

By: Perry

S.B. No. 1527

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1
2 relating to measures to assist small and rural school districts in
3 implementing a collegiate model and expanding broadband access,
4 including the establishment of the Rural Schools and Communities
5 Technical Assistance Center and a grant program.

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

7 SECTION 1. Chapter 30, Education Code, is amended by adding
8 Subchapter F to read as follows:

9 SUBCHAPTER F. RURAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

10 CENTER

11 Sec. 30.401. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "center"
12 means the Rural Schools and Communities Technical Assistance
13 Center.

14 Sec. 30.402. ESTABLISHMENT; PURPOSE. The Rural Schools and
15 Communities Technical Assistance Center is established to assist
16 small and rural school districts with the implementation and
17 expansion of the Collegiate Edu-Nation P-20 System Model for 21st
18 Century School Transformation in cooperation with the agency and to
19 further ensure better economic and life opportunities by
20 facilitating the expansion of broadband development in rural
21 communities.

22 Sec. 30.403. DUTIES OF CENTER. (a) The center shall
23 facilitate the tri-agency alignment for rural students by
24 collaborating with the agency, the Texas Higher Education

1 Coordinating Board, and the Texas Workforce Commission.

2 (b) The center shall assist participating school districts
3 in implementing the Collegiate Edu-Nation P-20 System Model for
4 21st-Century School Transformation to:

5 (1) combat generational poverty by fostering high
6 aspirations and expectations among students, families, and
7 communities for college and career success, with an emphasis on
8 workforce shortage areas;

9 (2) support attainment of the state's master plan for
10 higher education developed under Section 61.051; and

11 (3) support implementation of the Pathways in
12 Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) programs in
13 participating school districts under Subchapter N, Chapter 29.

14 Sec. 30.404. SELECTION OF CENTER. The commissioner shall
15 select a nonprofit organization to serve as the center and support
16 school districts awarded a planning or implementation grant under
17 this subchapter. The selected nonprofit organization must have:

18 (1) an individual on staff who has previously
19 implemented a collegiate model in a rural school district; and

20 (2) a demonstrated history of:

21 (A) successfully managing rural schools; and

22 (B) supporting multiple rural school districts
23 in implementing a collegiate model.

24 Sec. 30.405. PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS. (a) The
25 commissioner shall annually award planning grants to rural or small
26 school districts, as determined by commissioner rule, to plan for
27 the implementation of a collegiate model.

1 (b) The agency shall evaluate each district that receives a
2 planning grant under Subsection (a). If the agency determines that
3 the district successfully completed planning activities, the
4 commissioner shall award the district a one-year grant to implement
5 a collegiate model.

6 (c) The agency shall evaluate each district that receives an
7 implementation grant under Subsection (b). If the agency
8 determines that the district successfully completed implementation
9 activities in the first year of implementation, the commissioner
10 shall award the district an additional one-year implementation
11 grant.

12 Sec. 30.406. EXPECTED OUTCOMES. (a) By the conclusion of
13 the second year of implementation of a collegiate model using a
14 grant awarded under Section 30.405(c), the school district must:

15 (1) have implemented:

16 (A) a dual credit program or a joint high school
17 and college credit program;

18 (B) a Pathways in Technology Early College High
19 School (P-TECH) program under Subchapter N, Chapter 29;

20 (C) a research-based college readiness program
21 for grades 7 through 12;

22 (D) student college and career coaching;

23 (E) a common instructional framework and monthly
24 instructional review and improvement cycles;

25 (F) project-based learning experiences in a
26 majority of courses offered by the district;

27 (G) career and technical education programs;

1 (H) work-based learning opportunities, including
2 paid student apprenticeships in science, technology, engineering,
3 or mathematics workforce shortage areas;

4 (I) formal industry partnerships specific to
5 local workforce needs as identified by regional offices of the
6 Texas Workforce Commission;

7 (J) research-based, nationally norm-referenced
8 formative assessments; or

9 (K) access to a personal laptop or other
10 electronic device for each student; and

11 (2) demonstrate progress toward the goal of 90 percent
12 of graduating students concurrently earning a high school diploma,
13 associate degree, or industry-recognized certification by ensuring
14 that at least 30 percent of high school students enrolled in the
15 district are enrolled in college courses.

16 (b) If a school district that received a grant under Section
17 30.405(c) does not achieve the expected outcomes under Subsection
18 (a), the center shall work with the district to develop and
19 implement an intervention plan to support the district in achieving
20 those outcomes.

21 Sec. 30.407. SUPPORT OF RURAL BROADBAND INITIATIVES. Each
22 school district that receives a grant under Section 30.405 shall
23 work closely with relevant state agencies to assist in expanding
24 access, adoption, and use of broadband in rural areas to benefit
25 educational opportunities and economic development.

26 SECTION 2. This Act takes effect September 1, 2021.