

By: Guerra

H.B. No. 2168

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to measures to prepare students to teach bilingual education, English as a second language, or Spanish.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter F, Chapter 29, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 29.1831 to read as follows:

Sec. 29.1831. PROGRAM OF STUDY IN BILINGUAL EDUCATION, ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE, AND SPANISH. (a) The agency shall develop a program of study for use in career and technology education programs that prepares and assists students in pursuing a career teaching:

(1) bilingual education;

(2) English as a second language; or

(3) Spanish.

(b) The agency shall post on the agency's Internet website information regarding:

(1) the program of study developed under this section;

and

(2) the financial incentive program to prepare teachers to obtain certification to teach bilingual education, English as a second language, or Spanish administered by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board under Subchapter SS, Chapter 61.

SECTION 2. Section 33.007(b), Education Code, is amended to

1 read as follows:

2 (b) During the first school year a student is enrolled in a  
3 high school or at the high school level in an open-enrollment  
4 charter school, and again during each year of a student's  
5 enrollment in high school or at the high school level, a school  
6 counselor shall provide information about postsecondary education  
7 to the student and the student's parent or guardian. The  
8 information must include information regarding:

9 (1) the importance of postsecondary education;

10 (2) the advantages of earning an endorsement and a  
11 performance acknowledgment and completing the distinguished level  
12 of achievement under the foundation high school program under  
13 Section 28.025;

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

17 (4) financial aid eligibility;

18 (5) instruction on how to apply for federal financial  
19 aid;

20 (6) the center for financial aid information  
21 established under Section 61.0776;

22 (7) the automatic admission of certain students to  
23 general academic teaching institutions as provided by Section  
24 51.803;

25 (8) the eligibility and academic performance  
26 requirements for the TEXAS Grant as provided by Subchapter M,  
27 Chapter 56;

1 (9) the availability of programs in the district under  
2 which a student may earn college credit, including advanced  
3 placement programs, dual credit programs, joint high school and  
4 college credit programs, and international baccalaureate programs;

5 (10) the availability of education and training  
6 vouchers and tuition and fee waivers to attend an institution of  
7 higher education as provided by Section 54.366 for a student who is  
8 or was previously in the conservatorship of the Department of  
9 Family and Protective Services; ~~and~~

10 (11) the availability of college credit awarded by  
11 institutions of higher education to veterans and military  
12 servicemembers for military experience, education, and training  
13 obtained during military service as described by the informational  
14 materials developed under Section 302.0031(h), Labor Code; and

15 (12) the availability of programs that prepare  
16 students for teaching bilingual education, English as a second  
17 language, or Spanish, including:

18 (A) the program of study developed under Section  
19 29.1831; and

20 (B) the financial incentive program administered  
21 by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board under Subchapter  
22 SS, Chapter 61.

23 SECTION 3. Chapter 61, Education Code, is amended by adding  
24 Subchapter SS to read as follows:

25 SUBCHAPTER SS. FINANCIAL INCENTIVE PROGRAM TO PREPARE TEACHERS IN  
26 BILINGUAL EDUCATION, ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE, AND SPANISH

27 Sec. 61.99991. ESTABLISHMENT AND ADMINISTRATION OF

1 PROGRAM. (a) The board shall establish a program to provide  
2 financial incentives such as tuition assistance or student loan  
3 repayment to:

4 (1) assist persons in obtaining certification to teach  
5 bilingual education, English as a second language, or Spanish in a  
6 public elementary or secondary school in this state; and

7 (2) facilitate the employment of those persons by a  
8 public elementary or secondary school in this state that has a  
9 shortage of teachers certified to teach in those fields.

10 (b) In administering the program, the board shall give  
11 priority to awarding financial incentives to those eligible persons  
12 who demonstrate the greatest financial need.

13 Sec. 61.99992. ELIGIBILITY. To be eligible to receive  
14 financial incentives under this subchapter, a person must:

15 (1) apply to the board in the form and manner  
16 prescribed by board rule;

17 (2) be admitted into an educator preparation program  
18 at an institution of higher education or at a private or independent  
19 institution of higher education that prepares students for  
20 certification to teach bilingual education, English as a second  
21 language, or Spanish;

22 (3) enter into an agreement with the board as provided  
23 by Section 61.99993; and

24 (4) satisfy any other criteria jointly prescribed by  
25 the board and the State Board for Educator Certification.

26 Sec. 61.99993. AGREEMENT. To qualify for financial  
27 incentives under this subchapter, a person must enter into a

1 written agreement with the board as provided by this section. The  
2 agreement must require the person to:

3 (1) obtain, within the period prescribed by board  
4 rule, certification to teach bilingual education, English as a  
5 second language, or Spanish in a public elementary or secondary  
6 school in this state;

7 (2) accept, during the first school year that begins  
8 after the date the person becomes certified as provided by  
9 Subdivision (1), an offer of full-time employment to teach  
10 bilingual education, English as a second language, or Spanish in a  
11 public elementary or secondary school in this state that has a  
12 shortage of teachers certified to teach in one or more of those  
13 fields; and

14 (3) teach bilingual education, English as a second  
15 language, or Spanish at that school for at least two school years.

16 Sec. 61.99994. FINANCIAL INCENTIVES. The board shall award  
17 financial incentives such as tuition assistance or student loan  
18 repayment to each participant in the program to assist with the cost  
19 of payment of mandatory tuition and fees for courses required to  
20 obtain certification to teach bilingual education, English as a  
21 second language, or Spanish.

22 Sec. 61.99995. REIMBURSEMENT; EXCEPTIONS. (a) A program  
23 participant who fails to meet the requirements of Section 61.99993  
24 shall reimburse the board for the amount of any assistance received  
25 by the participant under this subchapter.

26 (b) The board by rule shall establish exceptions to the  
27 reimbursement requirement under this section for participants who

1 are unable to meet the requirements of Section 61.99993 as a result  
2 of an unusual hardship.

3 Sec. 61.99996. GIFTS, GRANTS, AND DONATIONS. In addition  
4 to money appropriated by the legislature, the board may solicit and  
5 accept gifts, grants, and donations for the purposes of this  
6 subchapter.

7 Sec. 61.99997. RULES. The board shall adopt rules  
8 necessary for the administration of this subchapter, including a  
9 rule that sets the maximum amount of financial assistance that a  
10 person may receive under this subchapter in one year.

11 SECTION 4. The Texas Education Agency shall develop the  
12 program of study for use in a school district's career and  
13 technology education program to teach bilingual education, English  
14 as a second language, or Spanish as required by Section 29.1831,  
15 Education Code, as added by this Act, beginning not later than the  
16 2024-2025 school year.

17 SECTION 5. Section 33.007(b), Education Code, as amended by  
18 this Act, applies beginning with the 2024-2025 school year.

19 SECTION 6. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
20 shall adopt rules for the administration of Subchapter SS, Chapter  
21 61, Education Code, as added by this Act, as soon as practicable  
22 after this Act takes effect.

23 SECTION 7. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
24 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
25 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
26 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
27 Act takes effect September 1, 2023.