86R10191 SOS-D

By:  Guillen H.B. No. 3141

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to providing by contract for a public or private entity to act as the administering authority for the state virtual school network and to the duties of the administering authority.

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

SECTION 1.  Section 30A.001(1), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(1)  "Administering authority" means the entity contracted with [~~designated~~] under Section 30A.053 to administer the state virtual school network.

SECTION 2.  Section 30A.051(a), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a)  The commissioner shall:

(1)  administer the state virtual school network in coordination with the administering authority; and

(2)  ensure:

(A)  high-quality education for students in this state who are being educated through electronic courses provided through the state virtual school network; and

(B)  equitable access by students to those courses.

SECTION 3.  Section 30A.053, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 30A.053.  CONTRACT FOR [~~DESIGNATION OF~~] ADMINISTERING AUTHORITY. The commissioner shall contract with a public or private entity [~~designate an agency employee or a group of agency employees~~] to act as the administering authority for the state virtual school network.

SECTION 4.  The heading to Section 30A.105, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 30A.105.  EVALUATION AND APPROVAL OF ELECTRONIC COURSES.

SECTION 5.  Sections 30A.105(c) and (d), Education Code, are amended to read as follows:

(c)  The administering authority [~~agency~~] shall pay the reasonable costs of evaluating and approving electronic courses. If funds available to the administering authority [~~agency~~] for that purpose are insufficient to pay the costs of evaluating and approving all electronic courses submitted for evaluation and approval, the administering authority [~~agency~~] shall give priority to paying the costs of evaluating and approving the following courses:

(1)  courses that satisfy high school graduation requirements;

(2)  courses that would likely benefit a student in obtaining admission to a postsecondary institution;

(3)  courses, including dual credit courses, that allow a student to earn college credit or other advanced credit;

(4)  courses in subject areas most likely to be highly beneficial to students receiving educational services under the supervision of a juvenile probation department, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, or the Texas Department of Criminal Justice; and

(5)  courses in subject areas designated by the commissioner as commonly experiencing a shortage of teachers.

(d)  If the administering authority [~~agency~~] determines that the costs of evaluating and approving a submitted electronic course will not be paid by the administering authority [~~agency~~] due to a shortage of funds available for that purpose, the administering authority may assess and the school district, open-enrollment charter school, public or private institution of higher education, or other eligible entity that submitted the course for evaluation and approval may pay a fee equal to the amount of the costs in order to ensure that evaluation of the course occurs. The administering authority [~~agency~~] shall establish and publish a fee schedule for purposes of this subsection.

SECTION 6.  Section 30A.108(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b)  Each report under this section must describe each electronic course offered through the state virtual school network and include the following information:

(1)  course requirements;

(2)  the school year calendar for the course, including any options for continued participation outside of the standard school year calendar;

(3)  the entity that developed the course;

(4)  the entity that provided the course;

(5)  the course completion rate;

(6)  from information provided by the agency, aggregate student performance on an assessment instrument administered under Section 39.023 to students enrolled in the course;

(7)  from information provided by the agency, aggregate student performance on all assessment instruments administered under Section 39.023 to students who completed the course provider's courses; and

(8)  other information determined by the commissioner.

SECTION 7.  Subchapter C, Chapter 30A, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 30A.1081 to read as follows:

Sec. 30A.1081.  INFORMATION PROVIDED BY AGENCY FOR INFORMED CHOICE REPORTS. For purposes of including the information under Sections 30A.108(b)(6) and (7) in the report required under that section, the agency shall provide that information to the administering authority in sufficient time for the administering authority to comply with the reporting requirement under that section.

SECTION 8.  Section 30A.1121(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b)  The administering authority [~~agency~~] shall review each professional development course sought to be provided by a course provider under Subsection (a) to determine if the course meets the quality standards established under Section 30A.113. If a course meets those standards, the course provider may provide the course for purposes of enabling a teacher to comply with Section 30A.111(a)(2).

SECTION 9.  Section 30A.115, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 30A.115.  ADDITIONAL RESOURCES. The commissioner by rule may establish procedures for providing additional resources, such as an online library, to students and educators served through the state virtual school network. The administering authority may provide the additional resources only if the commissioner or administering authority receives an appropriation, gift, or grant sufficient to pay the costs of providing those resources.

SECTION 10.  Section 30A.152(a), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(a)  The commissioner or the administering authority may accept a grant for purposes of this chapter from a public or private person and shall use those funds in accordance with the commissioner's or the administering authority's duties, as applicable, regarding the state virtual school network.

SECTION 11.  As soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act, the commissioner of education shall advertise a request for proposals for an administering authority for the state virtual school network under Section 30A.053, Education Code, as amended by this Act.

SECTION 12.  This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.