

By: Blanco

S.B. No. 1703

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

1
2 relating to continuing education for public school counselors and
3 the provision of postsecondary counseling by certain counselors at
4 public schools.

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

6 SECTION 1. Section 21.054(f), Education Code, is amended to
7 read as follows:

8 (f) Continuing education requirements for a counselor must
9 provide that at least 25 percent of training required every five
10 years include instruction regarding:

11 (1) assisting students in developing high school
12 graduation plans;

13 (2) implementing dropout prevention strategies;

14 (3) informing students concerning:

15 (A) college admissions, including college
16 financial aid resources and application procedures; and

17 (B) career opportunities, including the
18 possibilities for local and regional employment;

19 (4) counseling students concerning mental health
20 conditions and substance abuse, including through the use of
21 grief-informed and trauma-informed interventions and crisis
22 management and suicide prevention strategies; ~~and~~

23 (5) effective implementation of a comprehensive
24 school counseling program under Section 33.005;

1 (6) implicit bias related to race and socioeconomic
2 status, including the historical tracking process by which students
3 of different races and socioeconomic backgrounds were placed on
4 certain academic tracks based on their perceived abilities,
5 interests, and expected career paths; and

6 (7) methods for effectively integrating college,
7 career, and military readiness data into student advising.

8 SECTION 2. Sections 33.007(a), (b), and (c), Education
9 Code, are amended to read as follows:

10 (a) Each school counselor designated as a college readiness
11 counselor at an elementary, middle, or junior high school,
12 including an open-enrollment charter school offering those grades,
13 shall advise students and their parents or guardians regarding the
14 importance of postsecondary education, coursework designed to
15 prepare students for postsecondary education, and financial aid
16 availability and requirements.

17 (b) During the first school year a student is enrolled in a
18 high school or at the high school level in an open-enrollment
19 charter school, and again during each year of a student's
20 enrollment in high school or at the high school level, a school
21 counselor designated as a college readiness counselor shall provide
22 information about postsecondary education to the student and the
23 student's parent or guardian. The information must include
24 information regarding:

25 (1) the importance of postsecondary education;

26 (2) the advantages of earning an endorsement and a
27 performance acknowledgment and completing the distinguished level

1 of achievement under the foundation high school program under
2 Section 28.025;

3 (3) the disadvantages of taking courses to prepare for
4 a high school equivalency examination relative to the benefits of
5 taking courses leading to a high school diploma;

6 (4) financial aid eligibility;

7 (5) instruction on how to apply for federal financial
8 aid;

9 (6) the center for financial aid information
10 established under Section 61.0776;

11 (7) the automatic admission of certain students to
12 general academic teaching institutions as provided by Section
13 51.803;

14 (8) the eligibility and academic performance
15 requirements for the TEXAS Grant as provided by Subchapter M,
16 Chapter 56;

17 (9) the availability of programs in the district under
18 which a student may earn college credit, including advanced
19 placement programs, dual credit programs, joint high school and
20 college credit programs, and international baccalaureate programs;

21 (10) the availability of education and training
22 vouchers and tuition and fee waivers to attend an institution of
23 higher education as provided by Section 54.366 for a student who is
24 or was previously in the conservatorship of the Department of
25 Family and Protective Services; and

26 (11) the availability of college credit awarded by
27 institutions of higher education to veterans and military

1 servicemembers for military experience, education, and training
2 obtained during military service as described by the informational
3 materials developed under Section 302.0031(h), Labor Code.

4 (c) At the beginning of grades 10 and 11, a school counselor
5 certified under the rules of the State Board for Educator
6 Certification and designated as a college readiness counselor shall
7 explain the requirements of automatic admission to a general
8 academic teaching institution under Section 51.803 to each student
9 enrolled in a high school or at the high school level in an
10 open-enrollment charter school who has a grade point average in the
11 top 25 percent of the student's high school class.

12 SECTION 3. This Act applies beginning with the 2021-2022
13 school year.

14 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
15 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
16 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
17 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
18 Act takes effect September 1, 2021.