

By: Parker

H.B. No. 3003

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of the Texas Reskilling and Upskilling through Education (TRUE) Initiative to support workforce education at public junior colleges.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 61, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter T-2 to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER T-2. TEXAS RESKILLING AND UPSKILLING THROUGH EDUCATION
(TRUE) INITIATIVE

Sec. 61.881. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "initiative" means the Texas Reskilling and Upskilling through Education (TRUE) Initiative established under this subchapter.

Sec. 61.882. INITIATIVE: ESTABLISHMENT; ADMINISTRATION; PURPOSE. (a) The Texas Reskilling and Upskilling through Education (TRUE) Initiative is established.

(b) The board shall administer the initiative in accordance with this subchapter and rules adopted under this subchapter.

(c) Under the initiative, using funds appropriated or otherwise available for the purpose, the board shall award grants to public junior colleges for creating, redesigning, or expanding workforce training programs that lead to postsecondary industry certifications or other workforce credentials required for high-demand occupations.

Sec. 61.883. USE OF GRANT. (a) A grant awarded to a public

1 junior college under this subchapter may be used only for the
2 support and maintenance of educational and general activities that
3 promote workforce learning at the college, including:

4 (1) providing training in new or redesigned
5 accelerated programs that teach high-demand skills and lead to
6 postsecondary industry certifications or other workforce
7 credentials valued in growing occupations that pay a living wage;

8 (2) developing new industry-aligned, high-demand
9 postsecondary industry certifications or other workforce
10 credentials and certificate programs or other courses of
11 instruction leading to those certifications or credentials; and

12 (3) expanding institutional capacity to provide
13 high-demand postsecondary industry certifications or other
14 workforce credentials for target occupations included on regional
15 or statewide target occupations lists established by appropriate
16 workforce agencies.

17 (b) Money received by a public junior college under the
18 grant program in a fiscal year that is not used by the college in
19 that fiscal year may be held and used by the college in subsequent
20 fiscal years for the purposes prescribed in this section.

21 Sec. 61.884. RECOGNIZED CERTIFICATIONS OR CREDENTIALS. (a)
22 The board, in collaboration with public junior colleges, the Texas
23 Workforce Commission, and private employers, shall identify new
24 high-demand skills needed to earn postsecondary industry
25 certifications or other workforce credentials valued in
26 high-demand occupations.

27 (b) The board, in consultation with public junior colleges,

1 shall:

2 (1) identify new postsecondary industry
3 certifications or other workforce credentials developed using
4 grant funds under the initiative; and

5 (2) establish methods for collecting and reporting
6 data related to the certifications or credentials identified under
7 Subdivision (1).

8 (c) A public junior college awarded a grant under this
9 subchapter may recommend outcomes related to the achievement or
10 development of postsecondary industry certifications or other
11 workforce credentials identified under this section to be
12 considered by the board for inclusion in the state's long-range
13 master plan for higher education developed under Section 61.051.

14 (d) In devising its funding formulas and making its
15 recommendations to the legislature relating to institutional
16 appropriations of funds for public junior colleges under Section
17 61.059, the board shall incorporate the consideration of the
18 achievement or development of postsecondary industry
19 certifications and other workforce credentials identified under
20 this section.

21 Sec. 61.885. GRANTS, GIFTS, AND DONATIONS. The board may
22 solicit, accept, and spend grants, gifts, and donations from any
23 public or private source for the purposes of this subchapter.

24 Sec. 61.886. RULES. The board shall adopt rules for the
25 administration of this subchapter, including rules requiring
26 public junior colleges awarded a grant under this subchapter to
27 report necessary information to the board.

1 SECTION 2. (a) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating
2 Board shall adopt rules to administer Subchapter T-2, Chapter 61,
3 Education Code, as added by this Act, as soon as practicable after
4 the effective date of this Act.

5 (b) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall
6 award grants to public junior colleges under Subchapter T-2,
7 Chapter 61, Education Code, as added by this Act, beginning with the
8 2022 fall semester.

9 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
10 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
11 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
12 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
13 Act takes effect September 1, 2021.