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Lucio Bill to Allow TSTC, Technical Colleges to Help Drop-out Prevention Programs Passes

AUSTIN - Today, Texas Governor Rick Perry signed into law a bill by Senator Eddie Lucio, Jr. (D-Brownsville) which would allow public technical colleges like Texas State Technical College (TSTC) to partner with public junior colleges to administer high school drop-out prevention programs.

"This bill will strengthen coordination between independent school districts and institutions of higher education in providing technical education opportunities to high school students at risk of dropping out of high school," Senator Lucio said. "Career and technical education leading to industry certifications can be expensive to provide and some public junior colleges may not have the needed equipment or expertise to provide the technical coursework. This bill will provide these schools more resources by allowing them to partner with technical colleges."

[Senate Bill 860](#) is intended to strengthen [legislation passed during the 2011 legislative session](#) which replicated an existing and successful dropout recovery program from the Pharr-San Juan Alamo Independent School District, and opened the program to all public junior colleges and school districts statewide.

Senate Bill 860 now clarifies that a public technical institute may receive a negotiated amount from a partnering public junior college for courses the technical institute offers to students participating in a dropout prevention program. The bill thus gives junior colleges additional resources by clarifying that they may partner with public technical institutes to comply with the dropout recovery program's requirement to provide career and technology coursework.

Under existing law, a ["public technical institute" is defined as](#) the TSTC System and Lamar Institute of Technology.

"With the rapidly growing demand for technically skilled workers, it is more important than ever that we ensure every Texan has the skills to get a high-paying job," said Michael L. Reeser, Chancellor of the TSTC System. "The Partnership Program for Dropout Recovery does that. It makes jobs possible, and TSTC is pleased to be another resource to ISDs and public junior colleges."

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