible institution  
2 for the purpose of providing scholarships, with at least 50 percent  
3 of the amount awarded from private funds.

4 (b) Except as provided by Subsection (b-1), an ~~[An]~~ eligible  
5 student may receive a scholarship awarded under this subchapter for  
6 not more than two academic years.

7 (b-1) A student who previously participated in the T-STEM  
8 Challenge Scholarship program at a public junior college or public  
9 technical institute and completed at least 45 semester credit hours  
10 at the college or institute, who then enrolls in a general academic  
11 teaching institution, may receive a scholarship awarded under this  
12 subchapter for two additional academic years. The student must  
13 meet the eligibility requirements established under Section  
14 [61.9793](#).

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

18 SECTION 4. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
19 shall award scholarships under Subchapter GG, Chapter 61, Education  
20 Code, as amended by this Act, beginning with the 2015-2016 academic  
21 year. The coordinating board shall adopt the rules required by that  
22 subchapter as soon as practicable after this Act takes effect.

23 SECTION 5. This Act takes effect September 1, 2015.