

# Academic Planning and Policy E-News

Academic Quality and Workforce | College Readiness and Success  
Innovation and Policy Development | Strategic Planning and Funding



Texas Higher Education  
Coordinating Board

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

Volume 8, Number 9, November 2016

## Regional 60x30TX Workshop Set for El Centro College Dec. 1 in Dallas

In partnership with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), El Centro College and the Dallas County Community College District will co-host the eighth 60x30TX regional workshop on Dec. 1 to discuss the new Texas higher education plan and share suggested strategies for achieving the state's 60x30TX educational goals and targets within the Metroplex Higher Education Region. Invited participants include leaders from the region's public school systems, community colleges and four-year universities, business and industry, and government and nonprofit education organizations.

José Adames, President of El Centro College, will open the workshop, and Higher Education Commissioner Raymund Paredes will provide information and an overview on 60x30TX. Joe May, Chancellor of the Dallas County Community College District, will provide a keynote address directly after a networking luncheon. The workshop also will include a panel discussion of local leaders who will share their advice and ideas related to the 60x30TX goals before all participants engage in discussion regarding how stakeholders can best work together to achieve the goals of the new higher education plan.

With support from Lumina Foundation and the College for All Texans Foundation, the THECB is sponsoring the regional workshops. Participation is free of charge. For additional information, visit <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/60x30TX.regional.workshops>.

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

## Texas Awarded \$500,000 Grant from Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation to Develop Emergency Aid Network

The College for All Texans Foundation, a nonprofit corporation established in 2001 to support the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), has been awarded a two-year grant of \$498,410 from the Bill and Melinda

## Calendar

### Next Board Meeting

January 26, 2017  
8:30 a.m.

[2016 Metroplex Regional  
60x30TX Workshop in Dallas](#)

Dec. 1, 10:00 a.m.

[Education Research Center  
Advisory Board Meeting](#)

Dec. 8, 1:00 p.m.

Nursing Innovation Grant  
Program Grantees' Meeting

Dec. 9, 10:00 a.m.

[Committee on Affordability,  
Accountability and Planning  
\(CAAP\)](#)

Dec. 14, 9:00 a.m.

[Committee on Academic and  
Workforce Success \(CAWS\)](#)

Dec. 14, 10:00 a.m. or upon  
adjournment of the CAAP  
Board Meeting

**60x30TX  
in the News**

Gates Foundation to work with institutions of higher education to identify and implement strategies and practices that help promote policies and practices for effective emergency aid and financial literacy programs in Texas. To achieve the goals of the project, the THECB will coordinate, staff, and nurture the development of an Emergency Aid Network (EA Net) through which approaches and model practices can be circulated to stakeholders throughout Texas.



As part of the project, the THECB will survey Texas public and private higher education institutions to secure a deeper understanding of emergency aid practices in the state, leveraging national research on emergency aid conducted by the Student Affairs Professionals in Higher Education (NASPA). Following this initial landscape analysis, the THECB will invite eight to ten higher education institutions with emergency aid programs to share information about solutions that have the potential to increase institutions' graduation and retention goals.

EA Net members also will engage with the THECB's Financial Aid Advisory Committee and newly formed Financial Literacy Advisory Committee to 1) identify rules that hinder or help to accelerate the impact of emergency aid on student retention and completion goals, and 2) explore how financial literacy counseling (and what types) can best support students accessing emergency aid. EA Net members will disseminate their shared learning through meetings, presentations to THECB advisory committees, a statewide conference, and a comprehensive report that will include policy recommendations.

Additional information about the project will be forthcoming.

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

## New Rules Approved for New Degree Program Planning Notifications

At the October 2016 meeting, the board members of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Coordinating Board) approved modifications to [Chapter 5, Subchapter B, Section 5.21; 5.23; 5.24; 5.25](#) of agency rules regarding planning notifications. A planning notification is a letter submitted by a public institution of higher education to inform the Coordinating Board that the institution has begun planning for a new degree program in a Classification of Instructional Program (CIP) area in which the institution does not already have an approved program.

An institution must submit a planning notification prior to initiating, planning for, or submitting a proposal to offer a new program that requires approval by the board at a quarterly meeting. New programs requiring board member approval are doctoral programs in any discipline; engineering programs at

[Austin American-Statesman](#)

[Corridor News \(San Marcos\)](#)

[Dallas News](#)

[Jacksonville Progress](#)

[Longview News-Journal](#)

[Nacogdoches ISD](#)

[TexVet.org](#)

[The Coastal Bend Chronicle](#)

[The Daily Texan](#)

[Tyler Morning Telegraph](#)

[UHV \(University of Houston - Victoria newswire\)](#)

## APP Links

[Academic Quality and Workforce](#)

[College Readiness and Success](#)

[Compare College TX](#)

[Higher Education Strategic Plan](#)

[Higher Education Almanac](#)

[Innovation and Policy Development](#)

[Texas Higher Education Accountability System](#)

[Texas Higher Education Data](#)

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

any level, including inter- or multi-disciplinary engineering; and programs with five-year costs exceeding \$2 million.

Planning notification should be provided through the online submission portal as a letter to the Assistant Commissioner of the Academic Quality and Workforce Division. The letter needs to include the title, degree designation, the CIP code of the program, the anticipated date of submission of the proposal, and a description of the program.

An institution is considered by the Coordinating Board to be planning for a new degree program if it takes any action that leads to the preparation of a proposal for a new program, including hiring personnel, including consultants and planning deans; leasing and/or purchasing real estate; building facilities; and/or developing curriculum.

After submitting planning notification, an institution's leadership may be requested to address board members at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Coordinating Board. The institutional representative will describe how the potential program contributes to the efficient and effective diffusion of education throughout the state, while avoiding costly duplication in program offerings, faculties, and physical plants.

Planning notification must be submitted at least one year prior to submitting a proposal to offer the degree, if the proposed program would be a program leading to the award of a "professional degree," as defined by [Texas Education Code 61.306](#). This rule includes Doctor of Medicine (M.D.), Doctor of Osteopathy (D.O.), Doctor of Dental Surgery (D.D.S.), Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (D.V.M.), Juris Doctor (J.D.), and Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.).

**James Goeman | Assistant Director for Graduate and Professional Programs  
| Academic Quality and Workforce**

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## **Board Members Approve 2016 Community College Transfer Report**

The "Texas General Academic Institutions: Increasing Successful Community College Transfer Report" is required by a rider in the appropriations act. This seventh annual report presents information based on a 2016 survey of public universities about current practices and efforts to encourage success among transfer students. The report also compares the performance of community college transfer students and students who were first-time-in-college students at universities. Board members of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) approved the report at its regular quarterly meeting on Oct. 20.

The report examines the success trajectories of a cohort of students who became juniors in fall 2011. This cohort does not include all transfer students. Using a cohort of students who have achieved junior status at the same time provides a more reliable sample for student persistence to graduation. With a sample of similar students over four successive years, some patterns emerge. This year's report also examines a similarly defined cohort of sophomores over five successive years.

The bachelor's degree completion rates and time to degree for community college transfer students continue to lag behind those of native students, who were first-time-in-college students at universities. The completion rate for native juniors was 83 percent, while the completion rate for transfer

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or (512) 427-6434.

juniors was lower at 65 percent. These percentages have remained steady for the past seven years. Completion rates for native sophomores was 73 percent, while the completion rate for transfer sophomores was again lower at 61 percent. Differences in completion among the groups varied, which suggests that the planning and scheduling of transfer may influence timely bachelor degree completion.

Transfer students also take longer to complete their degrees than their university native peers, when measured from their first enrollment at an institution of higher education after graduating from high school. All transfer students in the study enrolled in almost the same number of semester credit hours as their university native peers. "Stopping out" appears to be more common for transfer students than for native students, making continuity in following a degree plan more challenging.

Major barriers to transfer were identified as inaccurate or inadequate advising, lack of financial aid, and limited support for transfer students. There are many articulation agreements in effect among universities and community colleges to provide pathways for transfer students; however, there are also barriers to agreement development and effectiveness. Public universities cited lack of time and personnel to devote to initial development and continued maintenance, specialized nature of degree programs, curricular differences and changes, and course quality at community colleges as barriers to articulation agreements.

Major recommendations of the report include:

- Four-year institutions should readily participate in the development of [Fields of Study](#) (FOS) and accept them.
- Universities and community colleges should connect [Texas Core Curriculum](#) requirements to FOS and, thus, to majors.
- Four-year institutions should align lower-division courses with the [Lower-Division Academic Course Guide Manual](#) (ACGM), including course-level student learning outcomes.
- Community colleges should fully implement ACGM course requirements and adopt FOS.

There is substantial variation in the completion gap between native and transfer students for each individual university. Individual institution information is also included in the report, which will be available Dec. 1 on the THECB's website at [THECB - Reports and Studies](#).

Rebecca Leslie | Program Director | Academic Quality and Workforce

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## 2016 Leadership Conference Features Resources to Address the Student Debt and Marketable Skills Goals of 60x30TX

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's 2016 Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference, "Connecting Higher Education and Workplace Success," brought leading experts together from higher education and the workforce to discuss top strategic issues for governing board members, resources to address student debt, and ways to make what institutions are already teaching students explicit in terms of how those skills fit into the workplace. Held annually, the leadership conference brings

together regents, trustees, chancellors, presidents, and other higher education leaders to discuss critical higher education issues.

The 2016 conference began on Oct. 25 with orientation sessions for new governing board members and other interested education leaders. Conference sessions on Oct. 26 included presentations and discussions of key strategic issues and demands confronting higher education leaders, best practices on advising students and parents on financial aid options and their impacts on students' finances, and best practices in explicating broad study with skillsets that will help students market themselves to employers in any economy. The conference concluded with the Annual State of Higher Education Luncheon and Star Awards Ceremony. The luncheon featured the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's 2016 Star Award finalists and a keynote address by Dr. Raymund Paredes, Commissioner of Higher Education.

A 2016 summary with audio presentations and handouts will be forthcoming at <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/2016LeadershipConference>. The conference was held at the Crowne Plaza in Austin.

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

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## Accelerate TEXAS Week Salutes Efforts to Help Adult Learners Succeed



*Students training in Laredo Community College's Petroleum Technician Accelerate TEXAS Program*

Community and technical college systems across the Lone Star state celebrated [Accelerate TEXAS](#) week from Nov. 6-12. The special week supported the initiative that has helped more than 600 students earn a high school equivalency (HSE) and more than 4,500 basic skills students earn a workforce certificate or college credentials. Campuses hosted various events

that provided information to potential students and recognized outstanding program graduates.

As of June 2016, 28 college systems have enrolled 6,224 students in Accelerate TEXAS programs leading to occupational skills awards (54% percent), Level 1 certificates (25%), or local certificates (16%) offered among 70 careers. Among credentials offered, an estimated 82 percent supported a living wage for a single adult in Texas (\$10.20/hour) with the median wage of those 70 careers at \$12.49/hour. The highest reported median wage for Accelerate TEXAS credentials was in mechanic repair technology at \$23/hour.

Accelerate TEXAS addresses a critical workforce issue: At least 60 percent of Texas jobs will require a career certificate or college degree by 2020, according to the Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce. This initiative is aimed at accelerating the skills of the estimated 44 percent of Texans over age 25 who have never been to college, let alone earned a credential. Of the students who earned a workforce credential through Accelerate TEXAS, nearly one in four continued in higher education after their first awarded credential, and 76 percent were employed or enrolled in college three to six months after program completion.

Collaboration among employers, workforce boards, adult education providers, and community-based organizations is also increasing as the colleges develop and implement integrated pathway programs.

"Partnering with all these groups is crucial to meeting adult learners' diverse needs," said David Gardner, Deputy Commissioner of Academic Planning and Policy at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. "Texas is truly a national leader in bringing together critical stakeholders to help close achievement gaps and build a highly competitive state workforce."

Kelly Carper Polden | Assistant Director, Communications | External Relations

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## Focus on 60x30TX

Each APP newsletter includes a Q&A about *60x30TX* with a staff member at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). This month's Q&A is with Linda Battles, Deputy Commissioner for Agency Operations and Communications/COO.

In this issue, we are focusing on [text from the plan's conclusion](#) (p. 31):

*To compete and remain relevant in the future, Texas students must attain quality postsecondary credentials, and they must complete those credentials and exit their programs with the skills employers need. If students are to graduate, contribute to the state's revenue, and become more engaged citizens, they also must exit their programs with no debt or with manageable debt, relative to their incomes. This plan addresses each of these areas through higher education goals aimed at the continued progress of Texas.*

***The paragraph summarizes the key components of 60x30TX. You worked at the THECB during the majority of the Closing the Gaps era. How do you see 60x30TX in relation to Closing the Gaps?***

*Closing the Gaps by 2015* was the primary reason I came to work at the THECB in September 2000. I strongly believed in the goals and strategies of

the plan, and I was eager to be part of its landmark implementation. At that time, I believed the goals were ambitious, necessary, and attainable, provided the state was committed to avoiding the bleak economic future that then-state demographer Dr. Steve Murdock projected if we did nothing to significantly improve education attainment levels of Texans, particularly among Hispanics. Fortunately, we achieved, or nearly achieved, the goals of the plan and successfully implemented the statewide strategies thanks to the hard work of our institutions, students, education and business leaders, and policymakers. Now, as we embark on the next 15 years, our successes in *Closing the Gaps* have set a strong foundation for achieving the goals of *60x30TX* – a completely student-centered plan that surpasses the aspirations of *Closing the Gaps* and aims to achieve national and international economic competitiveness.

***The staff at the THECB has been incorporating the key components of 60x30TX into their jobs. As the Deputy Commissioner in charge of agency operations and communications, how does 60x30TX inform your daily work?***

Similarly to how the agency focused its daily work on *Closing the Gaps*, we must stay focused on *60x30TX* by consistently using it to drive our policy decisions and recommendations. This focus also helps the plan to be a “living, breathing document.” In terms of the agency’s communications strategy, we have replaced, or have been in the process of replacing, our previous agency logo with the new *60x30TX* logo on our internal and external documents, websites, reports, newsletters, presentations, and press releases. The Commissioner of Higher Education – in his presentations to legislative committees, statewide conferences, and campus visits, and in his meetings with legislators, education officials, and business leaders – focuses his remarks on achieving the goals of *60x30TX*. These efforts, in addition to the regional workshops the agency held across the state this past year, have brought significant awareness and buy-in of the plan among higher and public education leaders and administrators, faculty, business and community leaders, legislators, and the governor.

Specific to the daily operations of the agency, we are recalibrating our business practices and organizational culture to more closely align with the goals of *60x30TX*. Our recently adopted [5-year agency strategic plan](#) focuses on fully implementing the plan by informing stakeholders about *60x30TX*; aligning statewide policy with the goals of the plan; highlighting at least one goal of the plan at every quarterly board meeting and measuring progress toward achieving the goals every five years; expanding workforce solutions and expertise in workforce data; and implementing statewide strategies that are listed in the plan. At our monthly executive officers’ meetings, each division head reports to the Commissioner on the initiatives they are working on to achieve the goals of *60x30TX*, and staff members from across the agency meet weekly – often bringing in external stakeholders and experts – to discuss and strategize about programs and initiatives to achieve the goals of *60x30TX*.

I feel privileged to have worked at the THECB for the 15 years of *Closing the Gaps*, and I look forward to continue working toward achieving the goals of *60x30TX*; the future of our state depends on achieving these critical goals.

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## New Employees in Academic Planning and Policy

**Vanessa Maló** (Senior Program Director - Teacher Quality, Academic Quality and Workforce) – Vanessa was born in Houston and raised in Austin. She holds a bachelor's in education and a master's in education administration (Certified Teacher/Principal), with eight years of work experience at the middle school, high school, and community college levels. Vanessa's most recent work focused on successfully increasing student persistence and retention rates with minimal debt initiatives at Austin Community College.



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