

By: Wilson

H.B. No. 4980

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to establishing the Child-Care Professional Pathway program.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter 2, Chapter 29, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 29.919 to read as follows:

Sec. 29.919. CHILD-CARE PROFESSIONAL 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 Child-Care Professional Pathway program established under this section.

(b) The commissioner shall establish and administer the Child-Care Professional 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) a Child Development Associate certificate

1 program with a successful job placement rate in the field of
2 professional child care; or

3 (B) an associate degree in human development,
4 psychology, sociology, applied science in early childhood
5 education, or another discipline relevant to the field of
6 professional child care.

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

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

12 (2) provide for a course of study described by
13 Subsection (c) that enables a participating student in grade level
14 11 or 12 to concurrently:

15 (A) enroll in a certificate or degree program
16 described by Subsection (c) at the partnering institution of higher
17 education under which the student may receive instruction from an
18 instructor employed by the institution and any appropriate
19 work-based learning opportunities from the institution and earn:

20 (i) a Child Development Associate
21 credential; or

22 (ii) another credential, including a
23 certificate and associate degree that may be earned concurrently
24 under a hybrid program approved by commissioner rule; and

25 (B) satisfy high school graduation requirements
26 and receive a high school diploma;

27 (3) require the partnering school district or

1 open-enrollment charter school to permit all district or school
2 students in grade level 11 or 12 to enroll in a course of study
3 provided under Subdivision (2);

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

7 (5) meet any other requirements established by
8 commissioner rule.

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

11 (f) The commissioner may approve the substitution of one
12 credit in a subject area required for high school graduation under
13 Section 28.025 with one credit in a child-care professional
14 education course provided by an institution of higher education
15 under the program that substantially covers the essential knowledge
16 and skills of the course for which it is substituted.

17 (g) A child-care professional education course authorized
18 as a substitute credit under Subsection (f) may not count:

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

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

22 (h) Time that a student spends participating in the program
23 is counted as part of the minimum number of instructional hours
24 required for a student to be considered a full-time student in
25 average daily attendance for purposes of Section 48.005.

26 (i) Nothing in this section may be construed to prevent a
27 student's participation in child-care professional education

1 courses before the student begins participating in the program.

2 (j) The commissioner shall adopt rules as necessary to
3 administer the program.

4 SECTION 2. This Act applies beginning with the 2025-2026
5 school year.

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