A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to community schools.

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

SECTION 1. Chapter 29, Education Code, is amended by adding

Subchapter N to read as follows:

SUBCHAPTER N. COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Sec. 29.551. DEFINITION. In this subchapter, "community-based organization" means a nonprofit corporation or association located in close proximity to the population the organization serves.

Sec. 29.552. COMMUNITY SCHOOL. (a) A community school is a public elementary, middle, junior high, or high school that partners with one or more community-based organizations to coordinate academic, social, and health services to reduce barriers to learning and improve the quality of education for students in the community.

(b) A community school offers a variety of programs and services, which may include:

(1) early childhood education;

(2) after-school and summer school academic and enrichment programs;

(3) college and career preparation;

(4) service learning opportunities, such as internships and community service programs;
(5) leadership and mentoring programs;
(6) activities to encourage community and parent engagement in students’ education;
(7) health and social services for students and their families; and
(8) parenting classes.

Sec. 29.553. TRANSITION TO COMMUNITY SCHOOL. (a) A public elementary, middle, junior high, or high school may transition to a community school if the school:

(1) establishes a school community partnership team to function as the campus-level planning and decision-making committee required under Section 11.251, composed of the members required under Section 11.251 and additional community representatives;
(2) conducts a comprehensive on-site needs assessment using the guidelines and procedures described by Section 39.106(b);
(3) establishes a partnership with a lead community-based organization that has experience in developing and implementing a community school plan;
(4) develops a community school plan that satisfies the requirements for a campus improvement plan under Section 11.253; and
(5) gains approval for the community school plan from:
   (A) at least 75 percent of campus faculty and staff and 75 percent of parents of students enrolled at the school; and
   (B) the board of trustees of the school district.
in which the school is located.

(b) A school that transitions to a community school under Subsection (a) shall designate a school district employee or an employee of a community-based organization with experience in developing and implementing a community school plan as the community school coordinator for the school. The coordinator's duties include:

(1) recruiting community partners and building community support for the school;

(2) coordinating:
   (A) the school community partnership team's planning and training activities;
   (B) planning and evaluation efforts between the school and community partners;
   (C) academic and student and family support programs; and
   (D) after-school, summer, and enrichment programs for students;

(3) encouraging community and parent engagement in the school;

(4) seeking available resources for implementing community school programs and services;

(5) conducting an annual needs assessment of the school in coordination with the school community partnership team; and

(6) acting as a liaison between the school, other community schools, the school district, and community partners.
In developing or implementing a community school plan, the school may seek assistance from other community schools or from regional education service centers.

Sec. 29.554. COMMUNITY AND DISTRICT OVERSIGHT. A school that transitions to a community school shall:

(1) hold a community meeting at least twice each year to:

(A) inform community stakeholders about the school's progress in implementing the community school plan; and

(B) seek community input regarding any improvements or changes that could be made to the plan; and

(2) report annually to the board of trustees of the school district in which the school is located regarding the school's progress in implementing the plan.

Sec. 29.555. LOW-PERFORMING SCHOOLS. (a) A school community partnership team formed by a school with performance below any standard under Section 39.054(e) functions as the campus intervention team for purposes of Section 39.106.

(b) A low-performing school transitioning to a community school shall receive district-level support to assist the school in developing and implementing the community school plan. The support must continue for at least two school years after the school successfully meets the standards under Section 39.054(e).

Sec. 29.556. FUNDING. A community school or a school transitioning to a community school may seek and accept gifts, grants, donations, and funds from federal and state agencies and private sources for purposes related to the school's function as a
community school.

Sec. 29.557. RECOGNITION AS COMMUNITY SCHOOL. (a) A school that transitions to a community school shall be recognized by the state as a community school.

(b) The agency shall develop methods for recognizing a school as a community school.

Sec. 29.558. RULES. The commissioner may adopt rules as necessary to implement this subchapter.

SECTION 2. Sections 39.106(c) and (f), Education Code, are amended to read as follows:

(c) On completing the on-site needs assessment under this section, the campus intervention team shall, with the involvement and advice of the school community partnership team, if applicable, recommend actions relating to any area of insufficient performance, including:

(1) reallocation of resources;
(2) technical assistance;
(3) changes in school procedures or operations;
(4) staff development for instructional and administrative staff;
(5) intervention for individual administrators or teachers;
(6) waivers from state statutes or rules;
(7) teacher recruitment or retention strategies and incentives provided by the district to attract and retain teachers with the characteristics included in Subsection (b)(1); [or]

(8) transition to a community school under Subchapter
other actions the campus intervention team considers appropriate.

(f) Notwithstanding any other provision of this subchapter, if the commissioner determines that a campus for which an intervention is ordered under Subsection (a) is not fully implementing the campus intervention team's recommendations or targeted improvement plan or updated plan, the commissioner may:

(1) order the reconstitution of the campus as provided by Section 39.107; or

(2) approve the campus's transition to a community school under Subchapter N, Chapter 29, on request from the principal of the campus.

SECTION 3. Section 39.107, Education Code, is amended by amending Subsection (a) and adding Subsections (a-2) and (s) to read as follows:

(a) Subject to Subsection (a-2), after [After] a campus has been identified as unacceptable for two consecutive school years, the commissioner shall order the reconstitution of the campus.

(a-2) A campus may elect to transition to a community school under Subchapter N, Chapter 29, instead of reconstitution under this section if the campus:

(1) notifies the commissioner of the campus's election not later than two weeks after the date on which the commissioner orders reconstitution under Subsection (a); and

(2) satisfies the requirements of transitioning to a community school under Subchapter N, Chapter 29, not later than six
months after the date on which the commissioner orders
reconstitution under Subsection (a).

(s) The commissioner may not order the closure of a campus
under this section without giving the campus the opportunity to
transition to a community school under Subchapter N, Chapter 29,
and at least two years to implement the campus's community school
plan.

SECTION 4. Section 29.259, Education Code, is transferred
to Subchapter Z, Chapter 29, Education Code, and redesignated as
Section 29.923, Education Code, to read as follows:

Sec. 29.923 [29.259]. ADULT HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA AND
INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION CHARTER SCHOOL PILOT PROGRAM. (a) In this
section, "adult education" means services and instruction provided
below the college level for adults by a nonprofit entity described
by Subsection (e).

(b) The commissioner shall establish an adult high school
diploma and industry certification charter school pilot program as
provided by this section as a strategy for meeting industry needs
for a sufficiently trained workforce within the state.

(c) The agency shall adopt and administer a standardized
secondary exit-level assessment instrument appropriate for
assessing adult education program participants who successfully
complete high school curriculum requirements under a program
provided under this section. The commissioner shall determine the
level of performance considered to be satisfactory on the secondary
exit-level assessment instrument for receipt of a high school
diploma by an adult education program participant in a program
provided under this section.

(d) Notwithstanding any other law and in addition to the number of charters allowed under Subchapter D, Chapter 12, a charter under the pilot program may, on the basis of an application submitted, be granted to a single nonprofit entity described by Subsection (e) to provide an adult education program for not more than 150 individuals described by Subsection (g) to successfully complete:

(1) a high school program that can lead to a diploma; and

(2) career and technology education courses that can lead to industry certification.

(e) A nonprofit entity may be granted a charter under this section only if the entity:

(1) has a successful history of providing education services, including industry certifications and job placement services, to adults 18 years of age and older whose educational and training opportunities have been limited by educational disadvantages, disabilities, homelessness, criminal history, or similar circumstances; and

(2) agrees to commit at least $1 million to the adult education program offered.

(f) A nonprofit entity granted a charter under this section may partner with a public junior college to provide career and technology courses that lead to industry certification.

(g) A person who is at least 19 years of age and not more than 50 years of age is eligible to enroll in the adult education
program under this section if the person has not earned a high school equivalency certificate and:

(1) has failed to complete the curriculum requirements for high school graduation; or

(2) has failed to perform satisfactorily on an assessment instrument required for high school graduation.

(h) The nonprofit entity must include in its charter application the information required by Subsection (i).

(i) A charter granted under this section must:

(1) include a description of the adult education program to be offered under this section; and

(2) establish specific, objective standards for receiving a high school diploma, including satisfactory performance on the standardized secondary exit-level assessment instrument described by Subsection (c).

(j) Funding for an adult education program under this section is provided based on the following:

(1) for participants who are 26 years of age and older, an amount per participant from available general revenue funds appropriated for the pilot program equal to the statewide average amount of state funding per student in weighted average daily attendance that would be allocated under the Foundation School Program to an open-enrollment charter school under Section 12.106 were the student under 26 years of age; and

(2) for participants who are at least 19 years of age and under 26 years of age, an amount per participant through the Foundation School Program equal to the amount of state funding per
student in weighted average daily attendance that would be
allocated under the Foundation School Program for the student's
attendance at an open-enrollment charter school in accordance with
Section 12.106.

(k) Sections 12.107 and 12.128 apply as though funds under
this section were funds under Subchapter D, Chapter 12.

(1) Not later than December 1 of each even-numbered year,
beginning December 1, 2016, the agency shall prepare and deliver to
the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of
representatives, and presiding officer of each standing
legislative committee with primary jurisdiction over public
education or economic development a report that:

(1) evaluates any adult education program operated
under a charter granted under this section; and

(2) makes recommendations regarding the abolition,
continuation, or expansion of the pilot program.

(m) The commissioner shall adopt rules necessary to
administer the pilot program under this section. In adopting
rules, the commissioner may modify charter school requirements only
to the extent necessary for the administration of a charter school
under this section that provides for adult education.

SECTION 5. Section 42.003(a), Education Code, is amended to
read as follows:

(a) A student is entitled to the benefits of the Foundation
School Program if, on September 1 of the school year, the student:

(1) is 5 years of age or older and under 21 years of age
and has not graduated from high school, or is at least 21 years of
age and under 26 years of age and has been admitted by a school
district to complete the requirements for a high school diploma; or

(2) is at least 19 years of age and under 26 years of
age and is enrolled in an adult high school diploma and industry
certification charter school pilot program under Section 29.923
[29.259].

SECTION 6. (a) The heading to Subchapter H, Chapter 29,
Education Code, is repealed.

(b) Sections 7.021(b)(8), 7.102(c)(17), 29.251, 29.252,
29.255, 29.256, and 29.257, Education Code, are repealed.

SECTION 7. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives
a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as
provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this
Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this
Act takes effect September 1, 2015.