

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 1323
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Education
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

In order to meet the state's higher education goal of 60x30TX, where 60 percent of all Texans between the ages of 25 to 34, more students need to be able to attend college. By not filling out Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), or Texas Application for State Financial Aid (TASFA) for those not eligible, there is little information for these students to determine what their financial aid package would look like. Students would be informed of what their loans and or grants could potentially be. As the Texas Commission on Public School Finance report states, "...Texas FAFSA completion rates trail leading states (Tennessee and Louisiana) by almost 30 percent, and currently only 62 percent of low-income high school graduates ultimately enroll each year in Texas public higher education institutions in the fall following their actual/scheduled high school graduation. The net result is that well over \$300 million of Pell grants available per year for the post-secondary education of low-income Texas students is unclaimed with each and every graduating class, representing a tremendous opportunity if additional investment in counseling supports for students can be funded and a post-secondary education expectation can be created culturally on every campus."

S.B. 1323 would require students who earn 15 semester credit hours (SCH) of dual credit to fill out a FAFSA or TASFA no later than six months upon which they completed 15 SCH. Additionally, students may opt out if the student's parent or guardian submits a signed form indicating that the parents authorizes the student to decline to complete and submit the application. Each institution of higher education that grants the dual credit class will be required to ensure that the student fills out the financial aid form.

As proposed, S.B. 1323 amends current law relating to requiring certain students awarded dual credit by a public institution of higher education to complete and submit a financial aid application for higher education costs.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Subchapter Z, Chapter 51, Education Code, by adding Section 51.9681, as follows:

Sec. 51.9681. FINANCIAL AID APPLICATION REQUIRED FOR DUAL CREDIT STUDENTS. (a) Defines "institution of higher education."

(b) Provides that each student who earns a cumulative total of 15 or more semester credit hours at an institution of higher education for dual credit coursework successfully completed by the student is required to complete and submit a free application for federal student aid (FAFSA) or, if applicable, a Texas application for state financial aid (TASFA) not later than six months after the last day of the semester or term in which the student earns that cumulative total.

(c) Provides that a student is not required to comply with Subsection (b) if:

(1) the student's parent or other person standing in parental relation submits a signed form indicating that the parent or other person authorizes the student to decline to complete and submit the financial aid application; or

(2) the student signs and submits the form described by Subdivision (1) on the student's own behalf if the student is 18 years of age or older or the student's disabilities of minority have been removed for general purposes under Chapter 31 (Removal of Disabilities of Minority), Family Code.

(d) Requires each institution of higher education to ensure that each student to whom the institution awards the cumulative total of semester credit hours described by Subsection

(b) completes and submits the financial aid application as required by that subsection or submits a signed form to the institution under Subsection (c).

(e) Requires each institution of higher education to adopt a form to be used for purposes of Subsection (c).

SECTION 2. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2019–2020 academic year.

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