



Academic Planning and Policy E-NEWS

Planning & Accountability | P-16 Initiatives | Workforce, Academic Affairs & Research
Office of Academic Planning and Policy | David W. Gardner, Deputy Commissioner

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The Coordinating Board is guided by the Texas higher education plan, *Closing the Gaps by 2015*, to close the educational gaps in student participation, student success, institutional excellence, and research.

Coordinating Board Approves New Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Assessment

The major policy discussion during the April 25 quarterly meeting of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) focused on the new Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessment. THECB staff and assessment experts gave a presentation outlining the details of the new TSI assessment and the collaborative process that occurred in its development. The assessment is the first of its kind in the country. It will include a diagnostic component to identify specific student weaknesses, align to national Adult Basic Education (ABE) standards to diagnose accurate placement, and align to the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). The THECB approved staff recommendations for the new assessment related to the statewide college readiness cut-score (with a phase-in implementation process) and to the developmental education placement cut-score (without a phase-in process) beginning with the first class day of the 2013 academic year. The agenda item description is accessible [here](#) and the presentation can be found [here](#). Archived video of all quarterly meetings of the THECB can be found [here](#).

In 2011, the 82nd Texas Legislature approved legislation that provided the THECB with the authority to prescribe a single standard for the TSI assessment and required the assessment to include a diagnostic component in order to diagnose student weaknesses and target interventions. In April 2012, the THECB awarded The College Board a no-cost contract to develop a new TSI assessment that will replace the current four assessments (Accuplacer, ASSET, Compass, and THEA) to measure college and career readiness beginning with the first class day of the fall 2013 academic year.

Resource: Click on the following link for the latest on dual credit eligibility policies:
<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/dualcredit>.

Lizette Montiel | Assistant Director, State Relations | Office of External Relations

UPCOMING THECB MEETINGS

Next Quarterly Board Meeting:
Thursday, July 25, 2013
8:30am

See all upcoming meetings:
[THECB Events](#)

LINKS TO USEFUL SITES

[2013 Almanac](#)

[Workforce, Academic Affairs and
Research Division](#)

[P-16 Initiatives Division](#)

[Finance and Resource Planning](#)

[Texas Higher Education
Accountability System](#)

[Texas Higher Education Data](#)

[THECB Recommendations
83rd Legislature](#)

[College for All Texans Website](#)

[Employment Opportunities at the
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Existing Program Performance Review System (EPPR) Available Online

The Existing Program Performance Review (EPPR) System is available online to assist institutions with strategic planning (<http://reports.thecb.state.tx.us/approot/epr/epr.htm>). The new interactive EPPR System includes programmatic-level performance data of students enrolled in Career Technical Certificates and Applied Associate, Academic Associate, Bachelor of Applied Technology, and Baccalaureate programs. The data will give institutional officials the ability to note areas of performance excellence and those in need of additional support.

The EPPR System allows institutions to access data for similar programs offered at peer-group and other Texas institutions to compare the performance of their programs with others. The data available include program inputs, such as enrollment and average class size; program throughputs, such as persistence at various points within a program; and program outputs, such as completion/graduation rate, time-to-award, total semester credit hours attempted, and transfer rates. Instructions and measure definitions are provided in the User Guide. Additional information about the EPPR System can be found at <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/existingprogramreview>.

Lucy Heston | Assistant Director | Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research

Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM) Redesigned to Enhance Search and Review Process

The Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM) is an online inventory of credit and continuing education courses available statewide for use in workforce programs at community, state, and technical colleges. The purpose of the WECM is to provide Texas colleges increased assistance and flexibility in responding to employer needs and to enhance the portability of credits and credentials for students. The courses are periodically reviewed for quality and consistency by instructional specialists at annual course review workshops under the guidance of the WECM Leadership Committee, which consists of community and technical college administrators who are leaders in the field of workforce education.

The WECM website (<http://reports.thecb.state.tx.us/approot/wecm/pubreports.htm>) has been redesigned to enhance the search and review process of these courses. Reports detailing the course revisions made at the annual course review workshops are easier to view and download. Comments about the changes may be submitted by college faculty through the WECM Comments link; these comments are reviewed by the WECM Leadership Committee and responses are usually sent within seven days. Questions about the WECM website should be directed to Duane Hiller at Duane.Hiller@thecb.state.tx.us.

Duane Hiller | Program Director | Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research

2013 Texas Public Higher Education Almanac Released

On April 12, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) released the third edition of the *Texas Public Higher Education Almanac*. The most significant change in the 2013 Almanac is the inclusion of the "8th Grade Cohort" data. Partnering with the Texas Education Agency, the THECB is able to track students who were enrolled in a Texas high school in 8th grade through six years of postsecondary education. Current data show that only 19 of every 100 Texas 8th graders completed a degree or workforce certificate. The data are also disaggregated by gender and economic status. The 2013 Almanac is a collaborative effort between the THECB and various private philanthropy groups working to improve higher education in Texas. The THECB acknowledges the College for All Texans Foundation, Houston Endowment, Inc., and Lumina Foundation for Education for providing financial support to produce the 2013 Almanac.

To view and download the 2013 Almanac, please visit: www.thecb.state.tx.us/Almanac.

Dominic Chavez | Senior Director | Office of External Relations

Coordinating Board Welcomes New Program Director for Distance Learning

Judith Sebesta serves as Program Director for Distance Learning in the Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research division at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). Before she joined THECB staff this year, Dr. Sebesta enjoyed a 15-year career as an administrator and professor at a variety of institutions, including the University of Missouri, Lamar University, the University of Evansville, and the University of Arizona, where she was awarded the College of Fine Arts Outstanding Faculty Member of the Year in 2004. Dr. Sebesta is the co-author of the first fully online text in the field of theatre, published recently by Pearson Education, and co-editor of the anthology *Women in American Musical Theatre* (McFarland Press). She is an immediate past editor of *Theatre Journal* and served as Vice President for Electronic Technology for the Association for Theatre in Higher Education. Dr. Sebesta earned an M.S. in Theatre from Florida State University and a Ph.D. in Theatre History & Criticism from The University of Texas at Austin.

Stacey Silverman | Interim Assistant Commissioner for Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research

Adult and Developmental Education Grantee Meeting to be Held June 3-5

The Division of P-16 Initiatives will host the Adult and Developmental Education Grantee Meeting on June 3-5, 2013, at the DoubleTree Hotel in Austin. The primary objective of the meeting is to provide a venue for cutting edge practitioners to connect with one another, hear from national experts on best and promising practices, collectively problem-solve common challenges, and determine new strategies together. The meeting is intended to equip grantee institutions with the knowledge, strategies, and connections that will allow them to further strengthen developmental and adult education programs in Texas, leading to greater college access, credential attainment, and family-sustaining employment outcomes for under-prepared learners. Some of the meeting topics include scaling innovation, accelerating skills development for under-prepared adults, engaging English Language Learners, and developing program models for students who work.

For further details about the meeting, please contact Kendra Horn at Kendra.Horn@theccb.state.tx.us.

Terri Daniels | Assistant Director, Developmental Education | P-16 Initiatives

Five Additional Institutions Join Accelerate TEXAS Program

Accelerate TEXAS, an initiative of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in partnership with Jobs for the Future, integrates basic skills instruction with career and technical education to help adult students acquire skills and certificates in high-demand occupations along a career pathway leading to jobs that provide family-sustaining wages. While these programs provide full or partial support for tuition and fees for adult students to co-enroll in GED and/or contextualized basic skills support and a workforce training program at a college, they also provide comprehensive support which includes case management advising (including career, financial, and academic advising), referrals to community services when necessary, and transportation and/or childcare support through their local workforce development board.

Under the Accelerate TEXAS program, 14 public college districts have already been implementing for several years integrated programs in occupations leading to careers in allied health, manufacturing, and logistics/transportation. Each college has a program sustainability plan to ensure that effective elements of their integrated instructional model are maintained at the institution once grant funds expire. Thus far, these colleges have served a total of 3,550 adult education students, and of that number 2,200 have earned a workforce training certificate while enrolled in contextualized basic skills instructional support or contextualized GED support courses. Five additional institutions joined the Accelerate TEXAS program in February 2013— College of the Mainland and those that make up the Vocational Advancement for South Texas (VAST) consortium led by Alamo College: Coastal Bend College, Victoria College, Southwest Texas Junior College, and Laredo Community College. For more information about the program, including a list of all 19 institutions participating, please visit <http://www.jff.org/projects/current/education/accelerate-texas/1471>.

Linda Muñoz | Senior Program Director, Developmental & Adult Education | P-16 Initiatives

ApplyTexas Advisory Committee Will Seek Nominations in June

ApplyTexas is a centralized means for potential students from Texas and outside of Texas to apply to Texas higher education institutions. The collaborative effort is overseen by the ApplyTexas Advisory Committee, which consists of representatives from public two-year, public four-year, and private institutions. The committee meets at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board approximately three times a year between September and May. The committee maintains the online application, making changes as needed to keep the application current. The committee also focuses on additional initiatives to strengthen student participation and access to higher education.

At the end of the academic year, the committee will have 12 vacancies—five vacancies from public universities and seven vacancies from two-year institutions. Nomination requests will be sent to institutional presidents in June. Institutions are encouraged to participate in this important project. The committee recommended changing the essay prompts for the application in fall 2014. For many years, the ApplyTexas Application essays have remained unchanged. Changes to the existing essays were deemed necessary to allow member universities to gauge and determine applicant writing proficiency.

If you have suggestions for improving the ApplyTexas Application or any comments/questions, please email ApplyTexasApplication@theccb.state.tx.us.

Jose Rios | Assistant Director, Community and Technical Colleges | Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research

Online Training for Public Higher Education Governing Board Members Available

This week, the Coordinating Board launched an online training for public higher education governing board members who are unable to attend in person the training required for newly appointed regents and elected trustees under Texas Education Code, Section 61.084, Training for Members of Governing Boards. The online training will be offered year-round and updated annually. The Coordinating Board will continue to host the annual Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference each fall which includes the state-required regent/trustee training, State of Texas Higher Education Luncheon and Star Awards Ceremony, and other informative and engaging sessions. This year's conference dates and information will be forthcoming. Information about the online training is available at: www.theccb.state.tx.us/Governing_Board_Training.

Sarah Rondinelli | Program Specialist | Development Office

Coordinating Board Staff Member Recognized as TRiO Achiever

The Texas Association of Student Special Services Program (TASSSP) recognized Jose Rios as a TRiO Achiever at this year's TASSSP 40th Annual State Conference. TASSSP is the representative body for TRiO professionals from colleges, universities, and agencies that host federally-funded TRiO educational opportunity programs in the state of Texas. With an annual budget of \$62 million, Texas TRiO programs annually serve approximately 55,398 students ranging from 6th-grade to post-baccalaureate. TRiO Achievers are TRiO alumni who have attained a position of high stature within their profession or who have received recognition for outstanding academic achievement. Each recipient has made significant civic, community, or professional contributions. Rios is Assistant Director of Community and Technical Colleges in the Division of Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research at the THECB. He was previously a college access advisor for TRiO programs for nine years prior to joining THECB's P-16 Outreach Division. His TRiO experiences have given him a valuable perspective on higher educational policy. While working in the P-16 Outreach Division, Rios assisted in the coordination of a statewide network of college access centers on high school campuses (Go Centers), development and implementation of the Work-Study Mentorship Program, and oversight of regional field specialists implementing the state's regional outreach strategic plan. In his current position, Rios serves in a leadership role in making current FAFSA and college application (ApplyTexas) data available to high school counselors across the state in a systemic manner.

Stacey Silverman | Interim Assistant Commissioner for Workforce, Academic Affairs and Research

Communities Unite to Support College Enrollment on GenTX Day (Friday, May 3)

On **Friday, May 3**, Generation Texas will see its third GenTX Day come to life as students, educators, businesses, and nonprofits in local communities across the state wear college t-shirts and hold rallies in a unified show of support to promote a college-going and career-ready culture in their hometowns. This year, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), creators of the Generation Texas movement, is encouraging GenTX Day enthusiasts to take at least one of three steps towards college on GenTX Day—fill out a college application, take a college tour, and/or be a college mentor.

THECB has expanded the GenTX Day campaign with a new theme for this year, *Take a Step on GenTX Day*. The new theme is designed to motivate school and community groups to celebrate the day with college enrollment activities that help close educational gaps in their community. GenTX Day activities planned for this year include several new contests and a line-up of key community GenTX Day partners across the state. Examples of GenTX day activities around the state include:

- **Amarillo:** Texas Panhandle P-16 Council and West Texas A&M University are collaborating with Amarillo College and Clarendon College to hold a college application drive in the region.
- **El Paso:** El Paso Collaborative for Academic Excellence and The University of Texas at El Paso are collaborating with El Paso Community College to hold college application drives at local high schools.
- **Laredo:** Council for Educational Excellence and Texas A&M International University are partnering with Laredo Community College to hold college application drives at local high schools.
- **Work-Study Mentorship Program:** More than 700 work-study mentors in the THECB Work-Study Mentorship Program have been trained to serve as college mentors on GenTX Day at campuses, potentially reaching some 160,000 high school and college students.
- **San Marcos:** Seeking Opportunities Achieving Results (SOAR) P-16 Council and Texas State University-San Marcos will hold college signings at high schools throughout Central Texas.

A full list of activities in each region of the state can be found at www.gentx.org. The THECB also announced a series of contests to be held as part of GenTX day activities designed to encourage students, families, and organizations to unite and support college enrollment in their communities.

• Your GenTX Success Story

Has Generation Texas helped guide you to college or inspired you to be more active in your community to create a college-going culture? Submit your story of how GenTX has impacted your life. The deadline to submit your entry is 5 p.m. (CST) on Tuesday, April 30. This contest is open to students in grades 6-12, college students, organizations, and select individuals. Two grand prize winners will receive an iPad mini with two runner-ups also receiving prizes. Go to <http://is.gd/GenTXSuccessStory2013> to submit your entry. Some restrictions apply.

• The Best College Application Drive

On GenTX Day, there will be many schools, colleges, universities, and nonprofit/community organizations holding college application drives. THECB will award the group that collects the most college applications with a College Tour Package—an expense-paid trip to take students on a college tour during 2013. The deadline to submit your entry is 5 p.m. (CST) on Friday, May 10. Go to <http://is.gd/GenTXCollegeAppDrive> to register your college drive effort. Some restrictions apply.

• Most Active College Tours

THECB is encouraging groups around the state to take their students to visit a college campus on GenTX Day. THECB is holding a contest for the most active college tour. Ten college tours will be selected to receive a College Tour Package—an expense-paid trip to take students on a college tour on GenTX Day on May 3. Applications are due by 5 p.m. (CST) on Friday, April 26. Go to <http://is.gd/GenTXtours> to register your college tour plans. Some restrictions apply.