

**Senate Education Committee**  
**October 18, 2006**

**Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board**  
**Update on HB 1 Higher Education Responsibilities**

*Background: HB 1, 79th Texas Legislature, Third Called Session, contained a number of initiatives regarding high school success and college-readiness as well as a provision for education research centers. Sections of the bill directly related to these initiatives involving higher education and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's progress in collaborating with the Texas Education Agency and the institutions to implement these provisions are summarized below.*

**Section 2.01: Education Research Centers**

*Authorizes the creation of up to three Education Research Centers (Centers) to conduct research for the benefit of education in the state, including research relating to the impact of state and federal education programs, the performance of educator preparation programs, public school finance, and the best practices of school districts with regard to classroom instruction, bilingual education programs, special language programs, and business practices. A Center may be established as part of the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Coordinating Board or CB), or a public college or university.*

**Implementation Update:**

- Legislation provides for as many as three Centers located at institutions of higher education (IHEs), the Coordinating Board, or the TEA.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is currently being drafted by TEA and CB staff for the operation of the Centers. The MOU will address joint supervision, Center operations, security and audit procedures, joint rulemaking, staffing, and compliance with federal and state confidentiality requirements. The interagency MOU is expected to serve as a template for the contracts between the Centers and the two agencies required by statute to provide direct joint supervision of the Centers.
- As the MOU is being finalized, a RFP will be developed for approval by the Coordinating Board and the TEA, with a proposed November distribution to IHEs.
- While Center proposals are being developed for submission, proposed rules will be submitted to the Coordinating Board for consideration at its January 25 meeting, and identical rules will be submitted to the Commissioner of Education for consideration.
- Final review of proposals is scheduled to be completed by January 31, 2007 with selection of IHEs in early February 2007.
- Funding beyond the first year will be the responsibility of each Center, either from grants, gifts, or fees. The Legislature provided \$3 million in funding for creation of the centers and their operations for one year. The statute requires that each center be self-funding

after the first year. The Commissioner of Education and the Commissioner of Higher Education requested the ability to carry forward funding for the current year to the 2008-2009 biennium.

### **Section 5.01: Advancement of College Readiness in Curriculum**

*Requires that the Commissioner of Education and the Commissioner of Higher Education establish vertical teams of faculty from public education and higher education. The teams will:*

- *Recommend standards and expectations of college readiness for approval by the Coordinating Board and for inclusion by the State Board of Education (SBOE) in the high school curriculum;*
- *Evaluate current high school curriculum requirements to determine whether or not they adequately prepare students to meet college-readiness standards;*
- *Develop instructional strategies for teaching the curriculum so that students are prepared to successfully perform college-level work;*
- *Develop standards for curricula and educational materials in English, mathematics, science, and social studies for students who need additional assistance in preparing to successfully perform college-level course work.*

#### **Implementation Update:**

- Vertical Teams –
  - Rules are being considered for adoption by the Coordinating Board at its October 26 meeting. CB and TEA staffs are working together to ensure that the content of the rules at both agencies are the same.
  - TEA will file its rules with the Texas Register on October 20, 2006.
  - Once adopted by the Commissioner of Education and the Coordinating Board, statewide vertical teams will be formed to develop recommendations for college-readiness standards in the four discipline areas.
  - First meeting of the statewide vertical teams is expected to take place in January 2007.
  - Both the Coordinating Board and the Commissioner of Education are responsible for approving the college-readiness standards.
  - Once college-readiness standards are adopted, the vertical teams will address the remaining charges in HB 1 assigned to the vertical teams.

### **Section 5.01: College Credit Program**

*Requires each school district to implement a program by which a student may earn the equivalent of at least 12 semester credit hours of college credit in high school. Requires institutions of higher education to assist school districts in developing and implementing the program upon request.*

### **Implementation Update:**

- CB staff has reviewed the dual credit offerings that are currently in place and believe that current dual credit rules are sufficient for the colleges and universities to assist the public schools in carrying out the requirements of the HB 1 College Credit Program.
- The statute allows any college-level academic or technical course to be used for dual credit—literally thousands of possible courses.
- CB and TEA staffs are collaborating on a policy to ensure that all of the required high school Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) are covered in dual credit courses as well as the college-level material.

### **Section 5.04: Texas Governor Schools**

*Establishes a summer residential program called Texas Governor's Schools for high-achieving students. A Texas Governor's School may be administered by a public college or university upon application to and approval by the Commissioner of Education. Preference will be given to those that apply in cooperation with a nonprofit association. The Commissioner may make a grant not to exceed \$750,000 to an institution whose application is approved.*

### **Implementation Update:**

- The Commissioners agreed in mid-September that it was a better fit for the Texas Governor's Schools to be administered by the Coordinating Board.
- Staff is recommending an MOU to move responsibility for the program from TEA to the CB. Due to recent nature of this decision, there has been no activity on the program to date.
- Staff also recommending changes to statute in next session to codify transfer of responsibility for program to the CB.

### **Section 5.08: P-16 College-Readiness and Success Strategic Action Plan**

*Requires the P-16 Council to recommend to the Commissioner of Education and the Coordinating Board for adoption a college-readiness and success strategic action plan designed to increase student success and to decrease the number of students enrolling in developmental coursework in college. A progress report must be submitted to the relevant executive and legislative offices not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year.*

### **Implementation Update:**

- TEA and CB staffs are working together to integrate the strategic plan and the plan submitted to Senate Education Committee in April 2006 to ensure objectives and activities in both plans are appropriately addressed.
- The strategic plan addresses the need for "definitions, as determined by the P-16 Council in coordination with the State Board of Education, of the standards and expectations for college-readiness that address the knowledge and skills expected of

students to perform successfully in entry-level [college] courses." Information from the statewide P-16 Council and State Board of Education will be shared with the statewide vertical teams when available.

- The plan requires that strategies be recommended to TEA, the State Board of Education, and the Coordinating Board for decreasing the number of students enrolling in developmental education in higher education. Under the direction of the P-16 Council, the CB and TEA staffs are working together on developing recommendations for consideration by the P-16 Council that would have policy implications for the Legislature, the CB, and institutions of higher education.
- The plan provides both the TEA and the Coordinating Board with the option to add other elements to the plan. It is under this provision that the two staffs will be combining this plan and the original plan submitted to the Senate Education Committee last year.

### **Section 5.08: Programs to Enhance Student Success**

*To implement the college readiness and success strategic action plan and to enhance the success of students, the Coordinating Board by rule must develop:*

- *Summer higher education bridge programs in math, science, and English;*
- *Incentive programs for institutions of higher education that implement research-based, innovative developmental education initiatives;*
- *Financial assistance programs for educationally disadvantaged students who take college entrance and college-readiness assessment instruments;*
- *Professional development programs for faculty of institutions of higher education on college-readiness standards*
- *Other programs that support the participation and success goals in Closing the Gaps.*

#### **Implementation Update:**

- CB staff recently received confirmation of the funds that are earmarked for implementation of these programs.
- Mechanisms are being developed for determining how to get funding to high schools and higher education institutions quickly, while ensuring that appropriate evaluation of these programs will be addressed.

### **Section 5.08: Course Redesign**

*Requires the Coordinating Board to implement a project under which institutions of higher education selected by the Board will review and revise entry-level lower-division academic courses. The project is to be initiated by September 1, 2006 and each participating institution of higher education must begin offering courses that have been redesigned through the project by September 1, 2007. Each institution will report results to the Board by September 1, 2009, and the Board will issue a summary report by January 1, 2011 to the appropriate legislative committees.*

#### **Implementation Update:**

- CB staff convened a course redesign ad hoc advisory group of 10 members, which met for the first time in August 2006. The advisory group is providing staff with recommendations on the criteria for (1) selecting entry-level academic college courses for redesign, and (2) selecting institutions to be involved in the statewide effort. College and university members represent public two- and four-year institutions from various regions and systems in Texas.
- The group reviewed a number of text and web-based materials defining course redesign, and summaries of research results on national course redesign efforts. The ad hoc group also heard a presentation by Dr. Carolyn Jarmon, Senior Associate with the National Center for Academic Transformation (NCAT). She spoke about a series of models for course redesign identified by NCAT that are being used by institutions across the country in disciplines as diverse as mathematics, Spanish, and chemistry.
- The advisory group also has identified several existing course redesign efforts in Texas that might be included in the HB 1 initiative, and out-of-state redesign work that could be beneficial for adaptation in state as well, given the mandate to have at least one course implemented beginning fall 2007. The advisory group has identified criteria for courses selected for redesign, some criteria for involving particular institutions across the state in the initiative, and one or more elements of financial support to allow institutions to participate in the statewide effort.
- Some proposed criteria for course selection include courses that are entry-level, core curriculum, required for degree, high enrollment across state, high attrition rate, heavy reading/writing requirements, or offered as dual credit.
- Proposed criteria for institutional participation in the pilot project include commitment of institutional leadership, ability to provide data on student performance and institutional delivery costs, understanding of the NCAT models and research, and course redesign work that may have already begun by an institution.
- A proposed implementation plan includes the following elements:
  - Identifying courses to redesign and institutions to participate:
    - Because of the timeline mandated in HB 1 to make courses available to students in September 2007, the pilot will use course(s) currently being redesigned by several Texas institutions. It will include a review of student performance and institutional cost data.
    - By the end of 2006, the ad hoc work group will recommend criteria for an RFP to identify both the courses eligible for redesign and institutions to participate.
    - In spring 2007, the Coordinating Board will issue the RFP. Proposals will be due June 2007 and will be reviewed in June and July 2007.
    - In summer 2007, the institutions selected for the course redesign projects will be announced. Redesign work will begin August 2007, with courses available in August 2008 or August 2009 depending on scope of the project and how much, if any, redesign has already been completed. In September 2009 institutions will report on redesign to Coordinating Board.

- Providing supporting activities to enhance the success of the projects:
  - In Spring 2007, the CB will:
    - Launch a course redesign best practices website
    - Conduct a series of workshops across Texas on best practices based on research from state and national redesign efforts in math and other disciplines.