

By: LaMantia

S.B. No. 2240

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to establishing a digital textbook and learning materials
subscription pilot program.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, is
amended by adding Section 61.0667 to read as follows:

Sec. 61.0667. DIGITAL TEXTBOOK AND LEARNING MATERIALS
SUBSCRIPTION PILOT PROGRAM. (a) In this section:

(1) "Digital textbook and learning materials
subscription program" means a subscription program to a platform
that includes unrestricted access to digital textbooks, study
tools, online homework platforms, and other educational resources
used to improve student outcomes.

(2) "Lower-division institution of higher education"
means a public junior college, public state college, or public
technical institute.

(b) The board shall establish a pilot program under which
the board awards grants to participating lower-division
institutions of higher education to provide financial assistance to
eligible students for the cost of subscribing to the digital
textbook and learning materials subscription program selected by
the board under Subsection (e).

(c) The board shall select lower-division institutions of
higher education to participate in the pilot program. In selecting

1 institutions, the board shall, to the extent possible:

2 (1) select institutions in both rural and urban areas
3 of this state; and

4 (2) prioritize institutions with large socially and
5 economically disadvantaged and historically underrepresented
6 student populations.

7 (d) A participating lower-division institution of higher
8 education must use grant funds awarded under this section to
9 provide financial assistance to eligible students for all or part
10 of the cost of subscribing to the digital textbook and learning
11 materials subscription program selected by the board under
12 Subsection (e). The participating institution shall determine the
13 eligibility criteria for a student to receive financial assistance
14 under the pilot program and must prioritize providing financial
15 assistance to economically disadvantaged students.

16 (e) The board shall engage in a competitive bidding process
17 to select the digital textbook and learning materials subscription
18 to be used in the pilot program. The subscription selected by the
19 board must provide 24-hour technical support services to
20 subscribers.

21 (f) Not later than September 1, 2026, the board shall
22 prepare and deliver to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the
23 speaker of the house of representatives, and the presiding officer
24 of each legislative standing committee with primary jurisdiction
25 over higher education a report that evaluates the effectiveness of
26 the pilot program in improving student outcomes. The report must
27 include a recommendation regarding whether the pilot program should

1 be continued, expanded, or terminated.

2 (g) This section expires September 1, 2027.

3 SECTION 2. (a) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating
4 Board shall adopt rules to administer the pilot program established
5 under Section 61.0667, Education Code, as added by this Act, as soon
6 as practicable after the effective date of this Act.

7 (b) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and
8 participating lower-division institutions of higher education
9 shall award initial grants under Section 61.0667, Education Code,
10 as added by this Act, beginning with the 2024 spring semester.

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.