

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
87R26689 KJE-D

C.S.H.B. 2030
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Higher Education
5/21/2021
Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

The substitute to H.B. 2030 amends the bill to include a statute expiration date of October 1, 2024, to coincide with federal funding expiration date of September 30, 2024. Secondly, C.S.H.B. 2030 clarifies that federal funds cannot be used for student tuition.

C.S.H.B. 2030 amends current law relating to the establishment by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board of a grant program for regional postsecondary education collaboratives.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 1 (Section 61.937, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 61, Education Code, by adding Subchapter W, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER W. REGIONAL POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COLLABORATIVES GRANT PROGRAM

Sec. 61.931. DEFINITIONS. Defines "low-income student" and "regional postsecondary collaborative."

Sec. 61.932. GRANT PROGRAM. (a) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to establish and administer a competitive grant program under which THECB awards grants to eligible regional postsecondary education collaboratives to improve postsecondary educational outcomes for low-income students in the state.

(b) Requires THECB, in awarding grants under the program, to give priority to eligible regional postsecondary education collaboratives that focus on supporting low-income students or that have a demonstrated connection to targeted workforce fields, as determined by THECB.

Sec. 61.933. ELIGIBILITY. Requires a regional postsecondary education collaborative, to be eligible to receive a grant under this subchapter, to:

(1) include at least one school district and public junior college;

(2) raise a minimum amount of funding from other sources for the collaborative's costs, as established by THECB rule;

(3) develop and submit to THECB a plan detailing how the collaborative would use grant funds awarded under this subchapter in a manner permitted under Section 61.935;

(4) build partnerships committed to changing postsecondary education systems and improving postsecondary educational outcomes through the use of data,

mutual accountability, and engagement between a student and the student's community;

(5) measure the collaborative's success by achievement of increasing postsecondary enrollment and completion at any institution of higher education or private or independent institution of higher education and career entry for all students the collaborative assists;

(6) provide personalized outreach to students and parents or caregivers;

(7) provide proactive, holistic supports to assist students in postsecondary persistence and completion and in connecting with employers; and

(8) satisfy any additional requirements established by THECB rule.

Sec. 61.934. GRANT AMOUNT. (a) Requires that a grant awarded to an eligible regional postsecondary education collaborative under the program be made for a period sufficient to cover the enrollment in, persistence in, and timely completion of a certificate or degree program for two consecutive cohorts of students.

(b) Provides that each grant consists of, for each cohort:

(1) an initial amount at the beginning of the first academic year for which the grant is awarded equal to \$1,000 for each low-income student who:

(A) graduated in the preceding school year from a high school participating in the collaborative; and

(B) enrolls at an institution of higher education or a private or independent institution of higher education for that academic year; and

(2) at the end of each academic year for which the grant is awarded, a bonus for each student described by Subdivision (1) who:

(A) persists, as determined by THECB rule, at an institution of higher education or a private or independent institution of higher education; or

(B) timely completes a certificate or degree program, as determined by THECB rule, at an institution of higher education or a private or independent institution of higher education.

(c) Provides that, subject to Subsection (e), the bonus per student under Subsection (a)(2)(A) is an amount equal to \$25 million divided by the total number of students who qualify for the bonus.

(d) Provides that, subject to Subsection (e), the bonus per student under Subsection (a)(2)(B) is an amount equal to \$20 million divided by the total number of students who qualify for the bonus.

(e) Prohibits the amount of a bonus under Subsection (a)(2)(A) or (B) from exceeding \$2,000 per student.

Sec. 61.935. GRANT USE. (a) Authorizes a grant awarded to an eligible regional postsecondary education collaborative under this subchapter, subject to Subsection (b), to be used only for:

(1) staff support for the collaborative;

- (2) student services designed to increase postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and completion;
- (3) student financial assistance;
- (4) programs that provide training for jobs in targeted workforce fields, as determined by THECB; and
- (5) other expenses approved by THECB.

(b) Prohibits a grant awarded under this subchapter from being used to pay for a student's tuition at an institution of higher education or a private or independent institution of higher education.

Sec. 61.936. REPORTING. (a) Requires each regional postsecondary education collaborative that receives a grant under this subchapter to collect and report to THECB information regarding postsecondary enrollment, persistence, and completion, disaggregated by category and semester or term, as required by THECB to assist THECB in fulfilling its duties under this subchapter.

(b) Requires THECB, not later than December 1 of each year, to submit to the legislature a report on the effectiveness of the grant program established under this subchapter and any recommendations for legislative or other action.

Sec. 61.937. RULES. Authorizes THECB to adopt rules as necessary to implement this subchapter.

Sec. 61.938. FEDERAL FUNDING CONTINGENCY. Provides that THECB is required to implement the grant program established under this subchapter only if federal funding is provided to THECB for that purpose as part of any federal coronavirus disease (COVID-19) relief spending appropriated on or after January 1, 2021. Provides that, if such funding is not provided for that purpose, THECB is authorized, but is not required, to implement the grant program using other money available to THECB for that purpose.

Sec. 61.939. EXPIRATION. Provides that this subchapter expires October 1, 2024.

SECTION 2. (a) Requires THECB to adopt rules to administer Subchapter W, Chapter 61, Education Code, as added by this Act, as soon as practicable after the effective date of this Act.

(b) Requires THECB to begin awarding grants under Subchapter W, Chapter 61, Education Code, as added by this Act, for the first academic year for which federal funding is appropriated for that purpose.

SECTION 3. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2021.