

## **BILL ANALYSIS**

Senate Research Center  
87R10393 ANG-F

S.B. 1527  
By: Perry  
Education  
4/21/2021  
As Filed

### **AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT**

#### Background:

Texas faces challenges to have a future-ready workforce to remain at the forefront of economic development. One of the most critical issues is ensuring that young people across the state receive the excellent education required to provide a knowledge-driven workforce of the future. One option is having an integrated educational model with affordable college and technical training available for all students.

Specifically, students in rural counties face large deficits in postsecondary education completion, including under-preparedness and inadequate support systems. COVID-19 and lack of broadband access have further reduced postsecondary participation.

#### Bill Summary:

As proposed S.B. 1527 adds Subchapter F (Rural Schools and Communities Technical Assistance Center). The center will be established to assist small and rural school districts with the implementation and expansion of the Collegiate Edu-Nation P-20 System Model for 21st Century School Transformation in cooperation with the Texas Education Agency and to further ensure better economic and life opportunities by facilitating the expansion of broadband development in rural communities.

As proposed, S.B. 1527 amends current law relating to measures to assist small and rural school districts in implementing a collegiate model and expanding broadband access, including the establishment of the Rural Schools and Communities Technical Assistance Center and a grant program.

### **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**

This bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, institution, or agency.

### **SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS**

SECTION 1. Amends Chapter 30, Education Code, by adding Subchapter F, as follows:

#### **SUBCHAPTER F. RURAL SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE CENTER**

Sec. 30.401. DEFINITION. Defines "center" as the Rural Schools and Communities Technical Assistance Center (center).

Sec. 30.402. ESTABLISHMENT; PURPOSE. Provides that the center is established to assist small and rural school districts with the implementation and expansion of the Collegiate Edu-Nation P-20 System Model for 21st Century School Transformation in cooperation with the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and to further ensure better economic and life opportunities by facilitating the expansion of broadband development in rural communities.

Sec. 30.403. DUTIES OF CENTER. (a) Requires the center to facilitate the tri-agency alignment for rural students by collaborating with TEA, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the Texas Workforce Commission.

(b) Requires the center to assist participating school districts in implementing the Collegiate Edu-Nation P-20 System Model for 21st-Century School Transformation to:

(1) combat generational poverty by fostering high aspirations and expectations among students, families, and communities for college and career success, with an emphasis on workforce shortage areas;

(2) support attainment of the state's master plan for higher education developed under Section 61.051; and

(3) support implementation of the Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) programs in participating school districts under Subchapter N (Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) Program), Chapter 29 (Educational Programs).

Sec. 30.404. SELECTION OF CENTER. Requires the commissioner of education to select a nonprofit organization to serve as the center and support school districts awarded a planning or implementation grant under this subchapter. Requires that the selected nonprofit organization have:

(1) an individual on staff who has previously implemented a collegiate model in a rural school district; and

(2) a demonstrated history of successfully managing rural schools and supporting multiple rural school districts in implementing a collegiate model.

Sec. 30.405. PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS. (a) Requires the commissioner to annually award planning grants to rural or small school districts, as determined by commissioner rule, to plan for the implementation of a collegiate model.

(b) Requires TEA to evaluate each district that receives a planning grant under Subsection (a). Requires the commissioner, if TEA determines that the district successfully completed planning activities, to award the district a one-year grant to implement a collegiate model.

(c) Requires TEA to evaluate each district that receives an implementation grant under Subsection (b). Requires the commissioner, if TEA determines that the district successfully completed implementation activities in the first year of implementation, to award the district an additional one-year implementation grant.

Sec. 30.406. EXPECTED OUTCOMES. (a) Requires the school district, by the conclusion of the second year of implementation of a collegiate model using a grant awarded under Section 30.405(c), to:

(1) have implemented:

(A) a dual credit program or a joint high school and college credit program;

(B) a Pathways in Technology Early College High School (P-TECH) program under Subchapter N, Chapter 29;

- (C) a research-based college readiness program for grades 7 through 12;
- (D) student college and career coaching;
- (E) a common instructional framework and monthly instructional review and improvement cycles;
- (F) project-based learning experiences in a majority of courses offered by the district;
- (G) career and technical education programs;
- (H) work-based learning opportunities, including paid student apprenticeships in science, technology, engineering, or mathematics workforce shortage areas;
- (I) formal industry partnerships specific to local workforce needs as identified by regional offices of the Texas Workforce Commission;
- (J) research-based, nationally norm-referenced formative assessments; or
- (K) access to a personal laptop or other electronic device for each student; and

(2) demonstrate progress toward the goal of 90 percent of graduating students concurrently earning a high school diploma, associate degree, or industry-recognized certification by ensuring that at least 30 percent of high school students enrolled in the district are enrolled in college courses.

(b) Requires the center, if a school district that received a grant under Section 30.405(c) does not achieve the expected outcomes under Subsection (a), to work with the district to develop and implement an intervention plan to support the district in achieving those outcomes.

Sec. 30.407. **SUPPORT OF RURAL BROADBAND INITIATIVES.** Requires each school district that receives a grant under Section 30.405 to work closely with relevant state agencies to assist in expanding access, adoption, and use of broadband in rural areas to benefit educational opportunities and economic development.

SECTION 2. Effective date: September 1, 2021.