

By: Miles

S.B. No. 1284

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to a competitive grant program to fund promotion of early literacy programs in certain communities in this state.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 73, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter J to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER J. COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM TO PROMOTE EARLY LITERACY

Sec. 73.701. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Competitive grant program" means the competitive grant program to promote early literacy established under this subchapter.

(2) "Health care practitioner" has the meaning assigned by Section 112.001, Occupations Code.

(3) "Health science center" means The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

(4) "Literacy program" means a program to promote early literacy.

Sec. 73.702. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM TO PROMOTE EARLY LITERACY. (a) Subject to Section 73.709, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston shall establish a competitive grant program to promote early literacy through which the health science center will award grants for the implementation of literacy programs, or the expansion of existing programs, and for the operation of those programs for a period of

1 not less than two years.

2 (b) The health science center shall award grants under the  
3 program to applicants, including applicants operating existing  
4 programs, in a manner that ensures that the literacy programs  
5 collectively operate in multiple communities that are  
6 geographically distributed throughout this state.

7 Sec. 73.703. LITERACY PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS. A literacy  
8 program funded through a grant awarded under this subchapter must:

9 (1) consult and use as a guide the program model  
10 developed by the Reach Out and Read National Center, including any  
11 clinical, programmatic, and data collection requirements of that  
12 model;

13 (2) require that health care practitioners who  
14 participate in the literacy program:

15 (A) in conjunction with performing well-child  
16 examinations, provide books to children and encourage parents to  
17 read to their children to develop preliteracy skills;

18 (B) maintain waiting rooms that encourage  
19 children to read; and

20 (C) provide services designed to increase the  
21 school readiness of children receiving program services; and

22 (3) partner with local adult literacy providers to  
23 encourage parent literacy in appropriate circumstances.

24 Sec. 73.704. APPLICATION. (a) A public or private entity,  
25 including a county, municipality, or other political subdivision of  
26 this state, may apply for a grant under this subchapter.

27 (b) To apply for a grant, an applicant must submit a written

1 application to the health science center on a form prescribed by the  
2 health science center in consultation with the Reach Out and Read  
3 National Center.

4 Sec. 73.705. LITERACY PROGRAM GUIDELINES. The health  
5 science center, with the assistance of the Reach Out and Read  
6 National Center, shall publish guidelines for the literacy programs  
7 funded under this subchapter. The guidelines may follow the Reach  
8 Out and Read national program model standards and guidelines that  
9 have been tested and replicated in multiple communities.

10 Sec. 73.706. USE OF PROGRAM MONEY. (a) In addition to  
11 awarding grants under this subchapter, the health science center  
12 may use program money to:

- 13 (1) administer the competitive grant program; and  
14 (2) purchase or contract to purchase discounted books  
15 for use by grant recipients.

16 (b) A grant recipient may use grant money awarded under this  
17 subchapter only to cover costs related to implementing or expanding  
18 and operating a literacy program, including costs related to:

- 19 (1) administering the literacy program;  
20 (2) training and managing health care practitioners  
21 who volunteer to participate in the literacy program; and  
22 (3) purchasing or contracting to purchase discounted  
23 books for use in the literacy program.

24 Sec. 73.707. PROGRAM EVALUATION; BIENNIAL COMMITTEE  
25 REPORTS. (a) The health science center, with the assistance of  
26 the Reach Out and Read National Center, shall prepare and submit a  
27 biennial report, not later than December 1 of each even-numbered

1 year, to the senate committee on education, or its successor, and  
2 the house public education committee, or its successor, regarding  
3 the grants awarded during the preceding two state fiscal years.

4 (b) The report required under Subsection (a) must include:

5 (1) the number of health care practitioners who  
6 participate in the program;

7 (2) the number of children receiving literacy program  
8 services as a result of the program; and

9 (3) the amount of each grant awarded to a health care  
10 practitioner under the program.

11 (c) On request, each grant recipient shall timely collect  
12 and provide data and any other information required by the health  
13 science center to monitor and evaluate the program, including  
14 recipient participation in the program, and to prepare the report  
15 required by this section.

16 Sec. 73.708. COMPETITIVE GRANT PROGRAM FUNDING. (a) The  
17 health science center shall actively seek and apply for any  
18 available federal money to assist in financing the competitive  
19 grant program established under this subchapter.

20 (b) To assist in financing the competitive grant program,  
21 the health science center may:

22 (1) use appropriated money from the state government;  
23 and

24 (2) accept gifts, donations, grants of money, and  
25 in-kind contributions from the federal government, local  
26 governments, private corporations, or other persons, provided that  
27 the health science center implements the program in accordance with

1 the contingency under Section 73.709.

2 Sec. 73.709. APPROPRIATION CONTINGENCY. The health science  
3 center is required to implement a provision of this subchapter only  
4 if the legislature appropriates money specifically for that  
5 purpose. If the legislature does not appropriate money  
6 specifically for that purpose, the health science center may, but  
7 is not required to, implement the provision using other money  
8 available to the health science center for that purpose.

9 SECTION 2. The University of Texas Health Science Center at  
10 Houston shall:

11 (1) as soon as practicable, apply for any available  
12 federal money to assist in financing the competitive grant program  
13 under Subchapter J, Chapter 73, Education Code, as added by this  
14 Act, as required by Section 73.708, Education Code, as added by this  
15 Act; and

16 (2) not later than December 1, 2022, submit a report to  
17 the senate committee on education, or its successor, and the house  
18 public education committee, or its successor, regarding the  
19 implementation and status of the competitive grant program under  
20 Subchapter J, Chapter 73, Education Code, as added by this Act.

21 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect September 1, 2019.