

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 863
By: Watson
Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Although dual credit is widely used across the state, during interim hearings on these programs, it became apparent that the state does not have any data on the costs associated with these programs, both to the schools implementing them and the students enrolled. S.B. 863 addresses this by requiring the Texas Education Agency to conduct an ongoing, comprehensive analysis of all the costs associated with dual credit. With this information, the state will be able to address any cost outliers and understand any barriers to access associated with the costs to the students.

As proposed, S.B. 863 amends current law relating to a study of costs associated with dual credit courses offered at public high schools.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 1 (Section 28.0091, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter A, Chapter 28, Education Code, by adding Section 28.0091, as follows:

Sec. 28.0091. STUDY OF COSTS OF DUAL CREDIT COURSES. (a) Requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to conduct an ongoing study to examine costs associated with dual credit courses offered at public high schools. Requires TEA, in conducting the study, to:

(1) collect from school districts, public institutions of higher education, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) data relating to costs associated with dual credit courses, including:

- (A) tuition and required fees;
- (B) the cost of required textbooks or other instructional materials;
- (C) the cost of student transportation to and from the location at which a dual credit course is provided;
- (D) any fee collected to pay the instructor of a dual credit course;
- (E) the cost of any assessment instrument administered under Section 51.333 (College Readiness Assessment Required) as a prerequisite for enrollment in a dual credit course;
- (F) the cost of using a facility at which a dual credit course is provided; and
- (G) any other associated costs identified during the study;

(2) identify the sources of funding for dual credit courses and the amount funded by each source; and

(3) consult with relevant stakeholders, including THECB, the American Institutes for Research, and the Texas Dual Credit Task Force.

(b) Authorizes TEA to contract with any public or private entity to conduct the study under this section.

(c) Requires TEA, not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year, to submit to the governor, the lieutenant governor, and the speaker of the house of representatives a report on the results of the study under this section. Requires the report to include a comparison of:

(1) costs associated with dual credit courses offered at public high schools generally and costs associated with dual credit courses offered through a college and career readiness school program, including:

(A) an early college high school program;

(B) the Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) program established under Section 29.553 (P-TECH Program);

(C) an Industry Cluster Innovative Academy; and

(D) a Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (T-STEM) Center; and

(2) the cost associated with dual credit courses per semester credit hour or the equivalent and the total cost associated with those courses.

(d) Authorizes the commissioner of education to adopt rules necessary to administer this section.

SECTION 2. Requires TEA, not later than December 1, 2020, to submit the initial report required under Section 28.0091, Education Code, as added by this Act.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2019.