

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
89R5138 KJE-D

S.B. 895
By: Hughes
Education K-16
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Higher education financial aid typically does not distinguish between a public school graduate, a homeschool graduate, or a private school graduate. Any of those students would be eligible for most types of postsecondary financial aid.

With the better alignment of K-12 and postsecondary coursework, higher education financial aid is now being extended to high school students through the Financial Aid for Swift Transfer (FAST) program established by H.B. 8 (88R), a significant piece of legislation to reform community college financing. This new financial aid program to help high school students access higher education credits is only available to public school students, however, and leaves out homeschool and private school students. FAST should be expanded to include homeschool and private school students to keep higher education financial aid available to all students.

As proposed, S.B. 895 amends current law relating to a student's eligibility to participate in the Financial Aid for Swift Transfer (FAST) program.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 28.0095(c), (e), (f), and (h), Education Code, as follows:

(c) Provides that a student is eligible to enroll at no cost in a dual credit course under the Financial Aid for Swift Transfer (FAST) program (program) if the student meets certain requirements, including being enrolled in high school in a school district, charter school, or private school, including a home school. Makes nonsubstantive changes.

(e)-(f) Makes conforming and nonsubstantive changes to these subsections.

(h) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to distribute money transferred to the coordinating board under Section 48.308 (Allotment for Financial Aid for Swift Transfer (FAST) Program), or appropriated to THECB for purposes of paying costs for eligible students enrolled in a private school, to the participating institutions of higher education in proportion to the number of dual credit courses in which eligible students are enrolled at the institution.

SECTION 2. Amends Section 48.308(b), Education Code, as added by Chapter 378 (H.B. 8), Acts of the 88th Legislature, Regular Session, 2023, as follows:

(b) Provides that an institution of higher education participating in the program is entitled to an allotment in an amount equal to the amount of tuition set by coordinating board rule under Section 28.0095(d) (relating to providing that an institution may participate only if its dual credit tuition meets THECB limits) for each dual credit course in which a student who is enrolled in a school district or open-enrollment charter school and is eligible to participate in the program is enrolled at the institution.

SECTION 3. Amends Section 61.059, Education Code, by adding Subsection (u), as follows:

(u) Requires THECB, in its instruction and operations formula applicable to an institution of higher education participating in the program under Section 28.0095 (Financial Aid for Swift Transfer (FAST) Program), to include the amount of tuition set by THECB rule under Section 28.0095(d) for each dual credit course in which a student who is enrolled in a private school and is eligible to participate in the program is enrolled at the institution.

SECTION 4. Provides that Section 28.0095, Education Code, as amended by this Act, applies beginning with that 2025–2026 school year.

SECTION 5. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2025.