**BILL ANALYSIS**

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| Senate Research Center | S.B. 530 |
|  | By: Sparks |
|  | Education K-16 |
|  | 6/9/2025 |
|  | Enrolled |

**AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

In 2019, the U.S. Department of Education amended federal rules to no longer require institutions of higher education to use their regional accreditor. Instead, colleges and universities are allowed to be accredited by any nationally recognized accreditor. However, there are parts of code that still require a Texas institutions of higher education to be accredited by their regional accreditor, the Southern Association of College and Schools (SACS). This legislation removes the statutory requirements for institutions of higher education to be accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.

S.B. 530 amends current law relating to the accreditation of certain postsecondary educational institutions in this state or of certain programs offered by those institutions.

**RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 2 (Section 61.051, Education Code) of this bill.

**SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Section 61.003(13), Education Code, to redefine "recognized accrediting agency."

SECTION 2. Amends Section 61.051(a), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Provides that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board represents the highest authority in the state in matters of public higher education and is charged with the duty to take an active part in promoting quality education throughout the state by performing certain actions, including adopting rules or taking other action necessary to ensure that each institution of higher education is properly accredited as required to participate in the federal financial aid program under 20 U.S.C. Section 1070a and other federal student financial assistance programs. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 61.0515(a), Education Code, as follows:

(a) Prohibits a student, to earn a baccalaureate degree, from being required by a general academic teaching institution to complete more than the minimum number of semester credit hours required for the degree by the institution's recognized accrediting agency, rather than the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or its successor, unless the institution determines that there is a compelling academic reason for requiring completion of additional semester credit hours for the degree.

SECTION 4. Amends Section 61.05151(a), Education Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 5. Amends Section 61.8235(f), Education Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 6. Amends Section 107.151(c), Education Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 7. Amends Section 107.201(c), Education Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 8. Amends Section 130.301, Education Code, by adding Subdivision (3) to define "recognized accrediting agency."

SECTION 9. Amends Section 130.305, Education Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 10. Amends Section 130.307(c), Education Code, to make a conforming change.

SECTION 11. Effective date: September 1, 2025.