

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

Volume 7, Number 3, March 2015

Long-Range Planning Committee Hears Priorities of Governor and House Committee on Higher Education

Members of the Texas Higher Education Strategic Planning Committee (TxHESPC) learned more about Governor Greg Abbott's priorities for Texas higher education from Erin Hodges, Special Assistant to the Governor, during the 11th meeting of the TxHESPC on March 17.

Hodges included in her remarks a summary of the Governor's specific priorities, as outlined in his [Educating Texans Plan: Higher Education](#). Hodges said that there are multiple initiatives in the Governor's plan, most of which are geared toward improving graduation rates and reducing the cost of higher education. Not in the plan, however, is the Governor's new [University Research Initiative \(URI\)](#), which was created to bring top research talent to Texas public institutions. The URI consists of three parts:

- Eliminating the Texas Emerging Technology Fund (TETF)
- Reallocating 50 percent of the TETF to the Enterprise Fund
- Reallocating 50 percent of the TETF to the Governor's URI (approximately \$50 million)

The committee also heard about some of the priorities of the House Committee on Higher Education from House Committee Clerk Cameron Cocke, who spoke on behalf of Rep. John Zerwas, Chairman of the House Committee on Higher Education. Cocke said the House Committee's priorities involve improving completion rates and providing affordable access to postsecondary education. He included in his remarks enthusiastic support for the current higher education plan *Closing the Gaps by 2015*, particularly with respect to the goals of increasing student participation and success in higher education. According to Cocke, the House Committee is looking at:

- Addressing online courses
- Looking carefully at outcomes-based funding
- Considering Tuition Revenue Bonds
- Putting into statute Governor Abbott's priority for Emerging Technology

In addition to the briefings and Q&As with Hodges and Cocke, the TxHESPC also deliberated on the potential targets for measuring the progress toward the goals of the new 2030 higher education plan.

The next meeting of the TxHESPC is scheduled for April 9, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., and will feature discussions of potential targets and strategies to help achieve the goals of the next Texas higher education strategic plan. Barring technical difficulties, the TxHESPC's meetings are open to the public and are broadcast live on the Coordinating Board's website. The presentations and minutes for all TxHESPC meetings are also available on the [TxHESPC's website](#).

During the deliberations process and prior to adopting the new 2030 higher education strategic plan in July 2015, the Coordinating Board encourages public input via [College Town Hall-Texas](#).

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

Calendar

Next Texas Higher Education Strategic Planning Meeting

April 9, 2015
10 a.m.

Next Board Meeting

April 23, 2015
8:30 a.m.

APP Links

[Higher Ed Data](#)

[Higher Ed Strategic Plan](#)

[Higher Education Almanac](#)

[Accountability System](#)

[College Readiness and Success](#)

[Finance and Resource Planning](#)

[Academic Quality and Workforce](#)

[Compare College TX](#)

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.

High Schools, GenTX Build College-Going Cultures in Texas

On or around May 1, many high schools across Texas will participate in the first statewide [GenTX Decision Day](#). During this event, students will be recognized for their postsecondary plans by the entire student body. The event coincides with the date when most seniors must inform colleges of their plans to enroll and also coincides with National Decision Day, sponsored by the National College Advising Corps (NCAC). Traditionally, decision-day fanfare has been reserved for athletes, but many Texas high schools, with the support of P-16 councils and the College Readiness and Success staff at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), are working to celebrate academic achievement with equal fanfare.



GenTX Decision Day is a culmination of the THECB's year-long student outreach and the college awareness activities and efforts by students, teachers, parents, and community members during the GenTX Week College Application Campaign. During the campaign, seniors are reminded to complete the application process by making a decision about what college to attend, and then on GenTX Decision Day, juniors and younger high school students rally to support seniors, as the underclassmen start to think about their goals for postsecondary education.

All high schools in Texas are invited to participate. The THECB, however, will focus on college application and admissions data from the 40+ high schools that signed up to participate in GenTX week. GenTX events focus on creating a college-going culture in Texas high schools, with an emphasis on first-generation and low-income students, as well as students who otherwise might not apply to college. GenTX Decision Day also encourages community participation and engagement to support the postsecondary education of graduating seniors.

The THECB encourages participants to approach GenTX Decision Day as a school spirit day and to work together to build excitement and awareness about the postsecondary selection and enrollment process. High school students, faculty, staff, and community members will wear college apparel, decorate doors and classrooms using college themes, post signs and pennants in their communities, decorate storefronts, and/or sponsor college trivia contests. In many cases, local businesses and regional P-16 councils will be supporting these activities.

"[Our] council's board of directors credits our gains in creating a college-going culture to our GenTX activities, especially GenTX Day."

Janie Ramirez, South Plains
Closing the Gaps
P-20 Council

Janie Ramirez from the South Plains Closing the Gaps P-20 Council serving Region 17 says, "School districts in Region 17 have learned more about the college-going goals of the state through these activities, and [our] council's Board of Directors credits our gains in creating a college-going culture to our GenTX activities, especially GenTX Day."

Follow [#GenTXDay](#) on Twitter for more information.

Josephine Hamilton | Assistant Director, Student Outreach and Awareness | College Readiness and Success

RFA Open for Grants to Support STEM Students at Community and Technical Colleges

A Request for Applications (RFA) for the Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (T-STEM) Challenge Scholarship Program is currently open. Electronic copies of the RFA and the application are available at <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/TSTEM>.

Eligible Applicants: Texas public community and technical colleges or their districts and systems.

Focus: The T-STEM Challenge Scholarship Program supports the education and training of STEM students at Texas public community and technical colleges. The program provides funding for the development, implementation, and maintenance of scholarships to qualifying STEM students. The program is funded from a grant provided by the Texas Guaranteed Student Loan Corporation (TG) to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. The available funding will be allocated among selected qualifying public community and technical colleges, districts, or systems. Please review the RFA for eligibility requirements and the list of eligible institutions. T-STEM grants will help increase the graduation of students enrolled in STEM and related degree and certificate programs.

Awarded applicants will provide T-STEM merit scholarships to qualifying eligible students in an amount not to exceed \$2,500 annually per student, for a maximum of two years of support. Eligible students must be in good standing with the institution and fulfill all the obligations required by the T-STEM scholarship program as described in the RFA. Scholarships using T-STEM 2015-2016 funding must support scholarships awarded for the 2015-2016 academic year, or for parts of the academic year.

Grant Period: Contract term extends from contract execution through August 31, 2016.

If your institution would like to participate in the T-STEM 2015, please email a notice of intent by **April 15, 2015**, to: TSTEM@theccb.state.tx.us. The deadline for the application is **April 30, 2015**. Applications received after the deadline or without a timely notice of intent will not be eligible for funding.

For more information about the T-STEM Challenge Scholarship Program, please contact Mindy Nobles, Program Director, Academic Quality and Workforce Division, at 512-427-6221 or at Mindy.Nobles@theccb.state.tx.us.

Mindy Nobles | Program Director | Academic Quality and Workforce



Questions? [Contact us](#)

GET UPDATES:



SUBSCRIBER SERVICES:

[Manage Subscriptions](#) | [Unsubscribe All](#) | [Subscriber Help](#) |

This email was sent to ramona.reeves@theccb.state.tx.us using GovDelivery, on behalf of: The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board · 1200 E. Anderson Lane, Austin, TX 78752

powered by
govDELIVERY
get the word out.