

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of the Texas Leadership Scholars Program.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 61, Education Code, is amended by adding Subchapter T-3 to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER T-3. TEXAS LEADERSHIP SCHOLARS PROGRAM

Sec. 61.891. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Leadership scholarship" means a scholarship awarded to an undergraduate student under the program.

(2) "Program" means the Texas Leadership Scholars Program established under this subchapter.

(3) "Research scholarship" means a scholarship awarded to a graduate student under the program.

Sec. 61.892. ESTABLISHMENT; ADMINISTRATION. (a) The Texas Leadership Scholars Program is established to serve as a merit-based scholarship and leadership opportunity program for high-achieving, emerging leaders with financial need.

(b) Using money appropriated or otherwise available for the purpose, the board shall award scholarships and provide academic achievement support and leadership development to eligible students under the program.

(c) The board shall administer the program. The board may contract with one or more institutions of higher education to

1 assist in administering the program, including receiving and
2 reviewing applications, recommending the distribution of funds to
3 institutions of higher education, and developing criteria for the
4 selection of students for the program.

5 (d) The board may establish one or more advisory committees
6 for the purpose of recommending rules for the administration of the
7 program.

8 Sec. 61.893. INITIAL ELIGIBILITY. (a) To be initially
9 eligible for the award of a leadership scholarship, an
10 undergraduate student must:

11 (1) have graduated from a public high school in this
12 state;

13 (2) either:

14 (A) have qualified for automatic admission to a
15 general academic teaching institution under Section 51.803; or

16 (B) be nominated by the student's high school for
17 participation in the program and hold another academic distinction
18 recognized by the board;

19 (3) be enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program at a
20 general academic teaching institution;

21 (4) be economically disadvantaged, as determined by
22 board rule; and

23 (5) comply with any additional requirement adopted by
24 the board.

25 (b) To be initially eligible for the award of a research
26 scholarship, a graduate student must:

27 (1) be enrolled in a research doctoral degree program

1 at a general academic teaching institution;

2 (2) either:

3 (A) have graduated from a public high school in
4 this state during the 10 years preceding the date of the student's
5 application to the program; or

6 (B) have graduated from an institution of higher
7 education or a private or independent institution of higher
8 education;

9 (3) be economically disadvantaged, as determined by
10 board rule;

11 (4) be nominated by the institution at which the
12 student is enrolled on the basis of the student's academic merit and
13 leadership potential; and

14 (5) comply with any additional requirements adopted by
15 the board.

16 Sec. 61.894. CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY. After establishing
17 initial eligibility to participate in the program under Section
18 61.893, a student may continue participating in the program only if
19 the student:

20 (1) remains:

21 (A) for a leadership scholarship, enrolled in a
22 baccalaureate degree program at a general academic teaching
23 institution; or

24 (B) for a research scholarship, enrolled in a
25 research doctoral degree program at a general academic teaching
26 institution;

27 (2) maintains a minimum overall grade point average

1 determined by board rule; and

2 (3) complies with any additional requirement adopted
3 by the board.

4 Sec. 61.895. ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT SUPPORT AND LEADERSHIP
5 DEVELOPMENT. The board may enter into agreements with general
6 academic teaching institutions or other institutions of higher
7 education to provide students participating in the program with:

8 (1) research-based support to make satisfactory
9 academic progress and graduate on time; and

10 (2) leadership development opportunities, including:

11 (A) program cohort learning communities;

12 (B) mentoring, research, and internship
13 opportunities;

14 (C) networking with state government, business,
15 and civic leaders; and

16 (D) statewide cohort learning institutes or
17 seminars.

18 Sec. 61.896. GRANTS, GIFTS, AND DONATIONS. The board may
19 solicit, accept, and spend grants, gifts, and donations from any
20 public or private source for the purposes of the program.

21 Sec. 61.897. RULES. (a) The board, in consultation with
22 general academic teaching institutions, shall adopt rules for the
23 administration of the program, including rules providing for the
24 amount and permissible uses of a scholarship awarded under the
25 program. The rules must provide that:

26 (1) the amount of a research scholarship is at least
27 150 percent of the amount of a leadership scholarship; and

1 (2) a student may not receive a scholarship under the
2 program for more than four years.

3 (b) Notwithstanding Section 61.033, the board is not
4 required to use negotiated rulemaking procedures under Chapter
5 2008, Government Code, for the adoption of rules under this
6 subchapter.

7 SECTION 2. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
8 shall adopt rules to administer Subchapter T-3, Chapter 61,
9 Education Code, as added by this Act, as soon as practicable after
10 the effective date of this Act.

11 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
12 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
13 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
14 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
15 Act takes effect September 1, 2023.

President of the Senate

Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 1590 was passed by the House on April 13, 2023, by the following vote: Yeas 126, Nays 21, 2 present, not voting; and that the House concurred in Senate amendments to H.B. No. 1590 on May 25, 2023, by the following vote: Yeas 120, Nays 19, 2 present, not voting.

Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 1590 was passed by the Senate, with amendments, on May 23, 2023, by the following vote: Yeas 30, Nays 1.

Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: _____

Date

Governor