

By: West

S.B. No. 1887

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the requirements for the early college education program and the transfer of course credit among public institutions of higher education.

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

SECTION 1. Section 29.908(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) The program must:

(1) provide for a course of study that enables a participating student to combine high school courses and college-level courses during grade levels 9 through 12;

(2) allow a participating student to complete high school and enroll in a program at an institution of higher education that will enable the student to, on or before the fifth anniversary of the date of the student's first day of high school, receive a high school diploma and either:

(A) an applied associate degree, as defined by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board rule; or

(B) an academic associate degree, as defined by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board rule, with a completed field of study curriculum developed under Section 61.823 that is transferable [at least 60 semester credit hours] toward a baccalaureate degree at one or more general academic teaching institutions, as defined by Section 61.003;

1 (3) include articulation agreements with colleges,
2 universities, and technical schools in this state to provide a
3 participating student access to postsecondary educational and
4 training opportunities at a college, university, or technical
5 school; and

6 (4) provide a participating student flexibility in
7 class scheduling and academic mentoring.

8 SECTION 2. Section 51.4033, Education Code, is amended to
9 read as follows:

10 Sec. 51.4033. REPORT OF NONTRANSFERABLE CREDIT. (a) Not
11 later than May [~~March~~] 1 of each year and in the form prescribed by
12 the coordinating board, each general academic teaching institution
13 shall provide to the coordinating board and the legislature a
14 report describing any courses in the Lower-Division Academic Course
15 Guide Manual or its successor adopted by the coordinating board for
16 which a student who transfers to the institution from another
17 institution of higher education is not granted:

18 (1) academic credit at the receiving institution; or

19 (2) if the student has declared a major and has not
20 changed majors, academic credit toward the student's major at the
21 receiving institution.

22 (b) A report required by this section must indicate:

23 (1) the course name and type;

24 (2) which institution of higher education provided
25 academic credit for the course; and

26 (3) the reason why the receiving institution did not
27 grant academic credit for the course as described by Subsection

1 (a) , including whether the institution complied with the dispute
2 resolution process under Section 61.826.

3 SECTION 3. Section 51.4034(a), Education Code, is amended
4 to read as follows:

5 (a) Not later than May [~~March~~] 1 of each year and in the form
6 prescribed by the coordinating board, each public junior college
7 shall provide to the coordinating board and the legislature a
8 report on courses taken by students who, during the preceding
9 academic year, transferred to a general academic teaching
10 institution or earned an associate degree at the college.

11 SECTION 4. Sections 61.003(11) and (12), Education Code,
12 are amended to read as follows:

13 (11) "Degree program" means any grouping of subject
14 matter courses which, when satisfactorily completed by a student,
15 will entitle the student [~~him~~] to:

16 (A) a degree from a public senior college or
17 university or a medical or dental unit; or

18 (B) an academic associate degree, as defined by
19 board rule, or baccalaureate degree from a public junior college.

20 (12) "Certificate program" means a grouping of
21 subject-matter courses which, when satisfactorily completed by a
22 student, will entitle the student [~~him~~] to:

23 (A) a certificate;

24 (B) an [~~7~~] associate degree, other than an
25 academic associate degree, as defined by board rule, from a
26 technical institute or junior college; or

27 (C) [~~7~~ ~~or~~] documentary evidence, other than a

1 degree, of completion of a course of study at the postsecondary
2 level.

3 SECTION 5. Sections 61.822(b) and (c), Education Code, are
4 amended to read as follows:

5 (b) Each institution of higher education shall adopt a core
6 curriculum of no less than 42 semester credit hours, including
7 specific courses comprising the curriculum. The core curriculum
8 shall be consistent with the common course numbering system
9 approved by the board and with the statement, recommendations, and
10 rules issued by the board. An institution may have a core
11 curriculum of other than 42 semester credit hours only if approved
12 by the board. The board by rule may approve a core curriculum of
13 fewer than 42 semester credit hours for an associate degree program
14 if the board determines that the approval would facilitate the
15 award of a degree or transfer of credit consistent with this
16 subchapter.

17 (c) If a student successfully completes the [~~42-hour~~] core
18 curriculum at an institution of higher education, that block of
19 courses may be transferred to any other institution of higher
20 education and must be substituted for the receiving institution's
21 core curriculum. A student shall receive academic credit for each
22 of the courses transferred and may not be required to take
23 additional core curriculum courses at the receiving institution
24 unless the board has approved a larger core curriculum at the
25 institution.

26 SECTION 6. Section 61.823, Education Code, is amended by
27 adding Subsection (a-1) and amending Subsection (b) to read as

1 follows:

2 (a-1) The board by rule may authorize a general academic
3 teaching institution to adopt, for each field of study curriculum
4 developed by the board for which the institution offers a degree
5 program, a set of courses specific to that field of study, for a
6 total of at least six semester credit hours or the equivalent, that
7 must be completed as part of the field of study curriculum for that
8 institution. Each general academic teaching institution that
9 adopts a set of courses for a field of study curriculum under this
10 subsection shall post on the institution's Internet website in a
11 manner easily accessible to students the set of courses with the
12 associated course numbers under the common course numbering system.

13 (b) If a student successfully completes a field of study
14 curriculum developed by the board, that block of courses may be
15 transferred to a general academic teaching institution and, subject
16 to completion of the set of courses adopted by the institution for
17 that field of study under Subsection (a-1), must be substituted for
18 that institution's lower division requirements for the degree
19 program for the field of study into which the student transfers, and
20 the student shall receive full academic credit toward the degree
21 program for the block of courses transferred.

22 SECTION 7. Sections 61.826(c), (d), and (e), Education
23 Code, are amended to read as follows:

24 (c) If an institution of higher education proposes to deny
25 the application toward the institution's core curriculum or a field
26 of study curriculum developed by the board under Section 61.823 of
27 [does not accept] course credit earned by a student at another

1 institution of higher education in the other institution's core
2 curriculum or in a field of study curriculum, that institution
3 must:

4 (1) ~~[shall]~~ give written notice to the student and the
5 other institution of that institution's intent to deny ~~[that]~~ the
6 application ~~[transfer]~~ of the course credit to the institution's
7 core curriculum or field of study curriculum and the reasons for the
8 proposed denial;

9 (2) ~~[is denied. The two institutions and the student~~
10 ~~shall]~~ attempt to resolve the application ~~[transfer]~~ of the course
11 credit to the institution's core curriculum or field of study
12 curriculum with the other institution and the student in accordance
13 with this section and board rules;

14 (3) resolve the dispute not later than the 45th day
15 after the date on which the student enrolls in that institution; and

16 (4) if ~~[. If]~~ the ~~[transfer]~~ dispute is not resolved to
17 the satisfaction of the student or the institution at which the
18 credit was earned, ~~[within 45 days after the date the student~~
19 ~~received written notice of the denial, the institution that denies~~
20 ~~the transfer of the course credit shall]~~ notify the commissioner of
21 higher education of its denial to apply the course credit to the
22 institution's core curriculum or field of study curriculum and the
23 reasons for the denial.

24 (d) Not later than the 20th business day after the date the
25 commissioner of higher education receives notice of a dispute
26 concerning the application of course credit to an institution of
27 higher education's core curriculum or field of study curriculum

1 under Subsection (c)(4), the [~~The~~] commissioner [~~of higher~~
2 ~~education~~] or the commissioner's designee shall make the final
3 determination about the [~~a~~] dispute [~~concerning the transfer of~~
4 ~~course credit~~] and give written notice of the determination to the
5 involved student and institutions. If the commissioner or the
6 commissioner's designee determines that the institution may not
7 deny the application of course credit described by Subsection (c)
8 to the institution's core curriculum or field of study curriculum,
9 the institution shall apply that course credit toward the
10 institution's core curriculum or field of study curriculum, as
11 applicable. A determination by the commissioner or the
12 commissioner's designee under this subsection is final and may not
13 be appealed.

14 (e) The board shall:

15 (1) collect data on the types of transfer disputes
16 that are reported and the disposition of each case that is
17 considered by the commissioner of higher education or the
18 commissioner's designee; and

19 (2) post on the board's Internet website a list of each
20 case that is considered by the commissioner of higher education or
21 the commissioner's designee under this section, including the
22 disposition of the case.

23 SECTION 8. Section 61.827(b), Education Code, is amended to
24 read as follows:

25 (b) In adopting rules regarding the recommended core
26 curriculum developed under Section 61.822, the board shall appoint
27 a committee to advise the board [~~use the negotiated rulemaking~~

1 ~~procedures]~~ under Section 2001.031 [~~Chapter 2008~~], Government
2 Code.

3 SECTION 9. Subchapter S, Chapter 61, Education Code, is
4 amended by adding Section 61.834 to read as follows:

5 Sec. 61.834. TEXAS DIRECT ASSOCIATE DEGREE. A public
6 junior college, public state college, or public technical institute
7 shall award a student a "Texas Direct" associate degree and include
8 an appropriate notation on the student's transcript if the student
9 completes a field of study curriculum developed by the board under
10 Section 61.823 and:

- 11 (1) the college's core curriculum; or
12 (2) an abbreviated core curriculum related to a
13 specific approved field of study curriculum transferable to one or
14 more general academic teaching institutions.

15 SECTION 10. This Act applies beginning with the 2023-2024
16 academic year.

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