

By: Woolley

H.B. No. 156

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to eliminating automatic admission to certain public institutions of higher education based on high school grade point average.

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

SECTION 1. Section 28.0252(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) If the commissioner develops a standard method under this section, a school district shall use the standard method to compute a student's high school grade point average~~[, except that to the extent of a conflict between that method and the method adopted under Section 51.807, the student's grade point average computed in accordance with the method established under Section 51.807 shall be used in determining the student's eligibility for university admission under Subchapter U, Chapter 51]~~.

SECTION 2. Section 33.007(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) During the first school year a student is enrolled in a high school or at the high school level in an open-enrollment charter school, and again during a student's senior year, a counselor shall provide information about higher education to the student and the student's parent or guardian. The information must include information regarding:

- (1) the importance of higher education;

1 (2) the advantages of completing the recommended or
2 advanced high school program adopted under Section 28.025(a);

3 (3) the disadvantages of taking courses to prepare for
4 a high school equivalency examination relative to the benefits of
5 taking courses leading to a high school diploma;

6 (4) financial aid eligibility;

7 (5) instruction on how to apply for federal financial
8 aid;

9 (6) the center for financial aid information
10 established under Section 61.0776;

11 (7) ~~[the automatic admission of certain students to~~
12 ~~general academic teaching institutions as provided by Section~~
13 ~~51.803,~~

14 ~~[(8)]~~ the eligibility and academic performance
15 requirements for the TEXAS Grant as provided by Subchapter M,
16 Chapter 56; and

17 (8) ~~[(9)]~~ the availability of programs in the district
18 under which a student may earn college credit, including advanced
19 placement programs, dual credit programs, joint high school and
20 college credit programs, and international baccalaureate programs.

21 SECTION 3. Section 51.4032, Education Code, is amended to
22 read as follows:

23 Sec. 51.4032. ANNUAL REPORT OF PARTICIPATION IN HIGHER
24 EDUCATION. Not later than December 1 of each year and in the form
25 prescribed by the coordinating board, each general academic
26 teaching institution and medical and dental unit as defined in
27 Section 61.003 shall provide to the Texas Higher Education

Coordinating Board and shall publish on the institution's website a report describing the composition of the institution's entering class of students. The report must include a demographic breakdown of the class, including a breakdown by race, ethnicity, economic status, and high school class standing. A report submitted by a general academic teaching institution or medical and dental unit as defined in Section 61.003 must include ~~[separate demographic breakdowns of the students admitted under Sections 51.803, 51.804, and 51.805 and]~~ a description of any plans, policies, or programs developed or implemented by the institution to recruit and retain students from underrepresented groups such as racial or ethnic minority groups.

SECTION 4. The heading to Section 51.805, Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 51.805. UNDERGRADUATE ~~[OTHER]~~ ADMISSIONS.

SECTION 5. Sections 51.805(a), (b), and (e), Education Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) ~~[A graduating student who does not qualify for admission under Section 51.803 or 51.804 may apply to any general academic teaching institution if the student satisfies the requirements of:~~

~~[(1) Section 51.803(a)(2)(A) or 51.803(b), as applicable to the student, or Section 51.803(a)(2)(B); and~~

~~[(2) Sections 51.803(c)(2) and 51.803(d).]~~

~~[(b) The general academic teaching institution, after admitting students under Sections 51.803 and 51.804, shall admit other applicants for admission as undergraduate students.]~~ It is

the intent of the legislature that all institutions of higher

1 education pursue academic excellence by considering students'
2 academic achievements in decisions related to admissions.

3 (b) Because of changing demographic trends, diversity, and
4 population increases in the state, each general academic teaching
5 institution shall also consider all of, any of, or a combination of
6 the following socioeconomic indicators or factors in making
7 first-time freshman admissions decisions:

8 (1) the applicant's academic record;

9 (2) the socioeconomic background of the applicant,
10 including the percentage by which the applicant's family is above
11 or below any recognized measure of poverty, the applicant's
12 household income, and the applicant's parents' level of education;

13 (3) whether the applicant would be the first
14 generation of the applicant's family to attend or graduate from an
15 institution of higher education;

16 (4) whether the applicant has bilingual proficiency;

17 (5) the financial status of the applicant's school
18 district;

19 (6) the performance level of the applicant's school as
20 determined by the school accountability criteria used by the Texas
21 Education Agency;

22 (7) the applicant's responsibilities while attending
23 school, including whether the applicant has been employed, whether
24 the applicant has helped to raise children, or other similar
25 factors;

26 (8) the applicant's region of residence;

27 (9) whether the applicant is a resident of a rural or

1 urban area or a resident of a central city or suburban area in the
2 state;

3 (10) the applicant's performance on standardized
4 tests;

5 (11) the applicant's performance on standardized tests
6 in comparison with that of other students from similar
7 socioeconomic backgrounds;

8 (12) whether the applicant attended any school while
9 the school was under a court-ordered desegregation plan;

10 (13) the applicant's involvement in community
11 activities;

12 (14) the applicant's extracurricular activities;

13 (15) the applicant's commitment to a particular field
14 of study;

15 (16) the applicant's personal interview;

16 (17) the applicant's admission to a comparable
17 accredited out-of-state institution; and

18 (18) any other consideration the institution
19 considers necessary to accomplish the institution's stated
20 mission.

21 (e) This section does not apply to an institution that has
22 an open enrollment policy[, ~~except that a student may apply to a~~
23 ~~general academic teaching institution that has an open enrollment~~
24 ~~policy only if the student satisfies the requirements described by~~
25 ~~Subsection (a)~~].

26 SECTION 6. Section 51.807, Education Code, as amended by
27 Chapters 941 (H.B. 3826) and 1369 (H.B. 3851), Acts of the 80th

Legislature, Regular Session, 2007, is reenacted and amended to read as follows:

Sec. 51.807. RULEMAKING. ~~[(a) To ensure a uniform standard for admissions under this subchapter, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board shall adopt rules establishing a standard method for computing a student's high school grade point average. The method established under this subsection:~~

~~[(1) must:~~

~~[(A) be based on a four-point scale; and~~

~~[(B) assign additional weight for each honors course, advanced placement course, international baccalaureate course, or dual credit course completed by the student as the board considers appropriate, taking into consideration the academic rigor of each course completed by the student; and~~

~~[(2) may result in a student having a grade point average higher than 4.0 on a four-point scale as a result of the assignment of additional weight for one or more courses completed by a student under Subdivision (1)(B).~~

~~[(b) The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, after consulting with the Texas Education Agency, by rule shall establish standards for determining for purposes of this subchapter:~~

~~[(1) whether a private high school is accredited by a generally recognized accrediting organization; and~~

~~[(2) whether a person completed a high school curriculum that is equivalent in content and rigor to the curriculum requirements established under Section 28.025 for the recommended or advanced high school program.~~

1 ~~[(c)]~~ The board may adopt ~~[other]~~ rules relating to the
2 operation of admissions programs under this subchapter~~[, including~~
3 ~~rules relating to the identification of eligible students.~~

4 ~~[(d) The standard method established under Subsection (a)~~
5 ~~for computing a student's high school grade point average applies~~
6 ~~to computing the grade point average of a student applying as a~~
7 ~~first-time freshman for admission to a general academic teaching~~
8 ~~institution beginning with admissions for the 2009 fall semester.~~
9 ~~This subsection expires January 1, 2010].~~

10 SECTION 7. Section 51.842(a), Education Code, is amended to
11 read as follows:

12 (a) A graduate or professional program of a general academic
13 teaching institution or medical or dental unit may consider the
14 following factors in making an admissions or scholarship decision
15 for admissions into or competitive scholarships for the graduate or
16 professional program:

17 (1) an applicant's academic record as a high school
18 student and undergraduate student;

19 (2) the socioeconomic background of the applicant
20 while the applicant attended elementary and secondary school and
21 was an undergraduate student, including any change in that
22 background;

23 (3) whether the applicant would be the first
24 generation of the applicant's family to attend or graduate from an
25 undergraduate program or from a graduate or professional program;

26 (4) whether the applicant has multilingual
27 proficiency;

1 (5) the applicant's responsibilities while attending
2 elementary and secondary school and as an undergraduate student,
3 including whether the applicant was employed, whether the applicant
4 helped to raise children, and other similar factors;

5 (6) to achieve geographic diversity, the applicant's
6 region of residence at the time of application and, if the applicant
7 graduated from a public high school in this state within the
8 preceding 20 years, the region in which the applicant's school
9 district is located;

10 (7) the applicant's involvement in community
11 activities;

12 (8) the applicant's demonstrated commitment to a
13 particular field of study;

14 (9) for admission into a professional program, the
15 current comparative availability of members of that profession in
16 the applicant's region of residence while the applicant attended
17 elementary and secondary school;

18 ~~[(10) whether the applicant was automatically~~
19 ~~admitted to a general academic teaching institution as an~~
20 ~~undergraduate student under Section 51.803,] and~~

21 (10) ~~[(11)]~~ the applicant's personal interview.

22 SECTION 8. Sections 28.026, 51.803, 51.804, and 51.8045,
23 Education Code, are repealed.

24 SECTION 9. The change in law made by this Act applies
25 beginning with admissions to a general academic teaching
26 institution for the 2010-2011 academic year. Admissions for an
27 academic period preceding that academic year are covered by the law

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1 in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act, and the
2 prior law is continued in effect for that purpose.

3 SECTION 10. This Act takes effect September 1, 2009.