

# Establishing a student outcomes pilot program by Alamo Community College

HB 3934 by McClendon (Van de Putte)

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**DIGEST:** HB 3934 would have established a pilot program at Alamo Community College to collect and analyze statistical data regarding retention and graduation rates for higher education students at the college in order to identify successful learning methodologies that would ensure college success and higher graduation rates. The data would have been used to provide educators with information to identify the efficacy of instruction at Alamo Community College and examine the transition of students to four-year institutions and further the ongoing education excellence initiatives by the college.

**GOVERNOR'S  
REASON FOR  
VETO:**

“House Bill 3934 would authorize the Alamo Community College District to create a new special item, which funds a study to determine how well their students transition to four-year institutions. This is something that should already be occurring, within existing resources, because one of the preeminent missions of any two-year college is to prepare students for transfer to a four-year school.”

**RESPONSE:**

Rep. Ruth Jones McClendon, the bill’s author, said: “HB 3934 would have established a student outcomes pilot program by the Alamo Community College District (ACCD) to provide an overall picture of how well students transition from high school to community college and graduation from a university. There is national recognition that such an evaluation tool is needed.

“A chief reason for instituting this program was to carry out the initiative set forth during the 79th third special session under HB 1, being the design to align curricula and establish P-16 strategies for student longitudinal success. In fact, this 80R appropriation would have provided a program to serve as the analytical backbone and a statewide model for ‘Closing the Gaps.’

“In the last special session of the 79th Legislature, HB 1 called for more coordination in a K-16 educational system and directed the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to coordinate their efforts in this regard. Here is how this pilot program of HB 3934 would have assisted with that directive:

- This project would have aligned with HB 1, sec. 28.008, ‘Advancement of College Readiness in Curriculum,’ which establishes vertical teams;
- It also would have aligned with sec. 39.0232, ‘Use of End-of-Course Assessment Instrument as Placement Instruments’; and
- It would have aligned with sec. 61.076, K-16, ‘College Readiness and Success Strategic Action Plan.’

“Currently, the TEA collects data regarding student performance and accountability. Separately, the THECB collects data regarding retention rates and graduation rates. The TEA system database contains information on student grades, class standing, TAKS scores, and other information. The THECB database has retention rates,

graduation rates, and other data. The ACCD quantitative study appropriation supporting HB 3934 would have provided a bridge for assembling meaningful data and an evaluation link between the separate sets of data gathered by the TEA and THECB.

- Although there are databases currently available at TEA for K-12 and at THECB as to student performance results, there is no system currently in place to bring the two systems together.
- This quantitative outcomes study authorized in HB 1 (80R) would have documented the transition from high school to college success with a mechanism for linking student results in high school and college.
- This \$500,000 appropriation in HB 1 (80R) would have carried through with the 79R and 79(3) plan of helping educators identify gaps in curriculum and align expectations between high school completion and entry into college and/or the workforce. Current legislation is based on accountability, whereas HB 3934 would have gone further. The results of this project would have helped solve the puzzle of why some students excel in high school academics but underperform in college admission exams and college classes.

“Commitments for participation and assistance with this project were in place from the University of Texas at San Antonio, Alamo Community Colleges, San Antonio Independent School District, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and Cal-PASS (the California State Pathways System).

“In conjunction with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the ACCD pilot study would have provided a system through which to:

- track students as they progress through their courses;
- develop faculty teams to measure progress, identify barriers to student progress and develop curricula strategies to overcome barriers; and
- create methods for statewide implementation to improve student graduation rates.

“In collaboration with Cal-PASS, this two-year ACCD pilot program would have provided a cost efficient means of enhancing the existing THECB tracking system and improving the benefits of that tracking system for the colleges and universities.

- This program would have provided a useful mechanism to bring systems together to document the transition from high school to college success by identifying gaps in curriculum and aligning expectations between high school completion and entry into college level work.
- This program would have helped public schools learn how well their students do as they transition from one educational system to another; it also would have helped faculty teams share and analyze data as students move through their educational continuum and identify intercollegiate strategies to improve student success.

- It would also have provided data to evaluate which current practices work to ensure student success as the student transitions from each level of education to the next, and the changes needed to meet the state’s goals for student success from pre-college years through university graduation.

“Other states, such as California and Florida, have established successful programs to allow for monitoring the transition of students as they move towards completion of an undergraduate degree. They have used these programs to identify issues and make recommendations to enhance their states’ gains in higher education. HB 3934 would have provided Texas with a pilot for helping our state accomplish similar successful outcomes experienced by educationally progressive states.”

Sen. Leticia Van de Putte, the Senate sponsor, was unavailable for comment.

**NOTES:**

HB 3934 passed the House on the Local, Consent, and Resolutions Calendar and was not analyzed in a *Daily Floor Report*.