

AN ACT

relating to certain alternative education programs designed to address workforce development needs for at-risk students.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 29.081, Education Code, is amended by amending Subsection (e) and adding Subsections (e-1) and (e-2) to read as follows:

(e) A school district may use a private or public community-based dropout recovery education program to provide alternative education programs for students at risk of dropping out of school. The program may be offered:

(1) at a campus; or

(2) through the use of an Internet online program that leads to a high school diploma and prepares the student to enter the workforce.

(e-1) A campus-based dropout recovery education program ~~[The programs]~~ must:

(1) provide not less than four hours of instructional time per day;

(2) employ as faculty and administrators persons with baccalaureate or advanced degrees;

(3) provide at least one instructor for each 28 students;

(4) perform satisfactorily according to performance

1 indicators and accountability standards adopted for alternative  
2 education programs by the commissioner; and

3 (5) comply with this title and rules adopted under  
4 this title except as otherwise provided by this subsection.

5 (e-2) An Internet online dropout recovery education program  
6 must:

7 (1) include as a part of its curriculum credentials,  
8 certifications, or other course offerings that relate directly to  
9 employment opportunities in the state;

10 (2) employ as faculty and administrators persons with  
11 baccalaureate or advanced degrees;

12 (3) provide an academic coach and local advocate for  
13 each student;

14 (4) use an individual learning plan to monitor each  
15 student's progress;

16 (5) establish satisfactory requirements for the  
17 monthly progress of students according to standards set by the  
18 commissioner;

19 (6) provide a monthly report to the student's school  
20 district regarding the student's progress;

21 (7) perform satisfactorily according to performance  
22 indicators and accountability standards adopted for alternative  
23 education programs by the commissioner; and

24 (8) comply with this title and rules adopted under  
25 this title except as otherwise provided by this subsection.

26 SECTION 2. Sections 29.0822(b) and (c), Education Code, are  
27 amended to read as follows:

1           (b) To enable a school district to provide a program under  
2 this section that meets the needs of students described by  
3 Subsection (a), a school district that meets application  
4 requirements may:

5           (1) provide flexibility in the number of hours each  
6 day a student attends;

7           (2) provide flexibility in the number of days each  
8 week a student attends; ~~or~~

9           (3) allow a student to enroll in less than or more than  
10 a full course load; or

11           (4) allow a student to enroll in a dropout recovery  
12 program in which courses are conducted online.

13           (c) Except in the case of a course designed for a student  
14 described by Subsection (a)(3) or enrolled in a course described by  
15 Subsection (b)(4), a course offered in a program under this section  
16 must provide for at least the same number of instructional hours as  
17 required for a course offered in a program that meets the required  
18 minimum number of instructional days under Section 25.081 and the  
19 required length of school day under Section 25.082.

20           SECTION 3. This Act applies beginning with the 2017-2018  
21 school year.

22           SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
23 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as  
24 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
25 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
26 Act takes effect September 1, 2017.

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President of the Senate

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Speaker of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 3706 was passed by the House on May 9, 2017, by the following vote: Yeas 145, Nays 0, 2 present, not voting.

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Chief Clerk of the House

I certify that H.B. No. 3706 was passed by the Senate on May 24, 2017, by the following vote: Yeas 31, Nays 0.

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Secretary of the Senate

APPROVED: \_\_\_\_\_

Date

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Governor