

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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C.S.H.B. 2237
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Education
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Committee Report (Substituted)

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

For years, Texas has succeeded in producing quality elementary school students. Recent results on the National Assessment of Educational Progress show that our Texas 4th grade students outperformed the national average in both reading and mathematics, and that our 8th grade students outperformed the national average in mathematics.

However, many Texas high schools fall short in preparing students for postsecondary studies and vocational opportunities. According to the Southern Regional Education Board, 22 percent of Texas adults between the ages of 24 to 44 do not have a diploma or GED, compared to the national average of 15 percent. Over 50 percent of students entering postsecondary studies have to take at least one remedial course in mathematics, reading, or writing while in college.

In addition, the 78th and 79th Legislatures designated and appropriated over \$100 million to be used to remedy such problems, but there has been little oversight as to how those funds are to be used.

C.S.H.B. 2237 establishes the High School Completion and Success Initiative (initiative) in order to improve secondary school instruction in Texas. The initiative provides support to schools and districts in implementing curriculum and instruction improvements that align with state standards and expectations for post-secondary success. The initiative also includes technical assistance to assist schools and school districts in the implementation of successful secondary education programs that maximize the impact of all available funds, including high school allotment funds.

The bill also establishes the High School Completion and Success Initiative Council to develop and manage the implementation of a strategic plan that coordinates public and private high school improvement initiatives. The bill establishes a number of pilot programs intended to aid in reducing the state's high school dropout rate.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of education in SECTION 4 (Section 21.4541, Education Code), SECTION 8 (Sections 29.096 and 29.098, Education Code), SECTION 9 (Sections 29.918 and 29.919, Education Code), and SECTION 11 (Sections 39.357 and 39.366, Education Code) of this bill.

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the commissioner of higher education in SECTION 8 (Section 29.098, Education Code) and SECTION 11 (Sections 39.357 and 39.366, Education Code) of this bill.

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in SECTION 5 (Section 21.462, Education Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends Sections 7.009(a) and (b), Education Code, as follows:

- (a) Requires the Texas Education Agency (TEA), in coordination with the Legislative Budget Board, to establish an online clearinghouse of information relating to best practices of campuses and school districts regarding dropout prevention in addition to other areas previously set forth in this subsection.

- (b) Makes a conforming change.

SECTION 2. Amends Subchapter B, Chapter 7, Education Code, by adding Section 7.031. as follows:

Sec. 7.031. STUDY OF BEST PRACTICES FOR DROPOUT PREVENTION. (a) Requires the commissioner of education (commissioner) to contract with one or more centers for education research under Section 1.005 or any other public or private entity qualified to conduct education research to study the best practices of campuses and school districts (districts) in this state and other states regarding dropout prevention programs and prepare a report regarding the findings of the study.

- (b) Requires the report under Subsection (a) to make certain identifications and recommendations set forth in this subsection.

- (c) Requires the commissioner to deliver the report produced under Subsection (a) to the governor, the lieutenant governor, the speaker of the house of representatives, and the presiding officers of the standing committees of each house of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over public education not later than December 1, 2008.

- (d) Provides that this section expires January 1, 2009.

SECTION 3. Amends Subchapter J, Chapter 21, Education Code, by adding Section 21.4511, as follows:

Sec. 21.4511. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHERS AND ADMINISTRATORS. (a) Authorizes the commissioner, from funds appropriated for that purpose, to develop and award grants to districts, regional education service centers (regional centers), nonprofit organizations, and institutions of higher education (institutions) for establishing and providing technical assistance and professional development activities in the staff development training of public school teachers and administrators.

- (b) Requires the training under this section to include training relating to implementing curriculum and instruction that is aligned with the foundation curriculum described by Section 28.002(a)(1) and standards and expectations for college readiness, as determined by State Board of Education (SBOE) rule under Section 28.008(d).

- (c) Authorizes the commissioner to give preference to a district, regional center, or institution conducting professional development activities under this section that applies for a grant in partnership with a state or national organization that has demonstrated success in the development and implementation of high school reform strategies.

SECTION 4. Amends Subchapter J, Chapter 21, Education Code, by adding Section 21.4541, as follows:

Sec. 21.4541. MATHEMATICS INSTRUCTIONAL COACHES PILOT PROGRAM.

- (a) Requires the commissioner by rule to establish a pilot program under which participating districts and campuses receive grants to provide assistance in developing the content knowledge and instructional expertise of teachers who instruct students in mathematics at the middle school, junior high school, or high school level from funds appropriated for that purpose.

- (b) Provides that a district or campus is eligible to participate in the pilot program under this section if the district or campus meets the eligibility criteria established as provided by Section 39.358.

(c) Authorizes a grant awarded under this section to be used to support intensive instructional coaching and professional development from a service provider approved by the commissioner. Authorizes approved service providers to include certain entities set forth in this subsection.

(d) Requires an instructional coaching or professional development program supported by a grant under this section to demonstrate significant past effectiveness in improving mathematics instruction in middle schools, junior high schools, and high schools serving a significant number of students identified as students at risk of dropping out of school, as described by Section 29.081(d). Authorizes an instructional coaching or professional development program to include engaging in certain activities set forth in this subsection.

(e) Requires the commissioner to adopt rules necessary to implement the pilot program.

SECTION 5. Amends Subchapter J, Chapter 21, Education Code, by adding Section 21.462, as follows:

Sec. 21.462. MATHEMATICS, SCIENCE, AND TECHNOLOGY TEACHER PREPARATION ACADEMIES. (a) Requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), from funds appropriated for that purpose, to establish academies at institutions to improve the instructional skills of teachers certified under Subchapter B (Certification of Educators) and train students enrolled in a teacher preparation program to perform at the highest levels in mathematics, science, and technology. Authorizes THECB to adopt rules as necessary to administer this section.

(b) Requires the institution, before it establishes an academy under this section, to apply through a competitive process, as determined by THECB, and meet any requirements established by THECB for designation as an academy under this section and continued funding. Requires the institution to have a teacher preparation program approved by the State Board for Educator Certification (certification board) or be affiliated with a program approved by the certification board.

(c) Requires a participant in an academy program to meet certain qualifications set forth in his subsection.

(d) Requires an academy program to take certain actions set forth in this subsection.

(e) Authorizes an academy program to take certain actions set forth in this subsection.

SECTION 6. Amends Section 28.008, Education Code, by adding Subsection (d-1), to require SBOE to incorporate college readiness standards and expectations into the essential knowledge and skills of the foundation curriculum under Section 28.002(a)(1) for courses in which students in grades nine through 12 generally enroll, as determined by SBOE, rule beginning with the 2008-2009 school year. Provides that this subsection expires December 1, 2012.

SECTION 7. Amends Section 28.0212, Education Code, by adding Subsections (d) and (e), as follows:

(d) Requires TEA to establish minimum standards for a personal graduation plan under this section (Personal Graduation Plan).

(e) Encourages each school district to establish a personal graduation plan that identifies a course of study that meets certain requirements for each student entering grade nine.

SECTION 8. Amends Subchapter C, Chapter 29, Education Code, by adding Sections 29.095 through 29.098, as follows:

Sec. 29.095. GRANTS FOR STUDENT CLUBS. (a) Defines “council” and “student at risk of dropping out of school.”

(b) Requires the commissioner to administer a pilot program to provide grants to school districts to fund student club activities for students at risk of dropping out of school. Requires the commissioner to spend an amount not to exceed \$5 million in any state fiscal biennium on the program from funds appropriated for purposes of this subchapter (Compensatory Education Programs).

(c) Authorizes the commissioner to award a grant in an amount not to exceed \$5,000 in a school year to a school district on behalf of a student club at a district high school campus that is eligible under the criteria established under Section 39.358. Requires the student club and the club's sponsor to be sanctioned by the campus and district to be eligible for a grant. Requires a grant awarded under this program to be matched by other federal, state, or local funds, including donations, in an amount equal to the amount of the grant. Requires a district to seek donations or sponsorships from local businesses or community organizations to raise the matching funds. Authorizes the commissioner to award a grant on behalf of more than one student club at a campus in the same school year.

(d) Requires the commissioner to establish application criteria for receipt of a grant under this section. Requires the criteria to require confirmation that the appropriate campus-level planning and decision-making committee established under Subchapter F (District-level and Site-based Decision Making), Chapter 11, and the district board of trustees have approved a plan that includes certain provisions set forth in this subsection.

(e) Requires the commissioner to establish the minimum requirements for a local grant agreement, including certain requirements.

(f) Authorizes a student club to use funds awarded under this section to support academic or co-curricular club activities, other than athletics, in which at least 50 percent of the participating students have been identified as students at risk of dropping out of school and to use such funds for materials, sponsor stipends, and other needs that directly support the club's activities. Requires a student club to use the entire amount of the grant to directly fund the club's activities described in the plan approved as provided by Subsection (d). Prohibits a student club from using more than 50 percent of a grant to pay sponsor stipends.

(g) Requires the district board of trustees to ensure that funds awarded under this section are expended in compliance with Subsection (f). Requires a student club that receives a grant to submit a report to the board of trustees summarizing the club's activities and the extent to which the club met the club's goals and achieved the club's intent at the end of the school year. Provides that the decision of the board of trustees under this subsection relating to compliance with Subsection (f) is final and may not be appealed.

Sec. 29.096. COLLABORATIVE DROPOUT REDUCTION PILOT PROGRAM. (a) Defines “council.”

(b) Requires the commissioner, using funds appropriated for that purpose, to establish a pilot program under which a district or open-enrollment charter school may receive a grant to implement a local collaborative dropout reduction program.

(c) Provides that a district or open-enrollment charter school is eligible to participate and receive a grant under this section under the eligibility criteria established under Section 39.358.

(d) Requires the commissioner to establish application criteria for receiving a grant under this section. Requires the criteria to require a district or open-enrollment charter school that applies for a grant to collaborate with local businesses, other local governments or law enforcement agencies, nonprofit organizations, faith-based organizations, and institutions of higher education to deliver proven, research-based intervention services. Provides that the goal of the program is to coordinate services and programs among local entities to comprehensively reduce the number of students who drop out of school in that community and increase the job skills, employment opportunities, and continuing education opportunities of students who might otherwise have dropped out of school.

(e) Requires the commissioner to establish minimum standards for a local collaborative agreement, including a requirement that the agreement must be signed by an authorized district or open-enrollment charter school officer and an authorized representative of each of the other participating entities that is a partner in the collaboration. Requires the program to take certain actions set forth in this subsection.

(f) Authorizes a local collaborative agreement under this section to consist of and take certain actions set forth in this subsection.

(g) Authorizes the commissioner to approve innovative instructional techniques for courses in the enrichment curriculum leading to high school graduation under a local collaborative dropout reduction program. Requires the commissioner to develop accountability measures appropriate to those programs. Authorizes the commissioner, from funds appropriated, to fund electronic courses that are part of a collaborative program and that are otherwise eligible for state funds. Prohibits funding for an electronic course from exceeding the total amount of state and local funding for a student to which the district or open-enrollment charter school would otherwise be entitled.

(h) Provides that nothing in this section authorizes the award of a high school diploma other than in compliance with Section 28.025 (High School Diploma and Certificate; Academic Achievement Record).

(i) Requires the commissioner to adopt rules necessary to administer the pilot program under this section.

Sec. 29.097. INTENSIVE TECHNOLOGY-BASED ACADEMIC INTERVENTION PILOT PROGRAM. (a) Defines “council” and “pilot program.”

(b) Requires the commissioner, from funds appropriated for that purpose, to establish a pilot program for the commissioner to award grants to participating campuses to provide intensive technology-based supplementary instruction in English, mathematics, science, or social studies to students in grades nine through 12 identified as being at risk of dropping out of school, as described by Section 29.081(d). Requires instruction techniques and technology used by a campus under this section to be based on the best available research, as determined by the High School Completion and Success Initiative Council, regarding college and workforce readiness.

(c) Authorizes the commissioner to select for participation in the pilot program only a campus that is eligible under the criteria established under Section 39.358.

(d) Authorizes a program supported by a grant under this section, to provide intensive technology-based supplementary instruction at a campus, to take certain actions set forth in this subsection.

(e) Provides that the primary purpose of a program supported by a grant under this section, to provide intensive technology-based supplementary instruction at a

campus, is to benefit students identified as being at risk of dropping out of school, as described by Section 29.081(d), but authorizes grant funds to be used to benefit a campus-wide program if the use of the funds does not defeat the primary purpose provided by this subsection.

(f) Prohibits a grant awarded under this section from exceeding \$50 for each participating student and requires such a grant to be matched by other federal, state, or local funds, including private donations.

(g) Provides that, for purposes of Subsection (f)(2) (requiring a grant to be matched), a district is encouraged to use funds allocated under Section 42.2516(b)(3) (state revenue the district is entitled to in order to provide an amount equal to the product of \$275 multiplied by the number of students in average daily attendance in grades nine through 12 in the district).

(h) Prohibits a grant awarded under this section from being used to replace federal, state, or local funds previously spent on an instructional program, but authorizes such a grant to be used to expand an existing program.

(i) Requires the entire amount of a grant awarded under this section to fund the program described in the application for the grant and authorizes that amount to be used for certain other necessary costs.

Sec. 29.098. INTENSIVE SUMMER PROGRAMS. (a) Defines “pilot program.”

(b) Requires the commissioner of education and the commissioner of higher education by rule and from funds appropriated for that purpose to establish a pilot program to award grants to participating campuses to provide intensive academic instruction during the summer semester to promote college and workforce readiness to students identified as being at risk of dropping out of school or college. Authorizes a grant awarded under this section to be used to fund certain categories of programs set forth in this subsection.

(c) Authorizes the commissioner of higher education to select for participation in the pilot program only a campus that is eligible under the criteria established under Section 39.358.

(d) Authorizes a grant to be awarded to an institution of higher education for a program administered under Subsection (b)(1) (a program administered by an institution to provide intensive academic instruction in English, language arts, mathematics, and science to facilitate the transition from high school to college) only if at least 50 percent of the students served in the program meet certain qualifications set forth in this subsection.

(e) Requires a program supported by a grant to provide intensive summer instruction under this section to take certain actions and be designed as set forth in this subsection.

(f) Requires an institution to create work-study opportunities for students enrolled in teacher preparation programs to assist in providing instruction in programs described by this section to the extent practicable.

(g) Prohibits a grant awarded under this section from exceeding \$750 for each participating student and requires a grant to be matched by not less than \$250 for each participating student in other federal, state, or local funds, including private donations.

(h) Provides that, purposes of Subsection (g)(2) (requiring a grant to be matched), a school district is encouraged to use funds allocated under Section 42.2516(b)(3).

(i) Prohibits a grant awarded under this section from being used to replace federal, state, or local funds previously spent on a summer intensive program, but authorizes such a grant to be used to expand an existing program.

(j) Requires the entire amount of a grant awarded under this section to fund the program described in the application for the grant and authorizes that amount to be used for certain other necessary costs.

(k) Requires instructional materials adopted by SBOE to be used for instruction in a program under Subsection (b)(2) or (3) (a program administered by a district in partnership with an institution to provide intensive academic instruction in English, language arts, mathematics, and science, or in reading and mathematics to students in grades six through eight, to promote high school completion and to college readiness). Authorizes SBOE to adopt any additional instructional materials as necessary for a program under those provisions. Authorizes THECB to adopt instructional materials as necessary for students enrolled in a program under Subsection (b)(1).

(l) Requires SBOE and THECB to include information technology instructional resources that incorporate established best practices for instruction among approved instructional materials for intensive summer programs under this section to enhance the effectiveness of the programs.

SECTION 9. Amends Subchapter Z, Chapter 29, Education Code, by adding Sections 29.911, 29.917, 29.918, and 29.919, as follows:

Sec. 29.911. "EDUCATION: GO GET IT" WEEK. (a) Requires each district and open-enrollment charter school offering a middle school, junior high school, and high school education to designate one week during the school year as "Education: Go Get It" Week in order to educate middle, junior high, and high school students about the importance of higher education.

(b) Requires each middle, junior high, and high school to provide students with comprehensive grade-appropriate information regarding the pursuit of higher education during the designated week. Requires the information provided to include certain information as set forth in this subsection.

(c) Requires each middle, junior high, and high school, in addition to the information provided under Subsection (b), to provide to the students during the designated week at least one public speaker to promote the importance of higher education.

Sec. 29.917. HIGHER EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE READINESS PROGRAMS. (a) Authorizes the commissioner to award grants to organizations that provide volunteers to teach classroom or after-school programs to enhance college readiness, workforce readiness, dropout prevention, or personal financial literacy.

(b) Authorizes the commissioner to accept gifts, grants, and donations from public or private entities to implement or administer a program under this section.

(c) Authorizes the commissioner to conduct a study of the programs under this section to determine the success of the programs in preparing students for higher education and participation in the workforce.

Sec. 29.918. DROPOUT PREVENTION STRATEGIES. (a) Requires a district or open-enrollment charter school with a high dropout rate, as determined by the commissioner, notwithstanding Section 39.114 or 42.152, to submit a plan to the commissioner describing the manner in which the district or charter school intends to use the compensatory education allotment under Section 42.152 and the high school allotment under Section 42.2516(b)(3) for developing and implementing research-based strategies for dropout prevention. Requires the district or charter school to submit the

plan not later than December 1 of each school year preceding the school year in which the district or charter school will receive the compensatory education allotment or high school allotment to which the plan applies.

(b) Prohibits a district or open-enrollment charter school to which this section applies from spending or obligating more than 25 percent of the district's or charter school's compensatory education allotment or high school allotment unless the commissioner approves the plan submitted under Subsection (a). Requires the commissioner to complete an initial review of the district's or charter school's plan not later than March 1 of the school year preceding the school year in which the district or charter school will receive the compensatory education allotment or high school allotment to which the plan applies.

(c) Requires the commissioner to adopt rules to administer this section. Authorizes the commissioner to impose sanctions under Section 39.131 (Acquisition of Professional Services) or 39.1321 (Sanctions for Charter Schools) if a district or open-enrollment charter school fails to timely comply with this section.

Sec. 29.919. TECHNOLOGY-BASED SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION PILOT PROGRAM. (a) Requires the commissioner to establish a pilot program under which state grant funds are provided to finance technology-based supplemental instruction to students at the sixth through 12th grade levels at participating campuses.

(b) Sets forth the campuses that are eligible to participate in the program and receive grant funds.

(c) Requires the commissioner to develop an application and selection process for selecting campuses to participate in the program. Requires the commissioner to give priority to a campus that offers a relatively limited course selection to students, in comparison to the course selection generally offered to students in metropolitan areas.

(d) Entitles a campus selected to participate in the program to receive state grant funds in an amount not to exceed \$200 each school year for each student in an eligible grade level served through the program. Requires the state grant funds to be used to provide technology-based supplemental instruction for students at the eligible grade levels. Sets forth certain costs that are included as permissible expenditures under the program.

(e) Requires a campus, as a condition of receiving a state grant, to contribute additional funding for activities provided at the campus through the program, in a certain amount. Authorizes certain funds to consist the additional funding required by this subsection. Authorizes the high school allotment provided under Section 42.2516(b)(3) to be used to meet the additional funding requirement prescribed by this subsection for program activities provided at the high school level.

(f) Requires a campus participating in the program to make instructional support services available to students outside of regular school hours for at least 10 hours each week.

(g) Requires the commissioner to pay the costs of the program using funds available for that purpose, not to exceed a certain amount.

(h) Requires the commissioner to contract for an evaluation of the program's effectiveness in improving student performance using funds available for the program in an amount not to exceed \$150,000 each state fiscal year. Requires the commissioner to deliver an interim report containing the results of the evaluation not later than December 1, 2008. Requires the commissioner to deliver a final report regarding the program to the legislature not later than December 1, 2010.

- (i) Requires the commissioner to adopt rules necessary to implement this section.
- (j) Provides that this section expires September 1, 2011.

SECTION 10. Amends Subchapter F, Chapter 39, Education Code, by adding Section 39.115, as follows:

Sec. 39.115. HIGH SCHOOL INNOVATION GRANT INITIATIVE. (a) Authorizes the commissioner, from funds appropriated for that purpose, to establish a grant program under which grants are awarded to secondary campuses and districts to support the implementation of innovative high school improvement programs that are based on the best available research regarding high school reform, dropout prevention, and preparing students for postsecondary coursework or employment; the enhancement of education practices that have been demonstrated by significant evidence of effectiveness; and the alignment of grants and programs to the strategic plan adopted under Section 39.357.

(b) Authorizes the commissioner, before awarding a grant under this section, to require a campus or district to obtain local matching funds or meet other conditions, including developing a personal graduation plan under Section 28.0212 for each student enrolled at the campus or in a district high school.

(c) Authorizes the commissioner to accept gifts, grants, or donations from a private foundation to implement a grant program under this section and authorizes the commissioner to coordinate gifts, grants, or donations with other available funding to implement a grant program under this section.

(d) Authorizes the commissioner to use funds appropriated under this section to support technical assistance services for school districts and open-enrollment charter schools to implement a high school improvement program under this section.

SECTION 11. Amends Chapter 39, Education Code, by adding Subchapter L, as follows:

SUBCHAPTER L. HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION AND SUCCESS INITIATIVE

Sec. 39.351. DEFINITION. Defines “council.”

Sec. 39.352. HIGH SCHOOL COMPLETION AND SUCCESS INITIATIVE COUNCIL. (a) Provides that the High School Completion and Success Initiative Council (completion council) is established to identify strategic priorities for and make recommendations to improve the effectiveness, coordination, and alignment of high school completion and college and workforce readiness efforts.

(b) Sets forth the composition of the completion council.

(c) Requires the commissioner, in making appointments required by Subsection (b)(3), to appoint certain individuals as set forth in this subsection.

Sec. 39.353. TERMS. Provides that members of the completion council appointed under Section 39.352(b)(3) by the commissioner serve terms of two years and may be reappointed for additional terms.

Sec. 39.354. PRESIDING OFFICER. Provides that the commissioner serves as the presiding officer of the completion council.

Sec. 39.355. COMPENSATION AND REIMBURSEMENT. Provides that a member of the completion council is not entitled to compensation for service on the completion council but is entitled to reimbursement for actual and necessary expenses incurred in performing completion council duties.

Sec. 39.356. COUNCIL STAFF AND FUNDING. (a) Requires TEA staff members, with the assistance of THECB, to provide administrative support for the completion council, except as otherwise provided.

(b) Requires funding for the administrative and operational expenses of the completion council to be provided by appropriation to and by gifts, grants, and donations solicited and accepted by TEA for that purpose.

Sec. 39.357. STRATEGIC PLAN. (a) Requires the completion council to adopt a strategic plan under this subchapter as set forth in this subsection.

(b) Requires the commissioner and the commissioner of higher education to adopt rules as necessary to administer the strategic plan adopted by the completion council under this section.

(c) Prohibits the commissioner and the commissioner of higher education from awarding a grant or entering into a contract in connection with a program relating to high school success and completion in a manner inconsistent with the strategic plan.

(d) Authorizes the commissioner, commissioner of higher education, or SBOE, notwithstanding Subsection (c), to use funds appropriated for high school success and completion to continue or expand a project, grant, or initiative relating to high school success and completion that was developed before January 1, 2007. Provides that this subsection expires September 1, 2009.

Sec. 39.358. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR CERTAIN GRANT PROGRAMS. Provides that a district or campus is eligible to participate in programs under Sections 21.4541, 29.095, 29.096, 29.097, and 29.098 if the district or campus exhibited during each of the three preceding school years characteristics that strongly correlate with high dropout rates.

Sec. 39.359. PRIVATE FOUNDATION PARTNERSHIPS. (a) Authorizes the commissioner or the commissioner of higher education, as appropriate, and the completion council to coordinate with private foundations that have made a substantial investment in the improvement of high schools in this state to maximize the impact of public and private investments.

(b) Provides that a private foundation is not required to obtain the approval of the appropriate commissioner or the completion council under Subsection (a) before allocating resources to a school in this state.

Sec. 39.360. GRANT PROGRAM EVALUATION. (a) Requires the commissioner to annually set aside not more than five percent of the funds appropriated for high school completion and success to contract for the evaluation of programs supported by grants approved under this subchapter. Requires the commissioner to consider centers for education research established under Section 1.005 in awarding a contract under this subsection.

(b) Requires a person who receives a grant approved under this subchapter to consent to an evaluation under this section as a condition of receiving the grant.

(c) Requires the commissioner to ensure that an evaluation conducted under this section includes an assessment of whether student achievement has improved. Requires the results of the evaluation to be provided through the online clearinghouse of information relating to the best practices of campuses and school districts established under Section 7.009.

Sec. 39.361. COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS. (a) Requires the completion council, based on the strategic plan adopted under this section, to make recommendations to the

commissioner or the commissioner of higher education, as applicable, for the use of federal and state funds appropriated or received for certain purposes.

(b) Requires the completion council to include recommendations under this section for key elements of program design, criteria for awarding grants and evaluating programs, program funding priorities, and program evaluation as provided by this subchapter.

(c) Requires the commissioner or the commissioner of higher education, as applicable, to consider the completion council's recommendations. Authorizes those individuals, based on the recommendations, to award grants to districts, open-enrollment charter schools, institutions, regional centers, and nonprofit organizations to meet the goals of the completion council's strategic plan.

Sec. 39.362. FUNDING PROVIDED TO SCHOOL DISTRICTS. Authorizes the commissioner, from funds appropriated, to provide funding to school districts to permit a school district to obtain technical assistance in preparing a grant proposal for a grant program administered under this subchapter.

Sec. 39.363. FUNDING FOR CERTAIN PROGRAMS. (a) Requires THECB, from funds appropriated, to allocate \$8.75 million each year to establish mathematics, science, and technology teacher preparation academies under Section 21.462 and implement and administer the program under Section 29.098.

(b) Requires THECB to establish mathematics, science, and technology teacher preparation academies under Section 21.462 and implement and administer the program under Section 29.098 in a manner consistent with the goals of this subchapter and the goals in "Closing the Gaps," the state's master plan for higher education.

Sec. 39.364. PRIVATE FUNDING. Authorizes the commissioner or the commissioner of higher education, as appropriate, to accept gifts, grants, or donations to fund a grant administered under this subchapter.

Sec. 39.365. REPORTS. (a) Requires TEA to prepare and deliver a report to the legislature that recommends any statutory changes the completion council considers appropriate to promote high school completion and college and workforce readiness not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year.

(b) Requires the commissioner to prepare and deliver a progress report to the presiding officers of the standing committees of each house of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over public education, the Legislative Budget Board, and the Governor's Office of Policy and Planning on the implementation of certain provisions, on the programs supported by grants approved under this subchapter not later than March 1 and September 1 of each year, and on the alignment of grants and programs to the strategic plan adopted under Section 39.357.

Sec. 39.366. RULES. Requires the commissioner and the commissioner of higher education to adopt rules as necessary to administer this subchapter and any programs under the authority of the commissioner or the commissioner of higher education and the completion council under this subchapter.

SECTION 12. Amends Section 42.158, Education Code, by amending Subsection (d) and adding Subsection (d-1), as follows:

(d) Provides that the prohibition of allotments under this section (New Instructional Faculty Allotment) from exceeding \$25 million in a school year is subject to Subsection (d-1). Requires the commissioner to reduce each school district's allotment under this section in the manner provided by Section 42.253(h) (relating to distribution of foundation school fund) if the total amount of allotments to which districts are entitled

under this section for a school year exceeds the amount appropriated under this subsection, rather than the amount appropriated for allotments under this section.

(d-1) Authorizes the amount of \$1 million to be appropriated each school year to supplement the allotment to which a school district is entitled under this section that may be provided using the appropriation amount described by Subsection (d), in addition to the appropriation amount described by Subsection (d). Requires the commissioner to first apply the fund appropriated under this subsection to prevent any reduction under Subsection (d) in the allotment for attendance at an eligible high school instructional facility, subject to the maximum amount of \$250 for each student in average daily attendance. Authorizes any funds remaining after preventing all reductions in amounts due for high school instructional facilities to be applied proportionally to all other eligible instructional facilities subject to the maximum amount of \$250 for each student in average daily attendance.

SECTION 13. (a) Requires the commissioner to prepare and deliver to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, and the presiding officers of the standing committees of each house of the legislature with primary jurisdiction over public education a preliminary report on or before December 1, 2008, and a final report on or before December 1, 2010, as described by Subsection (b) of this section.

(b) Requires the reports referred to in Subsection (a) of this section to include an assessment of the impact of programs for which grants have been awarded under Subchapter L, Chapter 39, Education Code, as added by this Act, on certain factors set forth in this subsection.

SECTION 14. Provides that this Act applies beginning with the 2007-2008 school year.

SECTION 15. Effective date: upon passage or September 1, 2007.