

# LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

## FOR THE 86TH TEXAS LEGISLATURE



*Increasing global competitiveness by improving student success and strengthening higher education*



Texas Higher Education  
Coordinating Board

Texas' future depends on a skilled and educated workforce. *60x30TX*, the state's higher education strategic plan, is focused on maintaining the state's global competitiveness by improving postsecondary attainment and strengthening higher education. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's (THECB) legislative priorities for the 86th Texas Legislature are focused on making significant progress toward meeting the goals of *60x30TX* by ensuring that:

- limited state higher education resources are used efficiently;
- students have access to meaningful paid internships;
- funding policies that reward institutions for helping students complete their education are prioritized; and,
- strategies that improve and simplify student transfer are implemented.

### Legislative Priorities to Support *60x30TX* Success



**Require Coordinating Board review and approval of new off-campus sites to prevent unnecessary duplication, use state resources more efficiently, and promote objectivity in pursuit of *60x30TX* goals**

One of the primary duties of the THECB is to ensure the efficient and effective use of state resources in higher education and to eliminate unnecessary duplication. Require institutions obtain Coordinating Board approval prior to acquiring property to develop a new facility or expand an existing off-campus academic, technical or research site to provide a statewide perspective and ensure the efficient use of higher education resources. The review should be limited to sites that are not on or near the main campus, and would provide for a confidential and expedited review of proposed acquisitions.



**Create the Texas WORKS Internship Program, a centralized off-campus work-study program to provide students with limited financial means an opportunity to pursue paid internships**

The strength of the Texas economy and the wide range of Texas industries offer an opportunity to provide college students with paid internships or other concurrent work experiences to strengthen their marketable skills and support transition to the workforce. Create the Texas WORKS (Working Off-campus: Reinforcing Knowledge & Skills) Internship Program to provide paid internship opportunities for full-time undergraduate students and advance the state's *60x30TX* goals relating to marketable skills and student debt. Authorize the Coordinating Board to utilize a portion of the current work-study appropriation to administer the centralized off-campus work-study program.



**Incorporate the *60x30TX* Graduation Supplement into the introduced General Appropriations Act to allocate funding to public universities based on graduates, in addition to enrollments**

Formula funding for public universities is determined largely based on student enrollments on the 12th class day. If Texas is to achieve its *60x30TX* goals to increase degree attainment among our youngest generation of workers and greatly increase the number of students earning a degree or certificate, the

state must adopt funding policies that fund institutions for helping students complete their education. The Graduation Supplement will fund universities \$500 per not-at-risk graduate and \$1,000 per at-risk graduate. The Coordinating Board estimates that the total cost for the Graduation Supplement is currently at \$165 million for the 2020-21 biennium.



### **Implement statewide strategies to simplify student transfer and improve applicability of credits to degree**

Texas' higher education options are numerous and diverse, which can make transferring from one institution to another complicated. Baccalaureate graduates who transfer accumulate more excess hours than those who do not transfer, which increases student costs and impacts general revenue. On average, students who transfer accumulate seven more hours to degree than non-transfer students. This amounts to an estimated combined (General Revenue and tuition and fees) annual cost of \$59 million. The recommendations are as follows:

- Bolster the implementation of Field of Study Curriculum (FOSC) by developing uniform public outreach materials to share with students and advisors.
- Restructure the core curriculum to help ensure students take courses that count toward their degrees.
- Support an interactive online degree site that allows students to input their majors and receive a list of the required courses needed to complete a specific degree in four years.
- Study the feasibility of a transfer admissions guarantee and make recommendations to the Legislature about student and institutional criteria for such a system.
- Require academic dual credit students to file a degree plan at 30 semester credit hours. All other students are already required to file a degree plan. Require institutions document compliance.

Office of External Relations  
512.427.6111  
er@theccb.state.tx.us