# Beyond Closing the Gaps by 2015

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

# Higher Education Strategic Planning Committee

- Will provide THECB with advice and recommendations on the development of the next long-term strategic plan for Texas higher education
- Up to 24 members
  - Former members of boards of regents and trustees
  - Former presidents and chancellors of institutions of higher education
  - K-12 education leaders
  - Business leaders
- Nominations invited Dec 9, 2013; due Jan 10, 2014
- First meeting late Feb 2014; then on a monthly basis, as required by workload and tasks

# Recommendations from Participants of the 2013 Texas Higher Education Leadership Conference

(November 21–22, 2013)

# Developing Consensus on the Goals & Securing Feedback on the Goals and Targets

- Keep stakeholders informed
  - Hold stakeholder meetings
  - Distribute monthly newsletter
  - Organize focus groups to solicit input
  - Create a structured avenue for feedback
- Use common definitions and language throughout the plan
- Reach out to parents as well as to students
- Include a broad and diverse representation of stakeholders in the planning process

# Defining the Partnership between the State and its Higher Education Institutions

- Define stakeholders
- Secure staff and faculty buy-in to keep on track
- Communicate with Legislative committees
- Secure institutional and public feedback, then move toward advancing the plan

## Changes to the Potential Timeline

- Think in terms of 5-year increments that build up to 15 years
- Schedule stakeholder meetings when it is more convenient – fall is a bad time
- Do not use the name "Beyond Closing the Gaps"
- Provide governing board members the opportunity to offer feedback at the annual conference
- Initiate a campaign similar to the "Go Campaign" at the beginning of the plan

## **WAVE Diagram Discussions**

#### WORKFORCE/VALUE

- Relevance criteria
  - What criteria make a field relevant? Will some fields be deemed irrelevant? What does this mean for fine arts and liberal arts?
- Rephrase "improve grad rates in relevant fields" to "improve grad rates in fields relevant to their studies."
- Aligning workforce with education needs do their majors lead to gainful employment?

### **WAVE Diagram Discussions**

#### **ALIGNMENT**

- Transfer of credits is the most important aspect of alignment
- Require universities to use the common course numbering system and greatly improve transfer
- Improve the process of reverse transfer and inform students
- Use statewide articulation agreements
- Utilize counseling/advising

## **WAVE Diagram Discussions**

#### **EXCELLENCE**

- Ask faculty how best to define excellence in their programs
- Measure excellence by reviewing the percentage of new programs developed in the last 5 years
- Consider that program approval process may hinder entrepreneurial and innovative programs
  - Students may be working in fields that currently do not exist, but programs not approved because not traditional
- Strengthen partnerships/relationships with institutions and accrediting bodies
  - Accrediting bodies can be an obstacle to new and innovative programs

## Discussion and Questions