

AGENDA ITEM 6.B.

RE: Senate Bill 17 FY2026 Compliance Certification

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: This item is presented for informational purposes only. No action is required by the Board of Trustees.

BACKGROUND: Senate Bill 17 requires the governing board of each Texas public institution of higher education to annually certify that the institution has complied with the requirements of the law during the preceding fiscal year. The certification must be submitted to the Texas Legislature and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB).

Among its primary requirements, Senate Bill 17 requires Laredo College to ensure that:

- The College does not establish or maintain a diversity, equity, and inclusion office.
- The College does not hire or assign employees, or contract with third parties, to perform the duties of a prohibited DEI office.
- The College does not compel, require, induce, or solicit individuals to provide a DEI statement, or give preferential consideration based on the provision of such a statement.
- The College does not give preference to an applicant for employment, employee, or participant in an institutional function on the basis of race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin.
- The College does not require participation in prohibited DEI training as a condition of enrollment or participation in an institutional function, except as otherwise permitted by law.
- The College maintains appropriate policies and procedures to address violations of these requirements by employees or contractors.

The law contains specific exceptions and does not prohibit activities such as academic course instruction, scholarly research and creative works, activities of registered or recognized student organizations, short-term guest speakers or performers, data collection, student recruitment or admissions, or programs designed to enhance student academic achievement or postgraduate outcomes when implemented without regard to race, sex, color, or ethnicity.

Submission of the certification is required before the College may expend state-appropriated funds for Fiscal Year 2027. The certification is due to the Legislature and the Coordinating Board no later than August 31, 2026, and must be submitted through the THECB's online certification portal.

BUDGETARY CONSIDERATIONS: None.

CONTACT PERSONS:

Dr. Minita Ramirez, President

Dr. David V. Arreazola, Vice President of Student Success and Compliance