



## KEY BILLS PASSED BY 84th TEXAS LEGISLATURE

### Pre-K Education

#### **HB 4 – Rep. Huberty et al (companion SB 801)**

Relating to a high quality prekindergarten program provided by public school districts. The bill provides an estimated \$130 million in additional state funding for districts that agree to adopt a number of policies — including regular teacher training, limits on class size and certain curriculum standards — in their pre-kindergarten programs, as well as a "parent engagement plan." Only districts offering full-day programs would be eligible.

**Status: Signed by Governor; Effective Immediately**

### Primary & Secondary Education

#### **SB 149 – Sen. Seliger**

Relating to the creation of individual graduation committees for certain high school students. Bill would require, for students who fail to perform satisfactorily on an end-of-course assessment instrument a second time, the school district or open-enrollment charter school that the student attends to establish an individual graduation committee to determine whether the student qualifies to graduate.

**Status: Signed by Governor; Effective Immediately**

#### **SB 925 – Sen. Kolkhorst (companion HB 1843)**

Relating to providing training academies for public school teachers who provide reading instruction to students in kindergarten through grade three. A literacy achievement academy developed under this bill must include training in effective and systematic instructional practices in reading, including phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension.

**Status: Signed by Governor; Effective Immediately**

#### **SB 934 – Sen. Kolkhorst**

Relating to providing training academies for public school teachers who provide mathematics instruction to students in kindergarten through grade three. Bill would require the Commissioner of Education to develop mathematics achievement academies for teachers who provide math instruction to students in kindergarten, first, second, or third grades. The achievement academies must include training in effective and systematic instructional practices in mathematics, including measurement, problem solving, and analyzing and describing geometric shapes, figures, and patterns.

**Status: Signed by Governor; Effective Immediately**

#### **SB 935 – Sen. Kolkhorst**

Relating to the establishment of reading excellence teams. Bill would require the Commissioner of Education to establish reading excellence teams for school campuses rated academically unacceptable on the TEA reading assessment instrument administered to students in the third grade.

**Status: Signed by Governor; Effective Immediately**

#### **HB 18 – Rep. Aycock**

Relating to college and career readiness training for certain public school counselors. Bill would require the Commissioner of Education to develop postsecondary education and career counseling academies for middle school counselors. Requires independent school districts to instruct students in seventh or eighth grades on personal graduation plans, college-readiness standards and possible career choices.

Funds are set aside for the University of Texas at Austin to develop Web-based instruction on college and career exploration, and the university is required to develop online training for middle and high school counselors and teachers, if applicable, on topics including career and workforce information. Finally, the bill removes limitations on the number of dual-credit courses or hours students can take while in high school, and it codifies guidelines from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools for teacher approval related to dual credit. •

***Status: Signed by Governor; Effective Immediately***

#### **HB 181 – Rep. Bell, Rep. Krause**

Relating to information printed by school districts on high school diplomas. Recent legislation mandated that a high school student's diploma and transcript include endorsements and performance acknowledgements earned by the student. School districts have expressed concern regarding the printing cost of individualized diplomas and the higher likelihood of printing errors on such diplomas. H.B. 181 seeks to reduce those costs and errors. HB 181 amends the Education Code to restrict the documentation of certain endorsements and performance acknowledgments earned by a student to the student's high school transcript, instead of allowing a student to earn an endorsement or performance acknowledgement on both the student's transcript and high school diploma. The bill applies beginning with a high school diploma issued at the end of the 2014–2015 school year.

***Status: Signed by Governor; Effective Immediately***

#### **HB 505 – Rep. E. Rodriguez**

Relating to a prohibition of limitations on the number of dual credit courses or hours in which a public high school student may enroll. H.B. 505 seeks to allow students to better prepare themselves for college and their careers. Bill would prohibit the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board from adopting a rule that limits the number of dual credit courses or hours in which a high school student may enroll.

***Status: Signed by Governor, Effective Immediately***

#### **HB1430 – Rep. S. King**

Requires the Texas Education Agency to ensure that the diploma endorsement for public services includes information on health science career pathways and careers, and that mental health professions are included in health science career information.

***Status: Signed by Governor, Effective Immediately***

#### **HB 1431 – Rep. S. King**

Relating to the development of a career-oriented foreign language program that public schools may offer. Bill would require the State Board of Education, in consultation with the Commissioner of Higher Education and business and industry leaders to develop an advanced language course that a school district may use in the curriculum to provide students with instruction in industry-related terminology that prepares students to communicate in a language other than English in a specific professional, business, or industry environment.

***Status: Signed by Governor, Effective Immediately***

#### **HB 2349 – Rep. Aycock**

Relating to public school assessment, performance standards, and course requirements. Bill would allow a student to earn a performance acknowledgement on the student's diploma and transcript by passing an established, valid, reliable, and nationally norm-referenced preliminary college preparation assessment instrument used to measure a student's progress toward readiness for college and the workplace or used by colleges and universities as part of their undergraduate admissions process. It would also authorize a student to take more than three dual credit courses if the junior college and the school district authorize the student's enrollment.

***Status: Signed by Governor, Effective Immediately***

### **HB 2812 – Rep. Springer**

Relating to the limit on junior college courses that a high school student may enroll in for dual credit. The bill would remove the limitation relating to the number of junior college courses that a high school student may enroll in for dual credit. Bill would repeal Section 130.008(f) of the Education code which limits junior college courses that a high school student may enroll in for dual credit to three if the student does not reside in the junior college territory.

***Status: Signed by Governor, Effective Immediately***

### **HB 3987 – Rep.'s Farney, Guillen, Schubert**

Relating to programs in public schools designed to facilitate planning and saving for higher education and facilitate personal financial literacy instruction. Bill allows schools to develop partnerships with local financial institutions and other organizations to open and manage savings accounts for students and to include this as part of the financial education curriculum.

***Status: Signed by Governor, Effective Immediately***

### **Post-Secondary Education**

#### **HB 1287 – Rep. Simmons**

Relating to a requirement that each state university's Internet website include a link to certain employment data. Bill requires each general academic teaching institution other than a public state college to maintain in a prominent location on the institution's Internet website a link to the Texas Consumer Resource for Education and Workforce Statistics ("Texas CREWS") report on gainful employment applicable to the institution for the most recent year for which that report is available.

***Status: Signed by Governor, Effective Immediately***

#### **HB 2628 – Rep. Clardy (companion SB 1480)**

Relating to the development and alignment by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board of curricula for certain educational programs. Bill would require the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to establish alignment between the college and career readiness standards and the knowledge, skills, and abilities students are expected to demonstrate in career and technical education. requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), with the aid of advisory committees, to develop CTE programs of study curricula and review them periodically for alignment across education levels, with student interest and with industry needs. In addition, THECB must align college- and career-readiness standards with knowledge, skills and abilities relevant to CTE through programs of study.

***Status: Signed by Governor; Effective on 9/1/15***

#### **HB 3348 – Rep. Clardy, Rep. Schaefer**

Allows THECB to start a pilot program to authorize certain junior colleges to offer baccalaureate degree programs in the applied science, applied technology and dental hygiene fields.

***Status: Signed by Governor, Effective Immediately***

### **Economic Development**

#### **HB 26 – Rep. Button**

Relating to state economic development measures, including administration of the Texas Enterprise Fund, creation of the Economic Incentive Oversight Board, abolishment of the Texas Emerging Technology Fund and certain programs and funds administered by the Texas Economic Development Bank, and disposition of balances from the Texas emerging technology fund.

***Status: Signed by Governor; Effective on 9/1/15***

### **Career and Technology Education**

#### **HB 2014 – Rep. Sheets**

Relating to the authority of military personnel to obtain certification to teach career and technology education classes in public schools. Bill would provide that a person who is a current or former

member of the United States armed services is considered to have satisfied the requirement of a person seeking **career and technology education certification** for a specific trade to hold a credential if the person possess experience related to the trade that obtained through military service.

**Status: Signed by Governor, Effective Immediately**

#### **HB 3062 – Rep. Clardy**

Relating to the participation of an independent school district in the Jobs and Education for Texans (JET) Grant Program. The bill would allow an independent school district (ISD) to become an eligible recipient of JET grant funds if the ISD has entered into a partnership with a public junior college or public technical institute for the purpose of promoting career and technical education to the ISD's students.

**Status: Signed by Governor; Effective Immediately**

#### **Veterans Affairs**

##### **SB 806 – Sen. Campbell (companion HB 757)**

Relating to the College Credit for Heroes program. Bill would require a report by November 1 of this year on the results of any grants awarded under College Credit For Heroes program, the best practices for veterans and military service members to achieve maximum academic or workforce education credit at institutions of higher education, and other related measures needed to facilitate the entry of trained, qualified veterans and military service members into the workforce.

**Status: Signed by Governor, Effective Immediately**

#### **TWC/Workforce Board Operations**

##### **SB 208 – Sen. Campbell (companion HB 3294)**

Relating to the continuation and functions of the Texas Workforce Commission. The bill transfers the following programs from the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) to TWC on September 1, 2016:

- Vocational rehabilitation program for individuals with visual impairments
- Vocational rehabilitation program for individuals with other disabilities
- Independent Living Services program for older individuals who are blind
- The Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center
- Program for vending facilities operated by blind persons including the Business Enterprises Program under the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

The bill also establishes a Legislative Oversight Committee to oversee the transition of programs from DARS to TWC; authorizes TWC to participate in the federal Treasury Offset Program; transfers the duties and powers of the Texas Commission on Human Rights to the Texas Workforce Commission; directs TWC to amend the form for filing a Wage Claim to notify customers that the form is available in other languages; and continues the agency for 12 years.

**Status: Signed by Governor; This Act takes effect September 1, 2015, except Sections 4, 6, 7, 8, and 19 take effect September 1, 2016, and Section 26 has no effect**

##### **SB 1351 – Sen. Hinojosa**

Relating to transferring to the Texas Workforce Commission certain duties of the comptroller related to the Jobs and Education for Texans Grant Program. Bill transfers the Jobs and Education and Training for Texans (JET) program from the Comptroller to TWC. The rider appropriates \$5 million in each year of the biennium for TWC to operate the program.

**Status: Signed by Governor, Effective Immediately**

**HB 426 – Rep. Howard**

Relating to the acceptance of employment applications through the online system for listing state agency employment openings maintained by the Texas Workforce Commission. Bill would make changes to TWC's workintexas.com (WIT) website to make it more user-friendly and to improve the application process for those seeking employment with the state.

***Status: Signed by Governor; Effective 9/1/2015***

**Workforce Development, Certification & Alignment**

**SB 18 – Sen.'s Nelson, Hinojosa, Seliger (companion HB 1445)**

Relating to measures to support or enhance graduate medical education in this state, including the transfer of assets following the dissolution of the Texas Medical Liability Insurance Underwriting Association. Bill is intended to address Texas' medical workforce needs by expanding graduate medical education (GME).

***Status: Signed by Governor; Effective 9/1/2015***

**HB 1606 – Rep. Burkett (companion SB 209)**

Relating to the continuation and functions of the Texas Workforce Investment Council, including assumption of the duties of the Texas Skill Standards Board. Continues the Texas Workforce Investment Council and changes the council's Sunset review date to 2027 to continue the agency for 12 years. The bill requires the council to be reviewed during the period in which the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) is reviewed. Bill also abolishes the Texas Skill Standards Board and transfers its powers and duties to the Texas Workforce Investment Council. The bill requires the council to provide advice to the governor and the legislature on the development of a statewide system of industry-defined and industry-recognized skill standards and credentials for all major skilled occupations that provide strong employment and earnings opportunities in this state and require less than a baccalaureate degree.

***Status: Signed by Governor; Effective 9/1/2015***