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Transferable Curriculum and the Texas Academic Skills Program - S.B. 148

by Senator Bivins, et al.

House Sponsors: Representatives Rangel and Kamel

§ Requires each institution of higher education to adopt a core curriculum of no less than 42 semester credit hours that is transferable among institutions of higher education. Requires each general academic institution to accept the transfer of a field of study curriculum and substitute those courses for the institution's lower division requirements for that degree program.

§ Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to recommend a 42-hour core curriculum and a field of study curriculum with the assistance of an advisory committee composed of representatives of higher education institutions.

§ Requires each higher education institution to adopt a core curriculum based upon the recommendations and rules of THECB. Requires the core curriculum to be no less than 42 semester credit hours and be consistent with the common course-numbering system.

§ Requires the student to receive academic credit for each course completed under the core curriculum and the field of study curriculum, whether the curriculum is fully or partially completed.

§ Requires the institutions of higher education to evaluate their core curriculum and field of study curricula.

§ Requires THECB to evaluate the transfer practices of the institutions of higher education.

§ Establishes provisions deciding transfer disputes involving higher education institutions and students.

§ Requires a student concurrently enrolled at more than one higher education institution to follow the core curriculum or field of study curriculum of the institution in which the student is classified as a degree-seeking student.

§ Requires each undergraduate student who enters a public higher education institution to be tested for reading, writing, and mathematics skills prior to enrolling in any course work. Requires THECB to prescribe circumstances under which a student may enroll in course work.

§ Requires a student who is permitted to enroll without taking the test to take the test no later than the end of the semester of enrollment.

§ Requires the institution to use the Texas Academic Skills Program (TASP) test as prescribed by THECB.

§ Authorizes THECB to prescribe an alternative test instrument for an institution to use to test a student.

Requires each alternative test to be correlated with the TASP test.

§ Requires a student, on completion of the developmental course work or program, to retake that portion of the TASP test for which developmental education was required.

§ Prohibits a student from enrolling in any upper division course, completion of which would give the student more than 60 or more semester credit hours, until the student's TASP test results meet or exceed the minimum standards in each skill area for which developmental education was required or the student has earned a grade of "B" or better in a freshman-level credit course in the subject matter of the assessed deficit. Requires THECB, for that purpose, to establish a list of freshman-level credit courses for each skill area of the test instrument.

§ Prohibits a general academic teaching institution from receiving funding for developmental course work taken by a student in excess of 18 semester credit hours in each skill area. Prohibits a public junior college or public technical institute from receiving funding for developmental course work taken by a student in excess of 27 semester credit hours in each skill area.

§ Requires THECB to develop a performance funding formula by which institutions may receive additional funding for each additional student who successfully completes the developmental courses.

§ Requires THECB to annually publish a summary of the report showing appropriate student test scores, a description of developmental courses required, and student grade point average. Sets forth requirements of the report.

§ Requires THECB to publish annually a report summarizing developmental education by higher education institution for each academic year.

§ Sets forth circumstances under which a student is considered exempt from the TASP requirements.

§ Requires a student who has passed the required exit-level assessment to be encouraged to take the TASP test while enrolled in high school unless the student is exempted from TASP requirements.

§ Requires taking the TASP test under this condition to be voluntary.

§ Sets forth requirements for high school students taking the TASP test.

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Post-Tenure Evaluation - S.B. 149

by Senator Bivins

House Sponsor: Representative Cuellar

§ Requires each governing board of an institution of higher education, after receiving advice from the faculty, to adopt rules and procedures for a periodic performance evaluation process for all faculty tenured at the institution.

§ Sets forth requirements for the rules adopted by the governing board, including, among other

provisions, requiring:

§ each tenured faculty member to be evaluated at least once every six years, but no more than once a year;

§ the evaluation to be based on professional responsibilities of the faculty member; and

§ the evaluation to be used for professional development, while also allowing that faculty member to be subject to revocation of tenure or other disciplinary measures.

§ Requires a faculty member subject to termination due to an evaluation to be given the opportunity for referral of the matter to a nonbinding alternative dispute resolution process. Authorizes another type of alternative dispute resolution if both parties agree.

§ Requires the governing board to give specific reasons, in writing, for any decision to terminate a faculty member on the basis of an evaluation.

§ Prohibits a governing board from waiving the evaluation process for any faculty member granted tenure at an institution.

§ Prohibits a governing board from awarding tenure to an administrator in any way that varies from the institution's general policy on the award of tenure.

Common Undergraduate Admissions Application -

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S.B. 150

by Senator Bivins

House Sponsor: Representative Maxey

§ Requires the THECB to adopt, by rule, a common application form for use by a person seeking admission as a freshman student to a general academic teaching institution. Permits THECB to adopt a similar form for an undergraduate transfer student.

§ Requires the governing body of a university system to adopt a common admission application form to be used by any person seeking freshman or undergraduate transfer admission to one or more of the general academic teaching institutions within the system.

§ Requires the form to allow the applicant to apply electronically to one or more of the institutions and to indicate preferences for admissions between those institutions.

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Contracts and Compensation for Higher Education Administrators - S.B. 537

(Died in the House)

by Senator Ogden, et al.

§ Prohibits an administrator contract entered into by a governing board of a higher education institution from providing for more than three years of employment; allowing severance payments exceeding the net present value of the contract on termination; allowing developmental leave unless the leave is granted under certain conditions; or awarding tenure in a way that varies from the institution's regular policy on awarding tenure.

§ Prohibits a higher education institution from paying a salary to a person who is reassigned from an administrative position to a faculty position at the institution that exceeds the salary of other individuals with similar qualifications performing similar duties.

§ Requires a higher education institution to require an administrator who receives developmental leave to return to work at the institution for an amount of time equal to the duration of the development leave; or pay the institution for all of the costs of the developmental leave, including the administrator's salary if paid.

§ Provides that a record pertaining to a contract between an institution and an administrator, including certain provisions, is public information and may not be withheld from public disclosure.

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Texas New Horizons Scholarship Trust Fund - S.B. 576

by Senators Sibley and Armbrister

House Sponsor: Representative Gallego

§ Requires THECB to issue scholarships to qualified students to pay for a recipient's tuition and required fees. Authorizes a scholarship to be used by the recipient to attend an eligible public higher education institution.

§ Requires THECB to adopt rules as necessary for the administration of the Texas New Horizons Scholarships program.

§ Sets forth requirements regarding eligibility for a scholarship.

§ Provides that a person is not eligible to receive a scholarship if the person has been granted a baccalaureate degree; or has received an athletic scholarship.

§ Requires each eligible institution to match any state funds with the local funds or institutional funds to be eligible to participate in the Texas New Horizons Scholarship program.

§ Establishes the Texas New Horizons Scholarship Trust Fund (fund). Authorizes THECB to accept gifts and grants from any public or private source and to deposit a gift or grant to the credit of the fund. Authorizes the legislature to appropriate money to the Texas New Horizons Scholarship Trust Fund.

§ Requires each eligible institution to transfer local funds provided by the institution to the fund. Requires THECB to use the funds transferred by an institution to provide scholarships to students attending the institution.

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Texas-Washington, D.C. Intern Scholarship - S.B. 1311

by Senator Moncrief

House Sponsor: Representative Cuellar

§ Provides that the purpose of the Texas-Washington, D.C. Intern Scholarship Program is to provide a grant of money to enable a qualified person enrolled in a higher education institution to participate in a Washington, D.C. internship program.

§ Requires a person to meet certain criteria to be eligible for a Texas-Washington, D.C. Intern Grant (grant).

§ Requires the THECB to require an internship to meet certain standards.

§ Requires the standards for selection of students to receive grants to include:

§ the socio-economic background of the applicant;

§ the extent to which the applicant has been responsible for financing the applicant's own education;

§ whether the applicant is a first generation college student;

§ the applicant's responsibilities while attending school, such as employment or child-raising duties;

§ the region of the state in which the applicant resides or resided during high school;

§ whether the applicant is, or during high school was, a resident of a rural or urban area;

§ the applicant's leadership, employment history, and involvement in community activities;

§ the applicant's personal statement of the purpose of the proposed internship and the role that internship would have on the applicant's education and personal and professional development;

§ letters of recommendation supporting the applicant's application for an internship; and

§ the applicant's personal interview.

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Athlete Admissions - S.B. 1419

by Senator West, et al.

House Sponsor: Representative Rangel

§ Prohibits a general academic teaching institution (institution) from admitting an applicant who has been promised or granted an athletic scholarship unless the institution's minimum high school grade point average (GPA) requirement for freshman applicants, if applicable, applies to all freshmen being admitted; or for all other applicants, the applicant's cumulative college-level GPA is at least equal to the minimum GPA required for undergraduate students to remain enrolled at the institution in the preceding academic year.

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Higher Education Funding Formulas - S.B. 1422

by Senator Ratliff

House Sponsor: Representative Junell

§ Provides the THECB with an additional three months before each legislative session to notify the higher education institutions, the governor, and the Legislative Budget Board of the formulas to be used in making appropriation requests for the next biennium.

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Tuition Charges and Rebates - S.B. 1907

by Senator Bivins

House Sponsors: Representatives Swinford and Rangel

§ Redesignates the building use fee charged by the governing board of a higher education institution (institution) as tuition.

§ Sets forth the maximum tuition for each semester credit hour that the governing board of an institution is authorized to charge, in addition to other authorized tuition charges, for the 1997-98 through 2000-01 academic years.

§ Provides that the aforementioned tuition charges collected by an institution are institutional funds and shall be accounted for as designated funds. Prohibits these funds from being accounted for in the General Appropriations Act in a way that would cause a reduction in the general revenue appropriation to an institution.

§ Authorizes the governing board of an institution to waive all or part of the tuition charged to a student if it finds that the payment of such tuition would cause the student an undue economic hardship.

§ Provides that a statutory provision requiring a certain percentage of tuition to be set aside for grants and scholarships does not apply to tuition charged above.

§ Authorizes the governing board of an institution to continue to charge as tuition the amount of the building use fee at the institution for the 1996-97 academic year without holding a public hearing, but

prohibits an increase above that amount without a public hearing.

§ Increases the resident tuition rate for a law school student from \$75 per semester credit hour to \$80 per semester credit hour. Provides that the nonresident tuition for a law school student is the amount charged to a nonresident graduate student.

§ Authorizes the governing board of an institution to waive an authorized fee if it determines that a student is enrolled only in distance learning courses or other off-campus courses; the student cannot reasonably be expected to use the activities, services, or facilities on which the fee is based; and the waiver of the fee will not materially impair the ability of the institution to service any debt on which the fee is based or operate the particular activity, service, or facility supported by the fee.

§ Prohibits the THECB from including in the funding formulas funding for semester credit hours earned by a resident undergraduate student who has previously attempted 170 or more semester credit hours for courses taken at any institution while classified as a resident student for tuition purposes. Provides certain exceptions.

§ Authorizes an institution to charge a resident student tuition at a higher rate than the rate charged to other resident students but not exceeding the rate of nonresident students, for a course that THECB is prohibited from including in the funding formulas for the semester credit hours for which the student registers, if the student has previously attempted 170 or more semester credit hours.

§ Provides that a qualified student is eligible for a rebate of up to \$1,000 of the undergraduate tuition the student has paid if the student is awarded a baccalaureate degree from a general academic teaching institution and has attempted no more than three hours in excess of the minimum number of semester credit hours required to complete the degree, including transfer credits and course credit earned exclusively by examination.

§ Requires the student, in order to qualify for a rebate, to have been a resident of this state and entitled to pay tuition at the resident student rate at all times while pursuing the degree.

§ Requires the institution to apply the amount of the rebate to a student's loan if the student has an outstanding loan.

§ Provides that it is the intent of the legislature that rebates shall be financed by savings to the state resulting from reductions in the number of courses taken by undergraduate students.

§ Sets forth provisions for the payment of bonds issued to purchase, construct, or renovate facilities by securing or pledging revenue funds, including tuition, rentals, rates, or other charges.

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Tuition and Fee Increases - H.B. 65

by Representative Kamel

Senate Sponsor: Senator Cain

§ Prohibits a higher education institution that sets tuition rates and fees for a semester or summer term

from increasing the tuition rate and fees charged to a student for that semester or summer term after the student registers, regardless of whether that student has paid the tuition and fees for that semester or summer term.

Top

Tuition Exemption for Educational Aides - H.B. 571

by Representative Rangel, et al.

Senate Sponsor: Senator Barrientos

§ Requires the governing board of a higher education institution to exempt an eligible educational aide from the payment of tuition and fees, other than class or laboratory fees.

§ Prohibits application of the student internship teaching requirement for teaching certification if the person who receives a bachelor's degree has at least two years of classroom working experience as an educational aide.

§ Requires the foundation school fund savings occurring as a result of the Early High School Graduation Scholarship program, which are not required for the funding of state tuition credits under that program, to be used first to provide a one-year tuition and fees exemption for certain Aid to Families With Dependent Children (AFDC) students.

§ Requires any remaining savings to be used to provide tuition exemptions for educational aides.

§ Requires the Texas Education Agency to also accept and make gifts, grants, and certain donations available to provide tuition exemptions for educational aides.

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Uniform Admission Policy - H.B. 588

by Representative Rangel, et al.

Senate Sponsor: Senator Barrientos

§ Provides that it is the intent of the legislature that all higher education institutions pursue academic excellence by considering students' academic achievements in decisions related to admissions. Requires each general academic teaching institution (institution) to consider certain socioeconomic factors in making first-time freshman admissions decisions because of changing demographic trends, diversity, and population increases in the state.

§ Requires each institution to admit an applicant for admission to the institution as an undergraduate if the applicant graduated in the top 10 percent of the student's class from an accredited public or private high school in this state within the preceding two years.

§ Requires the institution, after admitting the applicant, to review the applicant's record and any other factor the institution considers appropriate to determine whether the applicant may require additional

preparation for college-level work, or would benefit from inclusion in a retention program.

§ Requires the governing board of each institution to determine whether to adopt an admissions policy under which an applicant to the institution as a first-time freshman student, other than an applicant eligible for admission because of placing in the top 10 percent of the class, shall be admitted to the institution if the applicant graduated from an accredited public or private high school in this state with a grade point average in the top 25 percent of the applicant's high school graduating class.

§ Authorizes a graduating student who does not qualify for admissions under either category above to apply to any institution.

§ Requires the institution, after admitting students in the top 10 or 25 percent of their class, to admit other applicants for admission as an undergraduate.

§ Requires each institution to provide an annual report to THECB describing the composition of the entering class of admitted students. Requires the report to include a demographic breakdown, including a breakdown by race, ethnicity, and economic status of the students admitted.

§ Requires each institution or medical or dental unit that offers admissions to undergraduate transfer students or to a graduate, postgraduate, or professional program to also adopt a written admission policy applicable to those programs.

§ Requires an institution or medical or dental unit that offers competitive scholarships or fellowships to adopt a written policy describing the factors to be used by the institution or unit in making the award.

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Texas Chiropractic College - H.B. 621

by Representative Jackson, et al.

Senate Sponsor: Senator Patterson

§ Requires the THECB to determine by August 31, 1998, if Texas Chiropractic College (TCC) should be made a higher education institution.

§ Requires THECB to determine the university system governing board best suited to govern and provide direction to TCC if it is made a higher education institution.

§ Provides that TCC is transferred, effective September 1, 1998, if the board of trustees of TCC and the governing board of the university system both agree to the transfer and THECB approves the transfer by August 31, 1998.

§ Provides that if TCC is transferred, the Education Code is amended to add Chapter 114 to provide that the chiropractic college formerly constituting TCC is now a component higher education institution of the university system to which TCC was transferred.

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Tuition Exemption for Disabled Police Officers - H.B. 640

by Representative Kamel, et al.

Senate Sponsor: Senator Cain

§ Authorizes the governing body of an institution of higher education to exempt from tuition and fees, if space is available, a student who is a resident of this state and has resided in the state for 12 months immediately preceding the beginning of the semester or session for which an exemption is sought; permanently disabled as a result of an injury suffered during the performance of a duty as a peace officer of this state or a political subdivision of this state; and is unable to continue employment as a peace officer because of the disability.

§ Prohibits a person from receiving an exemption under this section if the person is attending postgraduate courses to meet the requirements of a master's degree program and the person has previously received a master's degree and received an exemption under this section for a master's degree program.

§ Prohibits a person from receiving an exemption under this section if the person is attending postgraduate courses to meet the requirements of a doctoral degree program and the person has previously received a doctoral degree and received an exemption under this section for a doctoral degree program.

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Sale of an Academic Product - H.B. 762

by Representative Averitt

Senate Sponsor: Senator Bivins

§ Provides that a person commits a Class C misdemeanor if:

§ with intent to make a profit, the person prepares, sells, offers or advertises for sale, or delivers to another person an academic product when the person knows that a person intends to submit or use the academic product to satisfy another person's academic requirement;

§ with intent to induce another person to enter into an agreement or obligation to obtain or have prepared an academic product, the person knowingly makes or disseminates a written or oral statement that the person will prepare or cause to be prepared an academic product to be sold for use in satisfying another person's academic requirement.

§ Provides that it is a defense to prosecution that the actor's conduct consisted solely of:

§ action taken as an employee of a higher education institution in providing instruction, counseling, or tutoring in research or writing to the students of the institution;

§ offering or providing tutorial or editing assistance to another person in preparation of an academic product to satisfy an academic requirement, and the actor does not offer to provide substantial

preparation, writing, or research in the production of the assignment; or

§ typing, transcribing, or reproducing a manuscript for a fee, or offering to do so.

§ Defines "academic product" to include a term paper, thesis, dissertation, essay, report, recording, work of art, or other material submitted by a person to satisfy an academic requirement.

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Tuition Exemption for Students in Foster or Other Residential Care - H.B. 767

by Representative Junell, et al.

Senate Sponsor: Senator Lindsay

§ Exempts a student meeting certain requirements from the payment of tuition and fees, including if the student:

§ was in foster care or other residential care under the conservatorship of the Department of Protective and Regulatory Services on or after the day of the student's 14th birthday if the student was also eligible for adoption on or after that day; or the day the student graduated from high school or received the equivalent of a high school diploma; and

§ enrolls in a higher education institution as an undergraduate not later than the third anniversary of the date the student was discharged from the foster or other residential care, the date the student graduated from high school, or the date the student received the equivalent of a high school diploma, whichever is earliest; or the student's 21st birthday.

Top

Distance Learning - H.B. 1404

by Representative Kamel, et al.

Senate Sponsor: Senator Bivins

§ Authorizes a public technical institute, public community college, or public college or university to offer a distance learning course approved by the THECB with no in-state geographic restrictions if the course is within the approved curriculum of the institution.

§ Requires THECB to encourage collaborative efforts to make the benefits of computer access to educational opportunities widely available in order to facilitate the delivery of courses by distance learning and to improve access to those courses.

§ Requires THECB to maintain a central informational resource accessible to the general public, to be called Texas College On-Line, on which higher education institutions can place information relating to all computer-accessible distance learning courses offered for credit by higher education institutions and including computer links, addresses, or other directions to assist a person in obtaining additional

information directly from the appropriate institution.

Top

Tuition for Students Outside a District - H.B. 1548

by Representative Sylvester Turner

Senate Sponsor: Senator Galloway

§ Authorizes the governing board of a public junior college district (district) to allow a person who resides outside the district and who owns property subject to ad valorem taxation by the district, or a dependent of that person, to pay tuition at the rate applicable to a student who resides in the district.

§ Authorizes the governing board of a public junior college district to allow a person who resides outside the district and in the taxing district of a contiguous district to pay tuition and fees at the rate applicable to a student who resides in the district.

§ Authorizes the governing board of a district to allow a person who resides outside the district to pay tuition and fees at a rate less than the rate applicable to other persons residing outside the district, but not less than the rate applicable to a student who resides in the district, if the person:

§ resides within the service area of the district;

§ does not reside in an independent school district that meets the criteria of the THECB for establishment of a district, and

§ demonstrates financial need in accordance with rules adopted by THECB.

Top

Study of Minority Participation - H.B. 2146

by Representatives Maxey and Dukes

Senate Sponsor: Senator Ellis

§ Requires the THECB to collect data and maintain a database relating to participation of members of racial and ethnic minority groups in this state in public higher education, including data relating to minority applications, recruitment, admissions, retention, graduation, and professional licensing at both undergraduate and graduate levels.

§ Requires the study to consider any factors THECB can identify that may have affected or be affecting those application and admission rates of public higher education institutions, including recent legal developments; recent changes in the application or student recruiting procedures; and recent changes in admissions standards or practices.

§ Requires THECB to maintain a continuous study of the data collected and of the factors affecting that data.

§ Requires THECB, through a memorandum of understanding, to work in conjunction with the Office of the Comptroller in conducting the study in order to avoid duplication with any other study by the comptroller.

§ Requires THECB to report its activities and findings of the study to the governor, lieutenant governor, and speaker by December 1, 1998.

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Performance Reports of Junior College Districts - H.B. 2517

by Representative Dunnam

Senate Sponsor: Senator Shapleigh

§ Requires a junior college district (district), as soon as practicable after the end of each academic year, to prepare an annual performance report for that academic year, beginning with the 1997-98 academic year.

§ Requires the Legislative Budget Board to develop recommended standards for the reports, in consultation with districts, THECB, the governor's office of budget and planning, and the state auditor.

§ Requires the state auditor, in advance of an independent audit of a district, to provide the presiding officer of the district's governing body and the chief executive officer of the district with written information relating to the procedures for and scope of the audit.

§ Requires the state auditor to seek the recommendations of THECB in preparing the materials.

Top

Early High School Graduation Scholarship - H.B. 3356

by Representative Rangel

Senate Sponsor: Senator Barrientos

§ Requires the commissioner of education to transfer to THECB, from funds appropriated for the Foundation School Program, an amount to pay each eligible higher education institution the amount of state tuition credit applied by the institution for a student participating in the Early High School Gradation Scholarship Program.

§ Requires THECB to distribute the appropriate amount of funds to each eligible institution when THECB receives the funds from the commissioner of education.