

By: Gates

H.B. No. 20

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to establishing the Applied Sciences Pathway program.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter 7, Chapter 29, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 29.914 to read as follows:

Sec. 29.914. APPLIED SCIENCES PATHWAY PROGRAM. (a) In this section:

(1) "Certificate program" and "institution of higher education" have the meanings assigned by Section 61.003.

(2) "Program" means the Applied Sciences Pathway program established under this section.

(b) The commissioner shall establish and administer the Applied Sciences Pathway program to provide opportunities for students to concurrently earn high school diplomas and certificates from institutions of higher education.

(c) The commissioner shall approve for participation in the program partnerships between school districts or open-enrollment charter schools and institutions of higher education to provide courses in a non-duplicative sequence of progressive achievement that lead to:

(1) a high school diploma; and

(2) completion of a certificate program with a successful job placement rate in high-wage, high-growth jobs in one of the following industries:

- 1 (A) plumbing and pipe fitting;
- 2 (B) electrical;
- 3 (C) welding;
- 4 (D) sheet metal;
- 5 (E) carpentry;
- 6 (F) masonry;
- 7 (G) diesel and heavy equipment;
- 8 (H) aviation maintenance;
- 9 (I) heating, ventilation, and air conditioning;

10 or

- 11 (J) construction management and inspection.

12 (d) A partnership participating in the program must:

13 (1) enable the school district or open-enrollment
14 charter school to provide at least one course of study described by
15 Subsection (c) through a partnership with an institution of higher
16 education under the program;

17 (2) provide for a course of study described by
18 Subsection (c) that enables a participating student in grade level
19 11 or 12 to concurrently:

20 (A) enroll in a certificate program described by
21 Subsection (c)(2) at the partnering institution of higher education
22 under which the student may receive instruction from an instructor
23 employed by the institution and any appropriate work-based learning
24 opportunities from the institution and earn:

25 (i) a level one or level two certificate, as
26 defined by the commissioner; or

27 (ii) another certificate approved by

1 commissioner rule; and

2 (B) satisfy high school graduation requirements
3 and receive a high school diploma;

4 (3) require the partnering school district or
5 open-enrollment charter school to permit all district or school
6 students in grade level 11 or 12 to enroll in a course of study
7 provided under Subdivision (2);

8 (4) be governed by an articulation agreement between
9 the partnering school district or open-enrollment charter school
10 and institution of higher education; and

11 (5) meet any other requirements established by
12 commissioner rule.

13 (e) A course of study provided under the program must be
14 provided at no cost to the student.

15 (f) The commissioner may approve the substitution of one
16 credit in a subject area required for high school graduation under
17 Section 28.025 with one credit in a career and technology education
18 course provided by an institution of higher education under the
19 program that substantially covers the essential knowledge and
20 skills of the course for which it is substituted.

21 (g) A career and technology education course authorized as a
22 substitute credit under Subsection (f) may not count:

23 (1) for more than one credit toward the student's high
24 school graduation requirements; or

25 (2) as a credit for more than one subject area.

26 (h) Time that a student spends participating in the program
27 is counted as part of the minimum number of instructional hours

1 required for a student to be considered a full-time student in
2 average daily attendance for purposes of Section 48.005.

3 (i) Nothing in this section may be construed to prevent a
4 student's participation in career and technology education courses
5 before the student begins participating in the program.

6 (j) The commissioner shall adopt rules as necessary to
7 administer the program.

8 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2025-2026
9 school year.

10 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
11 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
12 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
13 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
14 Act takes effect September 1, 2025.