

By: Zaffirini  
(Howard)

S.B. No. 1714

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the release of student academic information by a public institution of higher education for certain purposes and the manner in which the information is used.

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

SECTION 1. Subchapter Z, Chapter 51, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 51.9715 to read as follows:

Sec. 51.9715. RELEASE OF STUDENT ACADEMIC INFORMATION.

(a) An institution of higher education may request the submission of a signed consent form authorizing the institution to release academic course, grade, and credit information with each:

(1) application for undergraduate transfer admission to the institution, if the institution is a general academic teaching institution, to be used for the purposes of Section 61.833; or

(2) request from a student for a release of the student's transcript by the institution.

(b) An institution of higher education may release student information in accordance with Subsection (a) through:

(1) the National Student Clearinghouse; or

(2) a similar national electronic data sharing and exchange platform operated by an agent of the institution that meets nationally accepted standards, conventions, and practices.

SECTION 2. Section 61.833, Education Code, is amended by

amending Subsections (a), (b), (c), and (d) and adding Subsections (c-1), (e), and (f) to read as follows:

(a) In this section,

(1) "lower-division institution of higher education"  
means a public junior college, public state college, or public technical institute; and

(2) "reverse transfer data sharing platform" means:

(A) the National Student Clearinghouse; or

(B) a similar national electronic data sharing and exchange platform operated by an agent of the institution that meets nationally accepted standards, conventions, and practices.

(b) Subsection (c) ~~[This section]~~ applies to a student enrolled in a general academic teaching institution who:

(1) transferred to the institution from or previously attended a lower-division institution of higher education;

(2) earned at least 30 credit hours for course work successfully completed at the lower-division institution of higher education; ~~and~~

(3) has earned a cumulative total of at least 66 credit hours for course work successfully completed; and

(4) has not submitted a signed consent form by the method described in Section 51.9715(a).

(c) As soon as practicable after a student who is enrolled in a general academic teaching institution has met the criteria established by Subsection (b)(3), the institution by e-mail or other reasonable method shall request authorization from the student for the institution to release the student's academic

1 course, grade, and credit information [~~transcript~~] to each [~~the~~]  
2 lower-division institution of higher education that the student  
3 previously attended or to a reverse transfer data sharing platform  
4 for the purpose of determining whether the student has earned the  
5 credits required for an associate degree awarded by a [~~the~~]  
6 lower-division institution of higher education. On receipt of a  
7 student's authorization under this subsection, the general  
8 academic teaching institution shall release the student's academic  
9 course, grade, and credit information [~~transcript~~] to the  
10 lower-division institution of higher education or to a reverse  
11 transfer data sharing platform.

12 (c-1) After a student who has submitted a signed consent  
13 form by the method described in Section 51.9715(a) completes a  
14 semester or term at a general academic teaching institution, the  
15 institution by the method described in Section 51.9715(b) shall  
16 release the student's academic course, grade, and credit  
17 information to a lower-division institution of higher education  
18 that the student previously attended for the purpose of determining  
19 whether the student has earned the credits required for an  
20 associate degree awarded by the lower-division institution of  
21 higher education.

22 (d) After receiving [a] student information [~~transcript~~]  
23 from a general academic teaching institution under Subsection (c)  
24 or Subsection (c-1), a lower-division institution of higher  
25 education shall review the information [~~transcript~~] and, if the  
26 lower-division institution of higher education determines the  
27 student has earned the credits required to receive an associate

1 degree awarded by the lower-division institution of higher  
2 education, may award the student the degree.

3 (e) Nothing in this section affects the ability of a  
4 lower-division institution of higher education to determine the  
5 course work required to earn an associate degree awarded by that  
6 institution.

7 (f) Annually, each lower-division institution of higher  
8 education shall produce a report recording the number of degrees  
9 awarded by the institution in the previous academic year under this  
10 section. An institution shall:

11 (1) make the report publicly available; and

12 (2) submit the information to a reverse transfer data  
13 sharing platform.

14 SECTION 3. (a) The changes in law made by this Act apply  
15 beginning with the 2015 fall semester.

16 (b) For the purpose of administering Section 61.833,  
17 Education Code, as amended by this Act, in regard to a student who  
18 transferred to a general academic teaching institution before the  
19 institution could obtain a signed consent form from the student  
20 under Section 51.9715(a)(1), Education Code, as added by this Act,  
21 the institution shall request authorization from the student for  
22 the institution's release of the student's academic information  
23 under Section 61.833(c), Education Code, as amended by this Act, in  
24 the manner prescribed by that subsection as it existed immediately  
25 before the effective date of this Act.

26 SECTION 4. This Act takes effect immediately if it receives  
27 a vote of two-thirds of all the members elected to each house, as

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1 provided by Section 39, Article III, Texas Constitution. If this  
2 Act does not receive the vote necessary for immediate effect, this  
3 Act takes effect September 1, 2015.