

By: Bonnen

H.B. No. 5333

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the establishment of the STEM Excellence Graduate Fellowship program.

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

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

SUBCHAPTER W. STEM EXCELLENCE GRADUATE FELLOWSHIP PROGRAM

Sec. 61.931. DEFINITIONS. In this subchapter:

(1) "Program" means the STEM Excellence Graduate Fellowship program established under this subchapter.

(2) "STEM" means science, technology, engineering, and mathematics.

Sec. 61.932. ESTABLISHMENT; ADMINISTRATION. (a) The STEM Excellence Graduate Fellowship program is established as a merit-based fellowship for high-achieving research doctoral students in a STEM field.

(b) Using money appropriated or otherwise available for the purpose, the board shall award fellowships to eligible students under the program to conduct research at a general academic teaching institution.

(c) The board shall administer the program. The board may contract with one or more general academic teaching institutions to assist in administering the program, including receiving and reviewing applications, recommending the distribution of funds to

general academic teaching institutions, and developing criteria for the selection of students for the program.

(d) The board may establish one or more advisory committees for the purpose of recommending rules for the administration of the program.

Sec. 61.933. INITIAL ELIGIBILITY. (a) To be initially eligible for a fellowship, a student must:

(1) be a United States citizen;

(2) obtain the federal security clearance required for the research the student would be performing under the fellowship, if applicable;

(3) be a high-achieving student, as determined by the institution in which the student is enrolled, based on criteria the institution would otherwise use to award merit-based aid, including grades, test scores, work, internship, or other experience, scholarships or awards received, or prior research or publication by the student;

(4) be enrolled in a research doctoral degree program in a STEM field at a general academic teaching institution; and

(5) comply with any additional requirement adopted by the board.

(b) The board may give preference to a student who is a resident of this state under Subchapter B, Chapter 54.

Sec. 61.934. CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY. (a) After establishing initial eligibility to participate in the program under Section 61.933, a student may continue participating in the program only if the student:

1 (1) maintains a minimum overall grade point average
2 determined by board rule;

3 (2) maintains the required federal security clearance
4 for the research the student is conducting under the fellowship, if
5 applicable; and

6 (3) complies with any additional requirement adopted
7 by the board.

8 (b) A student may not receive a fellowship under the program
9 for more than five years.

10 Sec. 61.935. GRANTS, GIFTS, AND DONATIONS. The board may
11 solicit, accept, and spend grants, gifts, and donations from any
12 public or private source for the purposes of the program.

13 Sec. 61.936. RULES. (a) The board, in consultation with
14 general academic teaching institutions, shall adopt rules for the
15 administration of the program, including rules providing for the
16 amount and permissible uses of a fellowship awarded under the
17 program.

18 (b) Notwithstanding Section [61.033](#), the board is not
19 required to use negotiated rulemaking procedures under Chapter
20 [2008](#), Government Code, for the adoption of rules under this
21 subchapter.

22 SECTION 2. As soon as practicable after the effective date
23 of this Act, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall
24 adopt rules necessary to implement Subchapter [W](#), Chapter [61](#),
25 Education Code, as added by this Act.

26 SECTION 3. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
27 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as

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1 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
2 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
3 Act takes effect September 1, 2025.