

By: Ellis

S.B. No. 271

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

1 AN ACT
2 relating to authorization by the Texas Higher Education
3 Coordinating Board for certain public junior colleges to offer
4 baccalaureate degree programs.

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

6 SECTION 1. Section 130.0012, Education Code, is amended by
7 amending Subsections (a), (b), (d), (e), (g), and (h) and adding
8 Subsections (a-1), (g-1), (k), and (l) to read as follows:

9 (a) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board may
10 [~~shall~~] authorize public junior colleges to offer baccalaureate
11 degree programs in the fields of applied science, [~~and~~] applied
12 technology, and nursing under this section. Offering a
13 baccalaureate degree program under this section does not otherwise
14 alter the role and mission of a public junior college.

15 (a-1) Each biennium, the coordinating board, in
16 consultation with the Texas Workforce Commission, institutions of
17 higher education, and local workforce development boards, shall
18 identify at least three but not more than five applied science
19 disciplines for which a baccalaureate degree program may be offered
20 by a public junior college under this section.

21 (b) The coordinating board:
22 (1) shall authorize baccalaureate degree programs at
23 each public junior college that previously participated in a pilot
24 project to offer baccalaureate degree programs; and

1 (2) may authorize baccalaureate degree programs at one
2 or more public junior colleges that offer a degree program in the
3 field of applied science or the field of nursing and have
4 demonstrated a workforce need.

5 (d) Baccalaureate degree programs offered [~~A public junior~~
6 ~~college offering a baccalaureate degree program~~] under this section
7 [~~may not offer more than five baccalaureate degree programs at any~~
8 ~~time. The degree programs~~] are subject to the continuing approval
9 of the coordinating board.

10 (e) In determining what baccalaureate degree programs are
11 to be offered, the coordinating board shall:

12 (1) apply the same criteria and standards the
13 coordinating board uses to approve baccalaureate degree programs at
14 general academic teaching institutions; and

15 (2) consider the following factors:

16 (A) [(1)] the workforce need for the degree
17 programs in the region served by the junior college;

18 (B) [(2)] how those degree programs would
19 complement the other programs and course offerings of the junior
20 college and whether the associate degree program offered by the
21 junior college in the same field has been successful;

22 (C) [(3)] whether those degree programs would
23 unnecessarily duplicate the degree programs offered by other
24 institutions of higher education or whether a partnership with
25 other institutions of higher education is possible; [and]

26 (D) [(4)] the ability of the junior college to
27 support the program with student enrollment and the adequacy of the

1 junior college's facilities, faculty, administration, libraries,
2 and other resources; and

3 (E) whether the junior college meets the taxable
4 property valuation amount established in Section 130.032.

5 (g) Except as provided by Subsection (g-1), in [~~It~~] its
6 recommendations to the legislature relating to state funding for
7 public junior colleges, the coordinating board shall recommend that
8 a public junior college receive substantially the same state
9 support for junior-level and senior-level courses offered under
10 this section as that provided to a general academic teaching
11 institution for substantially similar courses. In determining the
12 contact hours attributable to students enrolled in a junior-level
13 or senior-level course offered under this section used to determine
14 a public junior college's proportionate share of state
15 appropriations under Section 130.003, the coordinating board shall
16 weigh those contact hours as necessary to provide the junior
17 college the appropriate level of state support to the extent state
18 funds for those courses are included in the appropriations. This
19 subsection does not prohibit the legislature from directly
20 appropriating state funds to support junior-level and senior-level
21 courses offered under this section.

22 (g-1) For the first two years in which a degree program
23 created under Subsection (b)(2) is offered, the degree program may
24 be funded solely by a public junior college's proportionate share
25 of state appropriations under Section 130.003, local funds, and
26 private sources. This subsection does not require the legislature
27 to appropriate state funds to support a degree program created

1 under Subsection (b)(2) for the first two years in which the degree
2 program is offered. For the third, fourth, and fifth years in which
3 a degree program created under Subsection (b)(2) is offered, state
4 appropriations under Section 130.003 for the degree program may not
5 provide more than 50 percent of the total amount of funds required
6 to support the degree program.

7 (h) Each biennium, each [~~Each~~] public junior college
8 offering a baccalaureate degree program under this section shall
9 conduct a review of each baccalaureate degree program offered and
10 prepare a [~~biennial~~] report on the operation, quality, and
11 effectiveness of those [~~the junior college's baccalaureate~~] degree
12 programs. A [~~and shall deliver a~~] copy of the report shall be
13 delivered to the coordinating board in the form and at the time
14 determined by the coordinating board.

15 (k) The coordinating board shall adopt rules as necessary
16 for the administration of this section.

17 (l) In this section, "general academic teaching
18 institution" and "institution of higher education" have the
19 meanings assigned by Section 61.003.

20 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
21 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
22 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
23 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
24 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.