

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.H.B. 1247
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Natural Resources & Economic Development
5/21/2021
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

C.S.H.B. 1247 directs the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Workforce Commission, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to jointly develop a strategic framework to encourage work-based learning in Texas. This bill develops a common language across agencies related to work-based learning, creates a strategic framework that guides cross-sector partnerships, and collectively identifies competencies and credentials crucial to the economic success of Texas.

As substituted, C.S.H.B. 1247 adds a requirement that the report identify available federal funds for work-based training and make recommendations on the use of those funds.

C.S.H.B. 1247 amends current law relating to the development of and report on a tri-agency work-based learning strategic framework by the Texas Workforce Commission, the Texas Education Agency, and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

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 Subtitle B, Title 4, Labor Code, by adding Chapter 318, as follows:

CHAPTER 318. TRI-AGENCY WORK-BASED LEARNING STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK

Sec. 318.001. TRI-AGENCY WORK-BASED LEARNING STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK. (a) Requires the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), the Texas Education Agency (TEA), and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to jointly develop a strategic framework to encourage work-based learning in this state. Requires each agency to appoint an existing agency employee to lead the development of the framework.

(b) Requires TWC, TEA, and THECB, not later than December 31, 2022, to jointly prepare and submit to the legislature a report on the framework developed under Subsection (a). Requires that the report:

- (1) define "work-based learning opportunity" in a comprehensive manner that includes certain work-based learning opportunities;
- (2) determine common language, definitions, and quality standards to be used by each agency for work-based learning opportunities that span secondary and postsecondary education;
- (3) establish methods of identifying certain skills and competencies that are aligned with industry demand and talent needs, with a particular focus on high-demand, high-growth industries that offer livable wages;

(4) align priorities, programs, and goals across the agencies to ensure the development of cohesive work-based learning strategies that strengthen workforce pipelines;

(5) identify strategies the agencies to partner with certain entities to implement high-quality project-based learning in middle and junior high school classrooms and work-based learning experiences in high school and postsecondary education;

(6) provide methods of supporting partnerships between public institutions of higher education to create additional pathways for postsecondary work-based learning credentials of value to high-demand, high-growth industries and that lead to quality career opportunities;

(7) articulate the roles and responsibilities of public primary and secondary schools, public institutions of higher education, and workforce boards and organizations in implementing high-quality work-based learning programs and partnerships;

(8) provide a strategy for identifying industry-led high-quality training models that promote and replicate high-need jobs that lead to equitable outcomes for individuals and can be scaled across industries and regions;

(9) identify opportunities to improve and incentivize regional coordination across Texas to better reflect regional workforce needs and eliminate duplicative programs, including by providing state support to build capacity in regional intermediary organizations to facilitate education-workforce partnerships and programs;

(10) identify streamlined data collection models for primary, secondary, and postsecondary education and workforce accountability that can be disaggregated as necessary to evaluate and increase equity in access to high-quality programs, with a focus on underrepresented populations;

(11) include recommendations to improve the coordination of funds and awarding of grants among the agencies to eliminate barriers to entry for regional partners; and

(12) identify any available funds that may be used for work-based learning and training and include recommendations regarding the use of those funds by the agencies, including supporting incentives for public institutions of higher education, work-study programs, and student advising and completion strategies.

(c) Requires TWC, TEA, and THECB, to, as soon as practicable after the report is submitted, to the extent possible, implement the recommendations made under Subsection (b) (12).

Sec. 318.002. EXPIRATION. Provides that this chapter expires September 1, 2023.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2021.