Texas improves transfer initiatives to reduce costs, increase student success

July 21, 2014 – Austin, Texas – The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) released its Improving Transfer to Increase Student Success document today that highlights initiatives and ongoing efforts to reduce costs and improve transfer for students enrolled in Texas public colleges and universities. The initiatives allow Texas students to progress in their degree attainment as rapidly as possible, reducing the need to repeat courses or take additional courses to obtain a college degree.

Four of the six transfer efforts are legislatively mandated; institutions are legally required to participate. Other efforts are voluntary and institutions may choose to participate.

“We still have work to do to make the transfer process as smooth and efficient as possible, but these efforts help to foster a streamlined approach that ensures students complete their education and obtain a degree as quickly and seamlessly as possible,” said David Gardner, THECB deputy commissioner for academic planning and policy. “Students who move through the education pipeline as quickly as possible incur less debt, which allows them to enter the workforce with less concern about repaying student loans.”

The number of students moving from a Texas public two-year college to a university continues to increase. Forty percent of all baccalaureate graduates last year took at least 30 semester credit hours from community colleges. According to Gardner, it is imperative that the state’s policies and initiatives help ensure transfer processes are in place that increase student success.

“Unfortunately, some students incurred more debt or took longer to graduate because they did not take advantage of existing programs designed to streamline transfer. For example, in fall 2012, only two percent of all Texas transfer students completed one of the streamlined field of study curriculum options that allow a student to complete and transfer courses that satisfy lower-division requirements. This transfer initiative document is intended to provide students, parents and counselors with an overview of options for greater student success,” Gardner explained.

There are eight field of study curriculum opportunities such as business, communication, computer science, engineering, and nursing. In addition, the faculty-led Texas Tuning project aligned 12 disciplines by focusing on the knowledge, skills and abilities students need to achieve at different levels along the educational pipeline prior to graduation. Texas Tuning efforts are helping to make higher education outcomes more transparent to students, parents, employers, and other stakeholders.

The transfer initiatives document was disseminated to all Texas public colleges and universities as well as to key stakeholders across the state. It will be available online at www.thecb.state.tx.us.

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**THECB Mission Statement**
The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s mission is to work with the legislature, governor, governing boards, higher education institutions, and other entities to help Texas meet the goals of the state’s higher education plan, Closing the Gaps by 2015, and thereby provide the people of Texas the widest access to higher education of the highest quality in the most efficient manner.

THECB