

Academic Planning and Policy E-News

Academic Quality and Workforce | College Readiness
and Success | Strategic Planning and Funding



Texas Higher
Education
Coordinating Board

Office of Academic Planning and Policy, David W. Gardner, Deputy Commissioner

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Planning Committee Meets with Industry Experts on Marketable Skills

In preparation for making a focused recommendation to the Coordinating Board in July 2015, the Texas Higher Education Strategic Planning Committee (TxHESPC) continues to deliberate on some potential goals and measures for the next long-range strategic plan for Texas higher education. Each regular meeting of the TxHESPC focuses on a strategic area and features experts from higher education and the workforce.

At the TxHESPC's Jan. 14 meeting, presentations and discussions focused on the proposed Marketable Skills goal and its potential targets and strategies. Eva Sage-Gavin, President of Sage-Gavin Associates and the Vice Chair of the Aspen Institute's Skills for America's Future Advisory Board, presented on the future work skills needed by graduates from an employer's perspective. Richard Froeschle, Labor Market Consultant, and Michael Bettersworth, Vice Chancellor and Chief Policy Officer for the Texas State Technical College System and the Executive Director of the Center for Employability Outcomes, spoke about aligning postsecondary education and marketable skills.

The presentations and minutes for the meetings are available on the [committee's website](#). During early 2015, the TxHESPC will continue to meet monthly, as required by workload and tasks. The next meeting is scheduled for Feb. 17, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at the Coordinating Board offices in Austin, and will feature a presentation on gender differences in educational attainment, performance, and programs of study by Dr. Thomas A. DiPrete, Giddings Professor of Sociology and Co-Director of the Center for the Study of Wealth and Inequality, Columbia University.

Barring technical difficulties, all TxHESPC's meetings are open to the public and broadcast live on the [Coordinating Board's website](#). During the deliberations' process and prior to adopting the new higher education plan in July 2015, the Coordinating Board will solicit public input via stakeholder meetings and online tools, such as [College Town Hall-Texas](#).

Mary E. Smith | Assistant Deputy Commissioner
| Academic Planning and Policy

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Reorganizes to Align with Strategic Plans

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board underwent a reorganization in November 2014. With the implementation of the agency's Sunset legislation, the adoption of the agency's five-year strategic plan, and the preliminary work accomplished on the next long-term strategic plan for higher education, Commissioner Paredes directed his senior leadership team to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of the agency's organizational structure and make recommendations for changes.

Calendar

Next Texas Higher Education Strategic Planning Meeting

February 17, 2015

APP Links

[Higher Ed Data](#)

[Higher Ed Strategic Plan](#)

[Higher Education Almanac](#)

[Accountability System](#)

[College Readiness and Success](#)

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The APP E-NEWS is written and produced by the staff of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). For newsletter questions or comments, contact Ramona Reeves, Editor, at ramona.reeves@theeb.state.tx.us or (512) 427-6434.

The leadership team consulted with key staff across the agency and made recommendations to improve efficiencies; further increase transparency; ensure strong succession planning; organize the agency in alignment with the new agency strategic plan and the next long-term higher education strategic plan; close the gaps in the overall quality of agency work; increase innovation and data-driven policy recommendations; correct weaknesses in operations, as revealed by internal/external audits; and, in general, strengthen the agency.

These recommendations resulted in adjusting key staff positions and redesignating divisions within Academic Planning and Policy to align with the two strategic plans. The Planning and Accountability division was redesignated Strategic Planning and Funding; Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research was redesignated Academic Quality and Workforce; and P-16 Initiatives was redesignated College Readiness and Success. In addition to the reorganization, Commissioner Paredes created a new division, Innovation and Policy Development, to affirm the agency's commitment to innovation in Texas higher education.

Kelly Carper Polden | Assistant Director of Communications
| External Relations
Ramona Reeves | Writer-Editor | Academic Planning and Policy

Generation Texas Hosts FAFSA Workshops in February

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) staff is inviting all Texas high school students, parents, current college students, and returning adults to participate in Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) workshops during February. The goal is for every participating student to complete the FAFSA during February as a first step toward applying for financial aid for college. As of Sept. 30, 2014, 1,382,352 FAFSA applications have been filed in Texas. For all of 2013, a total of 1,639,688 FAFSAs were filed in Texas.

Coordinating Board staff also has invited financial aid professionals from Texas institutions of higher education (IHEs) to participate in the workshops and offer their expertise to Texas students and parents. The participating IHEs include Work-Study Mentorship grantees and Advise Texas College Advising Corps (Advise TX) partners. The workshops will give parents and students the opportunity to sit with a trained volunteer and ask FAFSA-related questions.

For the events, THECB staff are providing FAFSA training materials that answer these questions:

- What is the FAFSA?
- How does the process work?
- How is FAFSA information used?
- Whose information belongs on the FAFSA?
- How do I help applicants overcome roadblocks?

The FAFSA training materials also include information for students pertaining to these financial aid topics:

- Getting federal aid first
- Using personal resources before borrowing
- Borrowing only what is needed
- Learning to make smart spending choices
- Using financial aid only for school expenses
- Understanding how financial need is assessed

The El Paso Region 19-area high schools will be hosting FAFSA Nights throughout February 2015. Other workshops around the state are scheduled as follows:

- Tuesday, Feb. 10, University of North Texas at Dallas
- Saturday, Feb. 21, Richardson High School, Richardson, Texas; Molina High School and Bryan Adams High School, Dallas, Texas
- Thursday, Feb. 26, Mercedes High School, Mercedes, Texas
- Saturday, Feb. 28, Adamson High School, Dallas, Texas; and the Dallas Central Library

For more information, contact natalie.coffey@theccb.state.tx.us.

Natalie Coffey | Director, Recruitment and Retention
| College Readiness and Success

Metroplex Counselor Conference Bridges the Gap to College and Career

Academic school counselors in Texas are increasingly tasked with creating personal graduation plans and addressing endorsement options. These responsibilities mean they must target and strengthen efforts to prepare all students for high school, college, and career success. To support elementary, middle school, and high school counselors who have these responsibilities, the Education Service Center (ESC) for Region 11 recently partnered with Texas Woman's University, the North Texas Regional P-16 Council, Texas Workforce Commission, Texas Education Agency, Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County and North Central Texas, and Generation TX to host the conference, "Counseling for College and Career Readiness" held on Jan. 15 at ESC 11 in Fort Worth.

Participants attended sessions covering many topics and received tools and resources. Sessions helped them to build their capacity to serve Pre-K through 12 students and focused on developing comprehensive college and career readiness programs. Sessions included:

- Bridging the Skill Gap between High School, College, and Career
- Dual Credit Panel Discussion
- Engaging Elementary Students in College and Career Planning
- Generation TX Resources
- House Bill 5 Updates
- Preparing Middle School Students for High School Success
- Texas Industry Needs & Workforce Resources
- Texas Online College and Career Readiness Resource Center Information

The event also included a panel discussion, Keys to College and Career Readiness, which brought together Workforce Solutions of Tarrant County; Workforce Solutions of North Central Texas; and Dr. Barbara Lerner of Texas Woman's University, the Regional College Readiness Special Advisor for the Metroplex region.

The conference drew over 150 attendees, including counselors, administrators, and teachers from approximately 45 different school districts and charters, and is one of many events across the state that have been supported by the [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's College Readiness Special Advisors](#). Additional local, regional, and statewide conferences and counselor workshops are listed and regularly updated at the [Texas College and Career Readiness Network Events](#) web page.

Matt Lashlee | Program Director, Success Initiatives
| College Readiness and Success
Susan Patterson | Consultant, CTE/College & Career Readiness
| Educational Service Center, Region 11
Barbara Lerner | Associate Provost, Undergraduate Studies and Academic
Partnerships | Texas Woman's University

Accelerate TX Grant: Request for Applications (RFA)

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is issuing a Request for Applications (RFA) from Texas public institutions of higher education for the *Accelerate Texas: Scaling and Sustaining Success in Integrated Basic Skills and Workforce Training Programs* grant. This integrated career pathways grant supports the participation and success of Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) students transitioning to workforce training programs at community and technical colleges.

The purpose of this Accelerate TX program is to increase the participation and success of lower-skilled students and English language learners into and through postsecondary education workforce training programs that lead to credentials of value in regional labor markets.

The intent-to-apply deadline was Jan. 26 but was not required to apply for the grant. The inquiry deadline is Feb. 26, and applications are due on Mar. 5. The RFA may be found on the THECB's [website](#).

NOTE: In the coming month, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), Office of Adult Education and Literacy (AEL), anticipates issuing an Accelerate TX Request for Applications (RFA). Although the THECB partners with many AEL programs to implement effective Accelerate TX programs at two-year, public institutions of higher education across the state under the THECB program, the TWC's RFA may have different applicant and student participant eligibility requirements, as well as different reporting requirements, than that of the Accelerate TX program currently administered at the THECB. For more information about the TWC project, please visit the [AEL site](#) at TWC.

Linda Muñoz | Director, Adult Education | College Readiness and Success
Suzanne Morales-Vale | Director, Developmental and Adult Education
| College Readiness and Success



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