

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

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First Regional 60x30TX Workshop Held at UT-Arlington

In partnership with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), The University of Texas at Arlington held the first 60x30TX regional workshop, as more than 200 North Texas leaders gathered to discuss ideas on how to meet the targets of the state's 60x30TX educational goals. The conference included area public school systems, community colleges and four-year universities, business and industry, government and nonprofit education organizations, and civic leaders working to improve education in North Texas. Commissioner Paredes opened the program with an overview of the 60x30TX plan, and Deputy Commissioner David Gardner participated in the education and workforce panel.

The THECB, with support from Lumina Foundation and the College for All Texans Foundation, is sponsoring the regional workshops. The objectives are to: 1) review the status of regional/local progress toward addressing higher education challenges, which include improving collaboration and alignment between public schools and higher education, as well as improving college readiness; 2) develop an action plan to improve students' completion of a postsecondary certificate or degree; and 3) create a seamless pipeline among public education, higher education, and the workforce.

Staff members at the THECB are in the process of planning at least six more regional workshops across the state. The next workshop, for the Upper East and Southeast Higher Education Regions, will take place May 31 at Stephen F. Austin State University. The following regional workshops will take place in June and July:

- [June 16, 2016 – San Antonio](#)
- [July 26, 2016 – Houston](#)
- [August 4, 2016 – El Paso](#)
- [September 15, 2016 – Harlingen](#)
- [October 5, 2016 – Lubbock](#)

For registration and additional information, please see <http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/60x30TX.regional.workshops>.

Kelly Carper Polden | Assistant Director of Communications | External Relations

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

Calendar

Next Board Meeting

July 21, 2016

Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) Advisory Committee Meeting

May 2, 2016

Apply Texas Advisory Committee

May 4, 2016

Music Field of Study Advisory Committee

May 18, 2016

60x30TX Nacogdoches Regional Workshop

May 31, 2016

60x30TX in the News

[Forth Worth Star-Telegram](#)

[Odessa American Online](#)

[Rio Grande Guardian](#)

[Texas Education Agency News](#)

[Texas Tribune - TribTalk](#)

Governor Appoints New Board Members to the THECB

Governor Abbott recently appointed Stuart W. Stedman of Houston, Arcilia C. Acosta of Dallas, and Ricky A. Raven of Sugar Land to serve as board members for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). The governor also designated Stedman vice chair of the board.

Appointed to a three-year term, Stedman is the president of Stedman West Interests, Inc., a family investment office. He received a B.A., J.D., and M.B.A. from The University of Texas at Austin. Stedman, who serves on the advisory board of the Caesar Kleberg Wildlife Research Institute, has been involved in wildlife research and conservation for many years. He has supported and designed research projects focused on the white-tailed deer and has written numerous articles on their management. He received the Texas Outdoorsman of the Year award in 2009, the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) Conservation Committee award in 2012, and the Harvey Weill Sportsman Conservationist of the Year award in 2014. He is also past committee chair for Texas Parks & Wildlife's Operation Game Thief.



Arcilia Acosta is president and CEO of CARCON Industries and Construction and is founder and CEO of STL Engineers, a geotechnical engineering and construction materials testing firm. She currently serves on the board of directors for Energy Future Holdings Corporation, parent company of TXU Energy, Oncor Services, and Luminant Power, and she is a board director for Legacy Texas Financial Group, a bank holding company. She is a board member of the Dallas Citizens Council and former chair for the Texas Association of Mexican American Chambers of Commerce. Acosta received a Bachelor's in Business Administration from Texas Tech University and board director certification from Southern Methodist University Southwest School of Banking. She is also a graduate of the Harvard University Business School Corporate Governance Program.

Ricky A. Raven is partner at Reed Smith, an international global law firm. He is a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates, State Commission on Judicial Conduct, Texas Association of Defense Counsel, State Bar of Texas International Association of Defense Counsel, United States Supreme Court Bar, Houston Bar Association, New York State Bar Association, and the Arkansas Bar Association. He sits on the boards of the Houston Community College Foundation, University of Houston Alumni Association, and the Yellowstone Academy. Additionally, he is a fellow of the Texas Bar Foundation and the Houston Bar Foundation and a member of the University of Houston Foundation Board of Trustees. Raven received a B.S. and J.D. from the University of Houston.



Other currently serving board members are Chair Bobby Jenkins Jr., recently reappointed S. Javiad Anwar, Fred Farias III, John Steen Jr., Janelle Shepard, David Teuscher, and Student Representative Christina Delgado.

[The Dallas-Morning News](#)

[The Katy News](#)

[The Shorthorn - UT-Arlington](#)

APP Resources

[Accountability System](#)

[Academic Quality and Workforce](#)

[College Readiness and Success](#)

[Compare College TX](#)

[Higher Education Almanac](#)

[Higher Education Data](#)

[Higher Education Strategic Plan](#)

[Overview of 60x30TX](#)

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@thehb.state.tx.us or (512) 427-6434.

More information about new and current board members is available on the [THECB - Board Members web page](#).

Marketable Skills Conference Draws High Attendance and Engagement

On April 12-13, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) hosted the Marketable Skills Conference at the AT&T Conference Center in Austin to help institutions achieve the third goal of the [60x30TX](#) strategic plan: *By 2030, all graduates from Texas public institutions of higher education will have completed programs with identified marketable skills.* The conference was supported through a partnership of the THECB, the Texas Workforce Commission, The University of Texas at Austin, and the College for All Texans Foundation. A special thanks to our sponsors: [Texas Business Leadership Council](#), [My Smart Network](#), the [Manufacturing Skills Standards Council](#), and [Pearson Education](#).

The THECB encouraged institutions to send teams drawn from the following staff (registration counts provided): Provosts (15), Deans (79), Career Services Administrators (53), Student Services Administrators (38), Chief Academic/Instructional Officers (28), and Faculty Senate Presidents (9). Registration was also extended to boards of regents and to trusted industry partners invited by institutions. Participation was outstanding with nearly 380 registrants, and a 93 percent attendance rate. Two- and four-year colleges and universities were represented equally at the conference, each making up about half of the registrants.

During 12 breakout sessions, higher education institutions shared ideas, policies, and practices on how to achieve the marketable skills goal of [60x30TX](#). One intention of the conference was to help participants connect the marketable skills goal to existing resources. Attendees heard from several national keynote speakers and two esteemed panels. Day one began with a keynote from [Erica Groshen](#), the Commissioner of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, who shared occupation and skills data from her agency. She also reminded attendees that the Occupation Information Network ([O*NET](#)) is one of several national resources that can contribute to implementing the Marketable Skills Goal. O*NET is the nation's repository for the knowledge, skills, and abilities performed in occupations.



Day one ended with [Eluned Jones](#), President of the Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (AGCAS) in the United Kingdom (UK), and the Director of Student Employability at the University of Birmingham. Dr. Jones shared how the UK went through a similar process to implementing the marketable skills goal some years ago. The efforts in the UK focused on contextualizing employability.

Jones said, "Contextualized Employability is about devising and delivering employability within the context of a student's academic program. This approach helps address tensions that can exist between employability and the primacy of a university's teaching and research mission. It also produces a more synergistic relationship with the academy."

[Brandon Busteed](#) from Gallup gave the closing keynote and reminded participants that "we are what we measure." His main point was about how institutions are valued and rated, and that current methods for assessing this

(e.g., the U.S. News & World Report rankings and the like) are insufficient for determining workplace and career success. He shared data from recent Gallup polls demonstrating that “if graduates strongly agree that they were ‘emotionally supported’ during college, the odds that they are engaged in their work and thriving in their overall well-being double.” He also shared that “graduates who had ‘experiential and deep learning’ have a higher likelihood of being engaged in their work (59% vs. 38%), and more are thriving (14% vs. 10%).” Engagement at work is vital for employer success because of its benefits. Businesses in the top-quartile claim lower absenteeism, lower turnover, fewer safety incidents, fewer product defects, higher customer satisfaction, higher productivity, and higher profitability.

A panel of experts was convened on each day of the conference. The panel on the first day was themed, “The Value of Liberal Arts and Related Marketable Skills,” led by [Debra Humphreys](#), Senior Vice President for Academic Planning and Public Engagement for the Association of American Colleges and Universities. The panel discussed the importance of emphasizing academic rigor and marketable skills in programs. Panelists echoed earlier comments by the THECB’s Deputy Commissioner of Academic Planning and Policy, David Gardner, that the marketable skills goal is not intended to displace the college and university experience with vocational training. The panel discussed how the major is no longer a driving indicator for hiring in many companies, including technology companies like Google. Employers are looking for achievement and impact when they review student or recent-graduate candidates. Also, panelists described the relationship between career services and academic programs as vital. In their opinion, achieving the marketable skills goal is highly contingent on a dialogue between career service staff and faculty.

The panel on the second day, “How Institutions Can Work with Industry,” was led by [Andres Alcantar](#), Commissioner Representing the Public for the Texas Workforce Commission. This panel reviewed the positive impacts of collaboration between higher education and employers and the need for this cooperation to fill the practical (and perceived) gaps between the higher education experience and the expectations of employers. In addition to marketable skills, such as literacy and numeracy, the employers on the panel saw a need to better develop graduates’ overall professionalism in social aptitude and professional communication. They discussed the need to enhance graduates’ cognitive readiness, or their ability to apply knowledge, skills, and abilities to varied, complex, or unpredictable work settings. The panel also discussed how students’ majors do not dictate their professional trajectory. For example, students who majored in humanities and art are often welcome additions to the technology industry because they bring a fresh perspective to problem solving. In addition, panelists discussed that employers must better articulate their needs to improve alignment between the required professional skills they are seeking and the skills listed in job postings.

All presentations and related materials are posted online at http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/msc/meeting_materials.

Ginger Gossman | Senior Director | Innovation and Policy Development

Decision Day Approaches for GenTX Students

On May 6, many high schools across Texas will celebrate GenTX Decision Day. 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 may not apply to college. GenTX Decision Day encourages community participation and engagement to support the postsecondary education of graduating seniors. During this event, all students are recognized for their postsecondary plans by the entire student body.

GenTX Decision Day coincides with the date when most seniors must inform colleges of their plans to enroll. The event also coincides with the 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, in partnership with the College Readiness and Success staff at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and others, are working to celebrate academic achievement with equal excitement.

GenTX Decision Day is the culmination of the THECB's yearlong, student outreach and college awareness activities and is the result of 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. Juniors and younger high school students rally to support seniors on GenTX Day as the underclassmen start to think about their own goals for postsecondary education.

All high schools in Texas are invited to participate; however, the THECB will focus only on college applications and admissions data from participating GenTX high schools. GenTX Decision Day in 2015 achieved the following:

- 29,913 college admission applications submitted from 10,000+ seniors
- 25,000 K-12 students involved in college and career readiness activities
- 33,159 FaceBook impressions
- 8,767 GenTX Twitter impressions

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

Natalie Coffey | Senior Director of Recruitment and Retention | College Readiness and Success

Applications for Autism Grant Program Accepted Through May 20

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) will provide funding support for existing autism research centers located at Texas public institutions of higher education through the newly established Autism Grant Program (AGP), as directed by the 84th Texas Legislature. The AGP will offer three categories of funding for grants to support parent-directed treatment; board-certified behavior analyst training; and research, development, and evaluation of innovative autism treatment models.

Texas public higher education institutions that operated an autism research center in 2015 may submit only one application per autism research center, but they are eligible to receive funding for each of the funding categories. The AGP will award grants in the following categories and amounts:

Parent-directed Treatment – One or more grant awards, with a maximum award amount of \$500,000 over two years and a maximum of \$250,000 per year. Parent-directed treatment models include parents and/or caregivers, e.g., parents, legal guardians, and extended family members, in treating children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). Parents and/or caregivers are trained by autism treatment professionals. The treatment strategies must be evidence-based, but they are not limited to Behavioral Analyst methodologies.

Board-certified Behavior Analyst Training for Teachers/Paraprofessionals – One or more grant awards, with a maximum award of \$475,000 over two years and with a maximum of \$237,500 per year. Teachers/paraprofessionals can be in public or private institutions, teaching grades prekindergarten through 12th grade. The training must include, but is not limited to, Behavioral Analyst methods, as certified by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board. Applicants may contract with educational service centers to provide this training.

Research, Development, and Evaluation of Innovative Autism Treatment Models – One or more grants with a maximum award amount of \$1,400,000 over two years and a maximum of \$700,000 per year, for autism research centers to research, develop, and evaluate innovative autism treatment models that provide treatment to the greatest number of children with ASD.

The Request for Applications is available [online](#). Texas public institutions of higher education will have until May 20 to submit an application for funding. The THECB anticipates announcing grant awards in early July.

Allen Michie | Program Director | Academic Quality and Workforce

Consensus Reached on Bilingual Ed Scholarship Program and B-On-Time Allocation Methodologies

Based on legislation passed by the 84th Texas Legislature, Regular Session, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) worked with representatives of Texas higher education institutions through the negotiated rulemaking process to develop allocation methods for the Bilingual Education Scholarship Program (House Bill 1, Article III, Rider 45) and the B-On-Time Tuition Set-Asides Reimbursement (House Bill 1, Article IX, Section 18.38).

The Negotiated Rulemaking Committee on the Bilingual Education Scholarship Program met on April 18 and reached consensus on the allocation of funds appropriated to the THECB for each year of the 2016-17 biennium for the Bilingual Education Scholarship Program. The scholarship program is intended to provide financial incentives in the form of tuition assistance to encourage students who enroll in an educator preparation program at specified universities to become certified to teach bilingual education, English as a Second Language, or Spanish in school districts with high critical needs.

The Negotiated Rulemaking Committee on B-On-Time Tuition Set-Asides Reimbursement met on April 20 and reached consensus on the allocation methodology for a one-time distribution of \$65,324,057 in unexpended balances for the B-On-Time Tuition Set-Asides Reimbursement.

The board of the THECB will consider adopting the proposed allocation methodologies, as proposed by the negotiated rulemaking committees, at the July 21 board meeting.

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

Focus on 60x30TX

Each APP newsletter includes a Q&A about *60x30TX* with a staff member at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. This month's Q&A is with Jerel Booker, Assistant Commissioner for College Readiness and Success. We are focusing on the following [text](#) (p. 11):

The state will achieve its goals for higher education through many strategies that will influence students to complete certificates and degrees. Creating pathways for students into higher education and through completion to the workforce will require higher levels of cooperation among higher education, K-12 education, and workforce leadership.

How do you see institutions of higher education, K-12, and workforce leadership working together to create pathways for students?

JB: I see these different entities coming up with common outcomes of success. Right now, those common outcomes haven't been agreed upon, but once they all agree on what success looks like for the state – whether that's completion of credentials in each area (e.g., high school completion, college completion, and/or workforce certificates) or whether it's workforce-ready students after high school or after higher education – then the pathways will start to make more sense. I do think the pathways will need to be affordable. The tough part for schools will be figuring out how to help students complete more inexpensively at all levels, while still having enough money to do business as a school district or as an institution. I also think there will need to be changes among each entity's organizational structures, while maintaining functionality, flexibility, and rigor.

What strategies do you think could be influential in moving students to and through higher education successfully?

JB: Having high expectations for kids and families starting at Pre-K could help. The Commissioner at the Texas Education Agency is looking at Pre-K and helping set the tone for how we will do business in the state with our youngest students and how we will guide them. This may not directly affect the *60x30TX* plan, but it will help Texas build for the next strategic plan, which is important. I think that by starting work at that younger age, setting postsecondary success expectations and a foundation earlier, counselors and teachers will gain a better understanding of where they fit into the pipeline. This may help K-12 focus more on getting students to graduate from high school and into and through higher education; so although starting in Pre-K is a long-term strategy, I think higher education will be better served.

Another strategy may be how we certify our employees. If we [K-12, higher education, and workforce leadership] all agree on a common goal [of postsecondary success] and if we can get that into the curriculum for administrators, teachers and high school counselors, then the goal will become standard across the state. This will mean that the overall goal or

outcome won't change from district to district. This strategy, in turn, will help the state to achieve some of the *60x30TX* goals.



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