

# EVALUATION 2015

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OUTCOMES  
OF THE TEXAS WORKFORCE SYSTEM

## **The Mission of Texas Workforce Investment Council**

*Assisting the Governor and the Legislature with strategic planning for and evaluation of the Texas workforce development system to promote the development of a well-educated, highly skilled workforce for Texas.*



Dear Fellow Texan:

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) is pleased to present the *Evaluation 2015* report on the Texas workforce system (system). Approved unanimously at the Council's December 4, 2015 meeting, it is the summative report for *Advancing Texas: Strategic Plan for the Texas Workforce System (FY2010-FY2015) (Advancing Texas)*, documenting accomplishments by system partners over the last six years.

State statutes require that the Council evaluate the workforce system and report annually to the Governor and the legislature. The Council evaluates five components, including:

- ▶ system and program performance based on the Formal and Less Formal measures approved by the Governor;
- ▶ implementation of action plans by partner agencies;
- ▶ adult education and literacy activities and achievements;
- ▶ local workforce board activities and alignment with the system strategic plan; and
- ▶ work development programs that focus on welfare to work initiatives.

Through the delivery of over 19 workforce education and training programs, state and local system partners served almost five million individuals in the last reporting year. Of those participating in workforce system programs and services, over 504,000 individuals completed a degree, certificate, or other measure of educational achievement. Over one million participants found and started a job and almost 930,000 more stayed in a job.

The report overview includes 12-year performance trend information, covering the *Advancing Texas* and *Destination 2010*—the previous workforce system strategic plan—plan periods. As evident in the trend data, the economic recession and recovery were major factors in changes in the trend line. These influences are particularly evident in the number of Texas served by the Council workforce system partner agencies. Texas showed comparative strength during the economic recession and earned national acclaim for job growth after the recovery began in mid-2009. Of note, this report found that:

- ▶ significant progress was made toward achieving the all of 14 long term objectives contained in *Advancing Texas*;
- ▶ system partners continued to improve and align programs with the goals articulated in the plan; and
- ▶ programs generally showed positive outcomes and performance trends.

I commend this report to you.

Sincerely,

Wes Jurey, Council Chair

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# Evaluation 2015

Accomplishments and Outcomes of the Texas Workforce System

Texas Workforce Investment Council  
December 2015



## OVERVIEW

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) was created in 1993 by the 73<sup>rd</sup> Texas Legislature. As an advisory body to the Governor and the legislature, the Council is charged with promoting the development of a well-educated and highly skilled workforce for Texas, and assisting with strategic planning for and evaluation of the state's workforce development system. As part of that responsibility, the Council annually reports to the Governor and the legislature on the degree to which the system is achieving state and local workforce goals and objectives. This is the final evaluation report for the fiscal years (FY) 2010–15 system strategic plan period.

Texas' workforce system comprises the workforce programs, services, and initiatives administered by eight state agencies and 28 local workforce boards, as well as independent school districts, community and technical colleges, and local adult education providers. System partners are responsible for a wide range of programs and services that focus on education, workforce education, and workforce training.

This is a vital role given how critical the number, skills, and education levels of workers are to the continued strength of the state's economy. Texas fared better than most states during the recession, and earned national acclaim for job growth after the recovery began in mid-2009.<sup>7</sup>

Systemic changes, by nature, are difficult given the different federal and state legislative and regulatory requirements associated with the myriad of funding sources available to system partners. Of note, key structural changes occurred over the six-year plan period:

- ▶ *Juvenile Justice* – Senate Bill (SB) 653 (82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature) abolished original system partner, the Texas Youth Commission (TYC), and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. Effective December 1, 2011, duties assigned to the two agencies were transferred to the newly created Texas Juvenile Justice Department.
- ▶ *Adult Education* – As required by SB 307 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature), administrative responsibility for adult education and literacy programs transferred from the Texas Education Agency to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). The program was transferred on September 1, 2013.

### Texas Economy Highlights

- ★ *The Texas seasonally adjusted unemployment rate fell to 4.1% in August 2015, the lowest rate of unemployment since January of 2001. The Texas rate continued to trend below the national rate of 5.1%. The state gained 217,700 nonagricultural jobs over the past year.<sup>1</sup>*
- ★ *Texas is home to 107 Fortune 1000 companies—more than any other state—and ranked second with 54 in the Fortune 500, according to Fortune Magazine's 2015 rankings.<sup>2</sup>*
- ★ *For the eleventh year in a row, Texas topped the 2015 'Best & Worst States for Business' ranking by CEOs.<sup>3</sup>*
- ★ *Texas earned the 2014 Governor's Cup—its third consecutive—recognizing the top performing state for capital investment attraction, based on total project activity.<sup>4</sup>*
- ★ *Texas claimed the top spot on the 'Best States to Make a Living 2015', scoring well across the board on a variety of employment conditions that contribute to a healthy economy.<sup>5</sup>*
- ★ *In 2015, small business owners gave Texas the highest rating (A+) for friendliness to small business for the fourth consecutive year.<sup>6</sup>*

<sup>1</sup> TWC press release (September 18, 2015).

<sup>2</sup> <http://fortune.com/> and [www.geolounge.com/](http://www.geolounge.com/).

<sup>3</sup> <http://chiefexecutive.net/> (May 7, 2015).

<sup>4</sup> [www.siteselection.com/](http://www.siteselection.com/) (March 2015).

<sup>5</sup> [www.money-rates.com/](http://www.money-rates.com/) (June 23, 2015).

<sup>6</sup> [www.forbes.com/](http://www.forbes.com/) (August 18, 2015) and [www.thumbtack.com/survey/](http://www.thumbtack.com/survey/).

<sup>7</sup> <http://businessclimate.com/> (April 26, 2012).

- ▶ *Postsecondary CTC Corrections* – As required by SB 1 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature), administrative responsibility for postsecondary education programs transferred from the Windham School District to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice’s Rehabilitation Programs Division, effective September 1, 2013.

## **Advancing Texas and Evaluation 2015**

Working with system partners, the Council completed a yearlong planning process in September 2009. The result of that process was *Advancing Texas: Strategic Plan for the Texas Workforce System (FY2010–FY2015) (Advancing Texas)*, which was approved by the Governor on October 23, 2009. Building on the systems approach to workforce planning first incorporated into the previous system strategic plan—*Destination 2010—Advancing Texas* served as the blueprint for Texas’ workforce system over the last six years.

In accordance with Texas Government Code, Section 2308.104, the plan established a framework for budgeting and operation of the state’s workforce system. It was reviewed and updated in 2012 to indicate accomplishments and milestones achieved, as well as other applicable changes to the action plans.

The Council’s *Evaluation 2015* report is the summative evaluation of the *Advancing Texas* strategic plan period. As such, it includes analysis of system performance based on the Formal and Less Formal measures approved by the Governor, as well as local workforce board and adult education activities, welfare-to-work initiatives, and partner progress in implementing the plan’s objectives. Final versions of all 14 action plans are included in Appendix 1.

## **System Integration Technical Advisory Committee**

Formed in late 2003 under the previous system strategic plan, the Council’s System Integration Technical Advisory Committee (SITAC) continued to work collaboratively to address critical workforce issues that face Texas. SITAC was charged with implementation of *Destination 2010* and *Advancing Texas* and authorized to create and deploy cross-agency teams to attain integrated solutions to issues associated with implementation of each plan’s long term objectives.

Working within their own organizations and with other system partners, current and past SITAC members worked to strengthen system alignment and played a major role in the accomplishments realized over the last twelve years. Through increased collaboration, system partners leveraged opportunities in order to accomplish the majority of both plans’ objectives and continued to build relationships and processes that will ensure additional progress in the future. Under *Advancing Texas*, progress was made in many areas, including:

- ▶ career and technical education,
- ▶ dual credit offerings,
- ▶ adult education programs for those with low literacy or English language skills,
- ▶ employer use of and satisfaction with system products and services, and
- ▶ the use of employment data for program improvement.

## **Addressing Critical Business Issues**

Critical business issues are those with system-wide challenges that are expected to have a direct impact on achievement of strategic goals and key performance measures. Eight critical business issues—with 13 associated critical success factors and 14 long term objectives—were addressed during the six-year plan period. Those critical issues were grouped into three key performance areas: Systems, Operations, Competencies, and Integration; Customer Outcomes; and Programs, Products, and Services.

Significant progress was made with regard to the issues identified during development of *Advancing Texas*.

***... integrated academic and career and technical education options***

Collaboration between workforce and education continued to increase over the plan period. System partners worked together and independently to offer programs and services that were both more effective and available on a more timely basis. Strides were made to improve and expand career pathways for current and future workers through dual credit offerings, Early College High Schools, and initiatives such as Accelerate Texas that integrates basic skills with career and technical pathways to help adult students acquire skills and certificates in high-demand occupations.

***... target populations as employment assets***

*Advancing Texas* identified veterans and individuals with disabilities as populations that must be considered in the pool of potential employees required by employers. In general, employment and retention outcomes exceeded targets following the economic recovery.

Partner agencies collaborated to develop new and enhance existing methods, programs, and processes for programs targeted at the English language learner and workforce literacy over-age-17 populations. Elements of the pilot models have been incorporated in ongoing service delivery requirements for career pathway programs.

***... data support planning and economic growth***

When developing new or expanding programs for in-demand middle-skills occupations, community and technical colleges consider program delivery methodologies and structures to increase both effectiveness and cost efficiency. The availability of improved supply/demand data, as well as the increased identification and sharing of best practices supported continuous improvement.

Planned development of a new, publicly accessible Texas supply and demand analysis internet portal will further improve the quality and availability of workforce data—benefiting workforce system partners, employers, and consumers.

***... more workers with essential middle skills***

The Council provided leadership on two plan objectives to address employer demand for skilled workers, working with system partners and stakeholders to increase awareness of career and technical education as a desirable career option and also to expand the earn-while-you-learn model of registered apprenticeship.

Several registered apprenticeship projects were studied, with a focus on those developing a new program in a target occupation or modifying an existing program by incorporating the increased flexibility afforded by revised federal regulations, such as offering training through distance learning.

***... relevant local and regional workforce programs and services***

Local workforce boards provided programs and services to Texas' employers and job seekers, including target populations identified in *Advancing Texas*—veterans, individuals with low literacy or poor English language proficiency, and blind or disabled Texans. Boards increasingly collaborate locally and regionally by working with other boards and system stakeholders, leveraging resources, and ensuring that services are delivered efficiently and effectively to job seekers and employers across workforce areas.

**... increased employer confidence in system products and services**

Employer confidence in system products and services increased over the life of the plan. Building on work started under the previous system strategic plan, partner agencies used employer survey and performance data to identify training and service needs and to identify modifications to current programs and services to better suit workforce requirements. In addition, data supported measurement of employer satisfaction and provided a resource for agency strategic plan development, grant applications, and in preparation for future legislative sessions.

## **Texas Workforce System – Performance Trend Data 2004–2015**

The Council is required by statute to report program-level data and to provide an overall assessment of implementation of the workforce system strategic plan.<sup>8</sup> In the Council's annual evaluation report, workforce system performance is presented in a series of five report cards that contain data reported by partner agencies for the Formal and Less Formal measures approved by the Governor. Aggregate data are presented on the four Formal measures report cards and on the System report card.

### ***Workforce System Formal Measures***

System measures are outcome oriented. They establish responsibility for end outcomes or outputs that are central to the system's success. These measures are essentially consistent across workforce programs and consist of the Formal measures found in partner agencies' performance measures for state-based budgeting and reporting. Four Formal measures approved by the Governor in 2003 remained in effect and were incorporated into *Advancing Texas*:

- ▶ *Educational Achievement* – Number and percent of all program participants who obtain a degree, other credential of completion, or complete the level enrolled in either a training or educational program.
- ▶ *Entered Employment* – Number and percent of all program participants who secure employment after exiting a program.
- ▶ *Employment Retention* – Number and percent of all program participants who retain employment at a specified point after exiting a program.
- ▶ *Customers Served* – Number of employers and individuals who received system services, including program participation.

### ***The Report Card Series: Data Treatment and Limitations***

The System report card shows the performance of Texas' workforce system and includes totals for each of the four Formal measures that have been aggregated and weighted by the number of program participants. The card also shows the number, percent where applicable, and rates of change for the Formal and Less Formal measures. The total should be viewed only as a good approximation of overall system performance.

The Council believes that the report card series is a useful tool to illustrate overall system performance, but the data presented should be taken in context. Most programs are designed to serve participants that meet specific eligibility criteria and have unique needs. Accordingly, program objectives and desired outcomes vary, and approved data definitions and methodologies are program-specific. Additionally, integrated service delivery strategies may result in duplication of customer counts across programs. The System report card contains aggregate data for all agencies' applicable programs by measure as noted on the Formal measure report cards. Due to known duplicates that cannot be removed from program-

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<sup>8</sup> Texas Government Code, Section 2308.104.

level data, adjustments are calculated at the System level, with unduplicated data footnoted as applicable.

- ▶ *Program-Level Reporting* – As required by statute, data are presented by program rather than by agency. System partners are responsible for the delivery of 24 programs and services focused on education, workforce education, and workforce training for three participant groups: adults, adults with barriers, and youth. The Council collects and disseminates performance data and descriptive information on 19 workforce programs, as well as five academic education programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Information and data from these five programs assist in understanding the scope and effort of program delivery through high schools and community and technical colleges, and these entities' efforts to prepare students to transition to further education or enter the workforce.
- ▶ *Agency Negotiation* – During 2004 data definition and methodology negotiations, the Council requested that where federal common definitions were relevant, those definitions and program periods be used. The intent was to lessen the differences between data sets, thereby achieving a higher degree of relatedness and relevance when aggregating data across multiple programs. Undertaken again in 2009 for *Advancing Texas*, the negotiations resulted in some definitions and program periods that differed slightly from those used during the previous strategic plan period. Occasionally, the methodology for a given program/measure may be modified during a strategic plan period (e.g., technological improvement or correction, legislative or regulatory requirement). Where possible, the agency provided revised prior year data, with exceptions footnoted in the evaluation report.
- ▶ *Unduplicated Data* – In most cases, data are unduplicated and conform to reporting definitions and methodologies agreed to by partner agencies. However, in some instances duplicate data are included in a report card. For example, Educational Achievement data may include duplicate data where a participant has outcomes for both education and training programs. Where known, these instances are footnoted on the measures report card (e.g., Postsecondary CTC Corrections: Educational Achievement and Customers Served). Programs of the TWC include duplicate data when a participant is enrolled in more than one program or service. The TWC does not adjust these duplicates at the program level, but does adjust them at the aggregate level for each Formal measure.

The System report card presents aggregate performance for the four Formal measures. Each is footnoted to show the rate or count, where necessary, adjusted to exclude duplicate TWC customers. The adjustment also takes into account Veterans Employment and Training customers, typically served through local workforce centers. Adjusted rates are typically less than one percentage point difference. For example, in 2015 the aggregate Employment Retention rate was 84.02% compared to 84.03% adjusted.

- ▶ *Data Revisions* – Each year, one or more partner agencies typically identify the need to submit corrected data for prior reporting cycle(s). Percentage point differences published in the report card series and all report narrative reflect the revised data, which are published in the **Data Addendum**.

### ***Program Levers – Contributions to Trend Line Changes***

As required by statute, the annual evaluation report presents data by program rather than by agency. It includes information on performance levels that vary significantly (+/-5%) from the prior year. Conversely, the longitudinal trend lines present a summary-level view of system performance based on data from up to 24 programs and services focused on education, workforce education, and workforce training for three participant groups: adults, adults with barriers, and youth. The 24 programs included in the report card series, along with the short titles used in the Council's annual evaluation report, are listed in the main report and in Appendix 3, which also includes more detailed information on program levers.

This overview provides general observations about the **Formal Measures: 2004–2015** chart (page vii), focusing on key changes (and year first reported) occurring over the 12-year period. It is based on

information and data reported by partner agencies for the Council's annual evaluation reports in the referenced years.

Typically defined and treated as a lag measure, Customers Served may be used as a lead measure for the purpose of system strategic planning given its tie to program infrastructure usage and capacity. This measure indicates the total number of individuals served by all system programs and services, and fluctuates based on factors such as the state of the economy and available funding for each program. Educational Achievement, Entered Employment, and Employment Retention are rate, or outcome, measures and the percentages reported for these measures are the weighted aggregate of multiple workforce programs. At the program level, these measures generally remain fairly consistent over time and are comparable within a reporting year and across reporting years.

### **Summary**

The recession and ensuing recovery were a major contributing factor to trend shifts over the 12-year period. As noted in *Evaluation 2013*, data reported for all Formal measures had shown the effects during and since recovery from the economic recession. This was true to some degree in *Evaluation 2009* for Customers Served, and began to be evidenced in 2010 for the employment-related measures due to delay in receiving and analyzing unemployment insurance wage records for measuring performance.

While minor changes occur across programs and over time, other key changes that affected the trend lines include federal or state legislation and policy changes, as well as significant increases or decreases in federal or state funding levels, including funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) (Public Law 111–5). Customers Served, as the most volatile trend line, clearly shows customer growth during the recession and a slow decline thereafter. During the recession, more Texans needed workforce programs and services, just as more students accessed higher education. These situations, combined with the influx of ARRA funding, created a significant increase in demand for services available through Texas' workforce system.

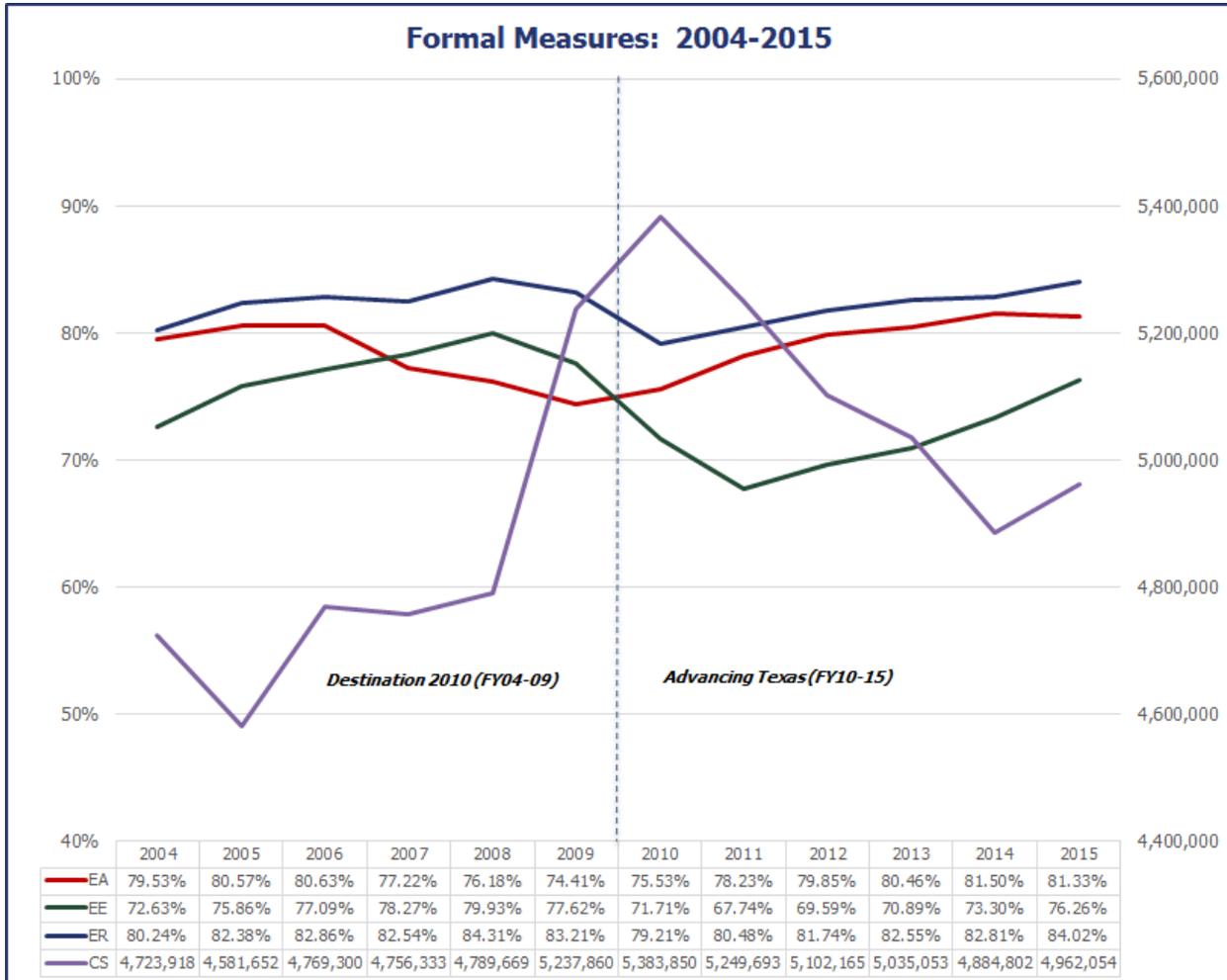
The longitudinal trend lines for Educational Achievement, Entered Employment, and Employment Retention demonstrate consistent performance across time. The recessionary period is evident in data reported by agencies from 2009 through 2011. Despite the fact that Texas fared far better than most states during the recession, both Entered Employment and Employment Retention moved downward by significant percentage points. In 2012 and 2013, these data trends had not yet returned to their pre-recession highs; however, by 2015, both trends approached their pre-recession levels. While there is no definitive causal information to which this movement can be attributed, it is likely that these are the tail ends of the higher unemployment, business contraction, and significantly reduced hiring by employers during that period.

While these employment measures were trending downward during the recession, Educational Achievement was trending upward. Higher enrollment in postsecondary institutions is often evidenced during periods of economic contractions or recession, and this is consistent with patterns during previous recessionary periods.

## Trend Data

The chart presents aggregate data for the four Formal measures, covering two workforce system strategic plan periods: *Destination 2010* (FY04–FY09) and *Advancing Texas* (FY10–FY15). The three-dimensional format presents:

- ▶ Data table (bottom) – Formal measures data, by year, with a key and exceptions noted in the table below.
- ▶ Formal measures in rates (left axis) – Percentages for Educational Achievement (EA), Entered Employment (EE), and Employment Retention (ER).
- ▶ Formal measure in count (right axis) – Numeric value for Customers Served (CS).



	Formal Measure	Exceptions (Years Included)	Exclusions <sup>9</sup>
Key	EA	Educational Achievement	Secondary Technical Corrections (2009–forward) Self-Sufficiency Fund (2004–2008) Skills Development Fund (2004–2008)
	EE	Entered Employment	-
	ER	Employment Retention	Secondary CTE (2004–2008) Youth WIA I (2009–forward)
	CS	Customers Served	-

<sup>9</sup> Project Re-Integration of Offenders (RIO) was not funded for the FY 2012–13 or 2014–15 biennia. The TWC submitted available data for applicable measures through 2012. Data for this program are not included in trend information presented in the chart.

## Advancing Texas Achievements

The following table denotes for all 14 plan components: key performance area, critical business issue, long term objective, summative outcome, and final data and initial data received, where appropriate, to demonstrate change over the plan period.

### Key Performance Area: Systems, Operations, Competencies, and Integration

Objective	Summative Outcome, with final data and baseline data, where appropriate
<b><i>Critical Business Issue: Need for enhanced and more effective integration of academic and career and technical education (CTE) options at secondary and postsecondary levels to assist students to graduate and transition to further education or the workforce, and to reduce dropouts.</i></b>	
Produce each biennium, commencing in 2010, a report that documents an assessment of the number and type of postsecondary education and training credentials (certificate, level two certificate, associate, bachelor's and advanced degrees) required to match the demand for a skilled and educated workforce. The assessment will include the number of forecast net job openings by occupation at each level of postsecondary education and training and the number of credentials needed to match that forecast. [S1]	Partner agencies collaborated to improve available supply-demand data and developed user scenarios to assist with data analysis. Awarded in 2015, a three-year federal grant will support development of a new Texas supply and demand analysis internet portal.
By 2013, Texas will decrease high school dropout rates by implementing rigorous Career and Technical Education (CTE) as a part of the recommended or advanced high school graduation program. [S2] ▶ CTE Concentrator Graduates	82.33% – 2015 (79.43% – 2010)
<b><i>Critical Business Issue: Lack of alignment and clarity in educational policy and regulation for secondary and postsecondary transitions is limiting efficiency and effectiveness of overall educational outcomes.</i></b>	
By 2013, education and training partners will have the infrastructure necessary (policies, procedures, data processes, rules, and capabilities) to facilitate the effective and efficient transfer of academic and technical dual credit courses from high schools to community colleges and four-year institutions. [S3]	Significant strides were made to improve and expand dual credit offerings and Early College High Schools, as well as the infrastructure supporting these and other initiatives designed to facilitate course transfer and consistency between educational institutions and systems.
<b><i>Critical Business Issue: Career and technical education is perceived by many as a less desirable career option.</i></b>	
By 2013, design and implement a demonstration program targeted to improve perception of career options that career technical education (CTE) programs enable. [S4]	The Council researched, identified, and validated best practices for providing information to improve understanding of educational pathways to careers; convened a workgroup to develop a model based on findings in the report; and published a guide detailing the model developed using the best practices research.

## Key Performance Area: Customer Outcomes

Objective	Summative Outcome, with final data and baseline data, where appropriate
<b><i>Critical Business Issue: Everyone must be part of the critical pool of potential employees that is and will be required by Texas employers, especially in target populations.</i></b>	
By 2013, the blind and disabled populations will achieve additional employment outcomes. [C1] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Blind Services Entered Employment</li> <li>▶ Rehabilitation Services Entered Employment</li> <li>▶ Blind Services Employment Retention</li> <li>▶ Rehabilitation Services Employment Retention</li> </ul>	70.08% – 2015 (70.16% – 2009) 66.60% – 2015 (56.91% – 2009) 88.41% – 2015 (86.71% – 2009) 87.36% – 2015 (85.90% – 2009)
By 2013, the veteran population will achieve additional employment outcomes. [C2] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Veterans E&amp;T Entered Employment</li> <li>▶ Veterans E&amp;T Employment Retention</li> </ul>	72.89% – 2015 (75.49% – 2009 revised) 86.40% – 2015 (86.93% – 2009 revised)
By 2013, design and implement integrated Adult Basic Education and workforce skills training programs to enhance employment outcomes for the English language learner population. [C3] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Vocational ESL Graduates</li> <li>▶ Vocational ESL Employment</li> </ul>	69 – 2014 (111 – 2012) 59.42% – 2014 (56.19% – 2012)
By 2013, design and implement targeted Adult Basic Education programs to enhance employment outcomes for populations requiring workplace literacy skills. [C4] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Workforce Literacy Employment</li> <li>▶ Workforce Literacy Graduates</li> </ul>	— 506 – 2013 (482 – 2012)  The TWC's initial request for proposals incorporated key elements of the pilot model by requiring service providers to implement career pathways programs. The commission's goal is to incrementally increase the proportion of students who exit workforce services ready for work, or who are enrolled or co-enrolled in college and career training. This model provides opportunities for literacy and basic educational development and ensures these services link students at all academic and English levels with employment, training, and college opportunities.

## Key Performance Area: Programs, Products, and Services

Objective	Summative Outcome, with final data and baseline data, where appropriate
<b>Critical Business Issue: Increasing shortage of workers with appropriate middle skills created by a skills gap and future workforce retirements in a wide range of industries and occupations.</b>	
Community and technical colleges (CTCs) will plan and execute education and training programs to address workforce skills gaps in their regions, as identified by local needs assessments or the biennial supply-demand report produced by the THECB and TWC. [P1]	<p>The THECB and Council surveyed the CTCs to collect information on their strategies for determining employer satisfaction and using that information in institutional planning processes to improve program delivery. Models of promising practices were selected and formally recognized by the Council.</p> <p>The Council contracted with the University of Texas' Ray Marshall Center to assess the availability and capabilities of supply and demand planning tools in Texas and other states.</p>
By 2012, design, develop, and implement a pilot program to demonstrate flexibility of the 'earn while you learn' model of traditional apprenticeship programs. Where appropriate, expand and replicate into new occupational areas by 2015. [P2]	Four of six projects remained active through the pilot period or the end of their federal grant period, as applicable. The recession presented challenges to implementation, which continued through the recovery period. The Council's final report documented promising practices and lessons learned, including models for new occupations and approaches—such as distance learning.
<b>Critical Business Issue: Data is required to ensure that system initiatives will be developed and executed to strategically position Texas in the global marketplace.</b>	
The Council will produce a data set whereby system stakeholders can ascertain Texas' position relative to key indicators of competitiveness. [P3]	The Council compiled the <i>Texas Index</i> through 2013, providing a series of indicators that showed the state's general workforce, education, and economic health.
<b>Critical Business Issue: Local workforce boards must understand and meet the needs of their local communities because they are the system's front line partner in offering relevant programs and services.</b>	
Local boards will align with and support the workforce system strategic plan through their planning processes and related initiatives. This will be documented in board plans and plan modifications, which are submitted to the Council for approval. [P4]	Local boards provided programs and services to Texas' employers and job seekers, including target populations identified in <i>Advancing Texas</i> . They collaborated locally and regionally with other boards and system stakeholders to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of workforce programs and services.
<b>Critical Business Issue: Existing data gap regarding employers' needs and customer satisfaction hinders the ability to assess whether existing programs and services are adequately meeting customer requirements.</b>	
<p>Partner agencies will gather data from employer customers at appropriate intervals to determine employer needs and satisfaction. [P5]</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ HHSC-DARS: Employer Satisfaction</li> <li>▶ THECB: Project modified and completed in 2011</li> <li>▶ TVC: Employer Satisfaction</li> <li>▶ TYC: Project modified and completed in 2011</li> <li>▶ TDCJ-Windham: Employer Satisfaction</li> </ul>	<p>85.71% – 2015 (83.02% – 2012)</p> <p>—</p> <p>88.10% – 2015 (92.31% – 2012)</p> <p>—</p> <p>94.29% – 2015 (96.43% – 2012)</p>
Partner agencies will use the employment data/outcomes of their programs to understand and improve those programs. [P6]	Partner agencies used data to measure satisfaction; identify training and service needs; identify modifications to current programs and services to better suit workforce requirements; and serve as a resource for agency strategic plan development, grant applications, and in preparation for future legislative sessions.

## The Future

*The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023* was approved by the Council on September 11, 2015, and subsequently by the Governor. The new plan will serve as the blueprint for Texas' workforce system over the next eight years.

Over the eight-year plan period, partners will also work to fully implement the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (Public Law 113-128). In addition, administration of the vocational rehabilitation program will transfer from the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services to the TWC, as required by SB 208 (84<sup>th</sup> Legislature).

During development of the new plan, three strategic imperatives became apparent as key characteristics that serve as foundational elements that represent a best-in-class workforce system. These overarching imperatives will serve as pillars upon which the capacity of the Texas workforce system should be built in order to successfully identify and respond to changing market conditions and the needs of all workforce system customers. They represent core competencies that must be embedded in all system elements to achieve the plan's vision and mission. Therefore, it is a key tenet of the new plan that all workforce system partners have core competencies in and a commitment to customer service and satisfaction, data-driven program improvement, and continuous improvement and innovation.

### Overarching Strategic Imperatives

- ★ Customer service and satisfaction
- ★ Data-driven program improvement
- ★ Continuous improvement and innovation

- *The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan  
FY 2016–FY 2023*



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## INTRODUCTION

### The Council and Texas' Workforce System

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) was created in 1993 by the 73<sup>rd</sup> Texas Legislature. The Council is charged with promoting the development of a highly skilled and well-educated workforce for Texas, and with assisting the Governor and the legislature with strategic planning for and evaluation of the Texas workforce system. The 19-member Council includes representatives from business, labor, education, and community-based organizations.

The workforce system comprises the workforce programs, services, and initiatives administered by eight state agencies and 28 local workforce boards, as well as independent school districts, community and technical colleges, and local adult education providers.

System partners are responsible for the delivery of 24 programs and services focused on education, workforce education, and workforce training for three participant groups: adults, adults with barriers, and youth. The Council collects and disseminates performance data and descriptive information on 19 workforce programs, as well as five academic education programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Information and data from these five programs assist in understanding the scope and effort of program delivery through high schools and community and technical colleges, and these entities' efforts to prepare students to transition to further education or enter the workforce.

Working with system partners, the Council completed a yearlong planning process in September 2009. The result of that process was *Advancing Texas: Strategic Plan for the Texas Workforce System (FY2010-FY2015)* (*Advancing Texas*), which was approved by the Governor on October 23, 2009. The plan was devised on a six-year time frame to align with the Texas Strategic Planning and Performance Budgeting System. It was reviewed and updated in 2012.

### Annual Evaluation

The Council is required by Texas Government Code, Chapter 2308, to monitor the state's workforce system. As part of that responsibility, the Council annually reports to the Governor and the legislature on the degree to which the system is achieving state and local workforce goals and objectives. This is the final evaluation report for the six-year strategic plan period.

#### *Advancing Texas*

The workforce system strategy is to provide its customers—employers and current and future workers of Texas—with access to relevant and comprehensive workforce services that span a continuum from career planning and preparation, to career development and enhancement.

#### **Vision**

Our world-class workforce system enables Texas to compete successfully in the global market.

#### **Mission**

The Texas workforce system creates a globally competitive workforce through collaborative workforce system partner relationships that align, leverage, and integrate system services.

#### **System Partners**

- ★ Economic Development and Tourism
- ★ Texas Association of Workforce Boards
- ★ Texas Department of Criminal Justice – Windham School District
- ★ Texas Education Agency
- ★ Texas Health and Human Services Commission – Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services
- ★ Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- ★ Texas Juvenile Justice Department
- ★ Texas Veterans Commission
- ★ Texas Workforce Commission

The system strategic plan, *Advancing Texas*, and other Council products referenced in this report are posted on the Council's website at:

<http://gov.texas.gov/twic/>

State statutes require that the Council evaluate five elements in the workforce system:

- ▶ Formal and Less Formal performance measures
- ▶ Implementation of the system strategic plan, *Advancing Texas*
- ▶ Adult education action and achievements
- ▶ Local workforce board activities and alignment
- ▶ Work development programs that focus on welfare to work initiatives

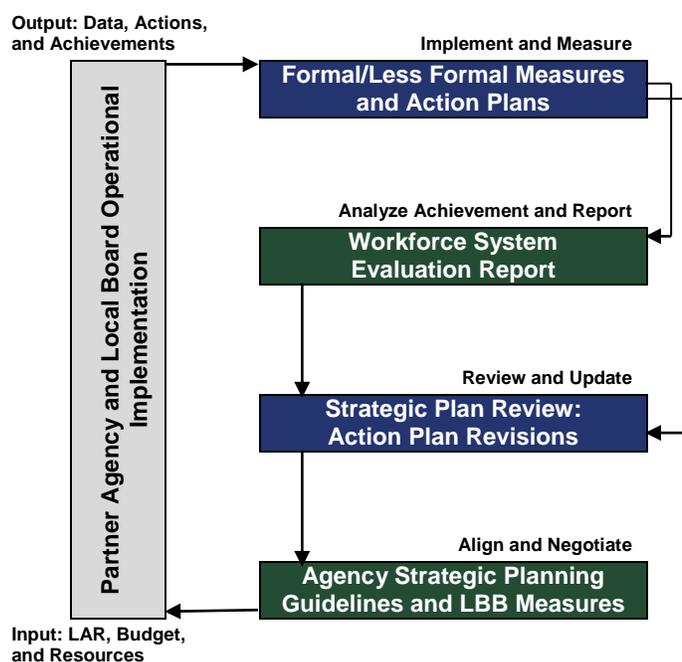
The Council uses a three-tier evaluation hierarchy that is one component of a comprehensive system performance framework, as illustrated in the graphic below. The framework depicts the inputs, outputs, and planning and evaluative components that form the cycle of planning, evaluation, and implementation that the Council engages in with system partners.

The Implement and Measure box at the top right references the three evaluation tiers, which are composed of metrics designed to evaluate system performance as well as progress toward achieving the long term objectives (LTO) identified in the system strategic plan.

- ▶ Evaluation Tiers 1 and 2 consist of Formal and Less Formal measures, respectively, which are presented in the **Report Card Series** and **Less Formal Measures** sections of this report.
- ▶ The third tier consists of action plans (AP) and progress milestones toward the LTOs, as noted in the **System Accomplishments** section.

- Key:**
- Grey = delivery/yields
  - Green = formal evaluative actions and course correction
  - Blue = planning actions and impacts
  - LAR = Legislative Appropriation Request
  - LBB = Legislative Budget Board

### Texas' Workforce System Performance Framework



### Issues Identification

System partners operate in a complex, changing economic environment as they strive to provide employers, current workers, and future workers with services that are comprehensive, timely, and relevant. There continues to be increased demand for middle-skills jobs, those that require more than a high school degree but less than a four-year degree. In Texas, future workers will be needed in traditional healthcare, energy, and technology-based jobs, as well as in the growth industries of wind, biofuel, and energy efficiency. In addition, the state's demographic composition is changing, with the workforce projected to include larger proportions of women, Hispanics, and prime-age (i.e., 25 to 54 years of age) workers.

The Council is charged with facilitating the development of a systemic, integrated approach to the delivery of programs and services that meet the needs of employers and individuals. This task is accomplished in part through identifying issues and working with system partners to achieve issue resolution. Over the *Advancing Texas* plan period, issues directly related to the scope as outlined above have been included

in the annual evaluation report. The Council also identifies and works to address issues related to the state's workforce system through a variety of other mechanisms, including:

- ▶ *System Integration Technical Advisory Committee (SITAC)* – Established by the Council Chair in December 2003 to oversee implementation of the system strategic plan, SITAC members represented all partner agencies and the Texas Association of Workforce Boards.
- ▶ *Council Strategy Sessions* – Convened in addition to, or in conjunction with, regular Council meetings in order to identify and address systemic issues.
- ▶ *Issue Briefs and Reports* – Produced periodically to address specific workforce issues.
- ▶ *Stakeholder Roundtables or Surveys* – Conducted periodically to obtain feedback regarding system stakeholder needs and to assess workforce system usage and satisfaction levels.
- ▶ *Listening Sessions* – Designed to increase members' understanding of system partners' goals, barriers, and initiatives related to workforce programs and services, as well as issues expected to be critical over the next five-to-eight years.

## Measures and Definitions

Three tiers of performance measures were included in *Advancing Texas*:

- ▶ **Tier 1 – Formal** – System measures are outcome oriented. They establish responsibility for end outcomes or outputs that are central to the system's success. Such measures are essentially consistent across workforce programs and consist of the Formal measures found in partner agencies' performance measures for state-based budgeting and reporting. Four Formal measures approved by the Governor in 2003 remained in effect and were incorporated into *Advancing Texas*:
  - *Educational Achievement* – Number and percent of all program participants who obtain a degree, other credential of completion, or complete the level enrolled in either a training or educational program.
  - *Entered Employment* – Number and percent of all program participants who secure employment after exiting a program.
  - *Employment Retention* – Number and percent of all program participants who retain employment at a specified point after exiting a program.
  - *Customers Served* – Number of employers and individuals who received system services, including program participation.
- ▶ **Tier 2 – Less Formal** – Strategy-critical measures are also outcome oriented. These consist of the Less Formal measures that establish responsibility for end outcomes or outputs that are central to system partners' missions. There were six such measures for *Advancing Texas*:
  - *Vocational ESL Graduates* – Number of vocational English as a Second Language (ESL) graduates (subset of ESL population).
  - *Vocational ESL Employment* – Percent of vocational ESL graduates who obtain employment (subset of ESL population).
  - *Workforce Literacy Graduates* – Number of workforce literacy graduates (subset of Adult Basic Education (ABE) population).

- *Workforce Literacy Employment* – Percent of workforce literacy graduates who obtain employment (subset of ABE population).
  - *CTE Concentrator Graduates* – Percent of Career Technical Education (CTE) concentrators (Code 2 and 3 CTE Participants) who graduate on the recommended or distinguished achievement high school program.
  - *Employer Satisfaction* – Agency-specific measures and definitions are presented in the **Less Formal Measures** section.
- ▶ **Tier 3 – AP Specific** – Capacity-building measures are process oriented and establish responsibility for intermediate outcomes that identify and chart achievement of tasks and milestones. They are specific to a given AP and often require a high degree of collaboration between system partners.

In 2010, definitions and methodologies were negotiated with partner agencies, in consultation with the Governor's Office and the Legislative Budget Board (LBB). Only the Tier 1 Formal measures are included in agency Legislative Appropriation Requests, and may or may not be specified as key measures<sup>10</sup>.

## Data Treatment and Limitations

Data for all Formal measures except Customers Served are presented as both an absolute number and as a percentage. All data are from the most recent 12-month reporting period available.

- ▶ *Agency Negotiation* – During 2004 data definition and methodology negotiations, the Council requested that where federal common definitions were relevant, those definitions be used, and that similar program periods also be used. The intent was to lessen the differences between data sets, thereby achieving a higher degree of relatedness and relevance when aggregating data across multiple programs. Undertaken again in 2009 for *Advancing Texas*, there are definitions and program periods that differ slightly from those used during the previous strategic plan period.
  - *Program-Level Reporting* – As required by statute, data are presented by program rather than by agency.
  - *Unduplicated Data* – In most cases, data are unduplicated and conform to reporting definitions and methodologies agreed to by partner agencies. For example, Educational Achievement data may include duplicate data where a participant has outcomes for both education and training programs. Where known, these instances are footnoted on the applicable report card.
- ▶ *Data Revisions* – This year, the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Veterans Commission and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) identified the need to submit corrected data for the prior reporting cycle. In addition, the Council requested that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board submit revised Less Formal measures data for the 2014 reporting cycle in order to have complete, final data set(s) for both measures. Percentage point differences published in the **Report Card Series** for the Change 2014–2015 and Cumulative 2009–2015 and all report narrative reflect the revised data, which are published in the **Data Addendum** to this report.
- ▶ *Change Rates* – Data are presented and tracked longitudinally. This year, each report card includes columns for two rates of change:
  - *Change 2014–2015* – The one-year rate captures the change from the previous year to the current year. Expressed as a percentage, the rate represents the percentage point difference from 2014 to 2015.

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<sup>10</sup> Key measures indicate the extent to which a state agency is achieving its goals or objectives and consist of the outcome, output, efficiency, and explanatory measures referenced in the General Appropriations Act for each agency. [LBB, *Performance Reporting – New Key Measures* (November 2013)]

- *Cumulative 2009–2015* – The cumulative rate aggregates the rate of change from 2009 (baseline year) to the current year. Expressed as a percentage, the rate represents the percentage point difference from 2009 to 2015.
- ▶ *Explanation of Variance* –
  - *Variance Range* – Instances where the value in the Change 2014–2015 column was more than 5%, either positive or negative, are addressed within the relevant report card section. This reporting is aligned to LBB performance measures reporting requirements.
  - *Base Values* – Significant changes in numerator and/or denominator values from 2014 to 2015, with no resulting significant rate change, were also reviewed where applicable. Such instances are addressed in the respective report card sections.
- ▶ *Rounding Convention* – A rounding convention has been applied to the Formal and Less Formal measures data: .001 to .004 has been rounded down to .00; .005 to .009 has been rounded up to the next highest hundredth. Rounding rules are applied after completion of all applicable mathematical operation(s) such as division or subtraction.
- ▶ *Data Ownership* – Some partner agencies process their own data, while others have interagency agreements with other partner agencies for data processing. Raw data are confidential records owned by the applicable agency.
- ▶ *Unemployment Insurance Records* –
  - *Time Lag* – There is a significant delay in receiving and analyzing unemployment insurance (UI) wage records for measuring performance. For example, when looking at six-month employment retention, there is a six-month wait to establish the period of data collection, plus four-to-five months for employers to submit the data to the TWC.
 

This lag continues to pose significant challenges regarding timely performance measurement in other states as well as Texas. The approximate one-year data lag is ongoing because of the UI records delay and the time necessary for agencies to process and report the data to the Council.
  - *Coverage* – An unknown number of program exiters obtain jobs that are not covered by the Texas UI system. For example, the self-employed, those who relocate and become employed in another state, and those who live in Texas but are employed across state lines are not reported in the Texas UI database. This non-coverage results in lower levels of documented employment, reflecting negatively when education and training programs' outcomes are evaluated.
 

Data sets that are more complete may be available in instances where the agency can use other databases, such as the Wage Record Interchange System, to identify employment with employers who do not file UI wages in Texas.
- ▶ *Project Re-Integration of Offenders (Project RIO)* – Project RIO was not funded for the fiscal years 2012–13 or 2014–15 biennia. However, the TWC continued to submit available data for applicable measures. No data were reported by the TWC since 2012.

## Report Cards

The Council believes that the report card series is a useful tool to present overall system performance. System evaluation is complex. Although the four Formal measures are appropriate to provide a system snapshot, they should not be viewed in isolation from other factors. Agencies and programs have different service populations with unique needs and characteristics, which has a large effect on performance data.

Additional limitations of specific significance to a single program are contained within the card footnotes or narrative.

System performance is presented in a series of five report cards that contain data reported by partner agencies for the Formal and Less Formal (Tiers 1 and 2) measures. Aggregate data are presented on the four Formal measures report cards and on the System report card. However, it is important to note that not all data definitions or methodologies are identical. The total should be viewed only as a good approximation of overall system performance. The graphic on page 8 illustrates the relationship of Formal and Less Formal measures to the report card series.

- ▶ *Programs in the Report Card Series* – The 24 programs included in the report card series, along with the short titles used in this report, are:

Programs in the Report Card Series	Short Title
Adult Education Workforce Investment Act II	Adult Education
Adults Workforce Investment Act	Adults WIA I
Apprenticeship Chapter 133	Apprenticeship
Blind Services	Blind Services
Community and Technical College Academic	CTC Academic
Community and Technical College Technical	CTC Technical
Dislocated Workers Workforce Investment Act	Dislocated WIA I
Employment Services - Wagner Peysner	Employment Services
Perkins Secondary Career Technical Education	Secondary CTE
Postsecondary Community and Technical College Corrections	Postsecondary CTC Corrections
Rehabilitation Services	Rehabilitation Services
Senior Community Service Employment Program	SCSEP
Secondary Education	Secondary
Secondary Academic Youth Corrections	Secondary Academic Corrections
Secondary Technical Youth Corrections	Secondary Technical Corrections
Secondary Academic Windham	Secondary Academic Windham
Secondary Technical Windham	Secondary Technical Windham
Self-Sufficiency Fund	Self-Sufficiency
Skills Development Fund	Skills Development
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training	SNAP E&T
Trade Adjustment Assistance	Trade Adjustment
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Choices	TANF Choices
Veterans Employment and Training	Veterans E&T
Youth Workforce Investment Act	Youth WIA I

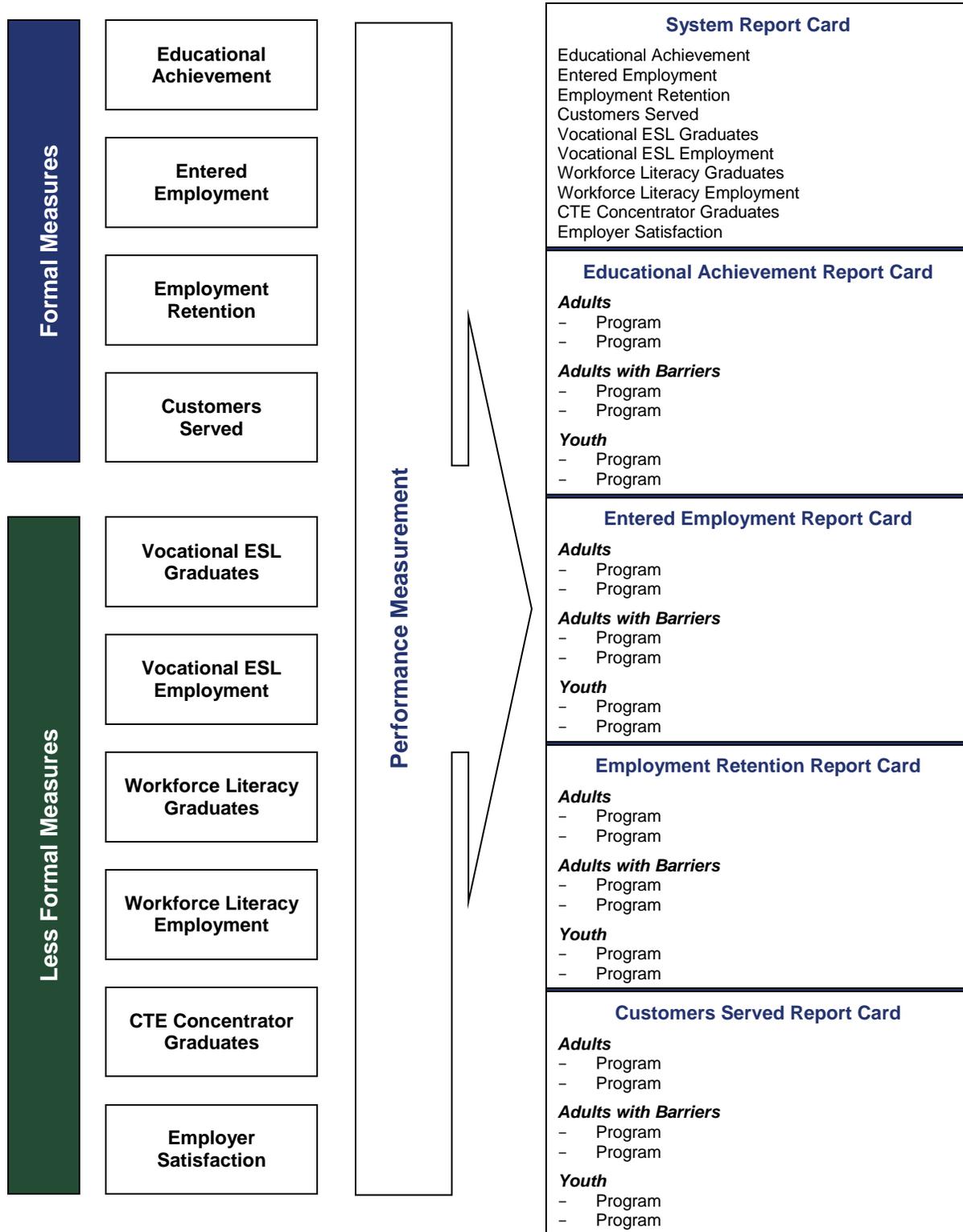
- ▶ *System Report Card* – This report card contains aggregate data for the four Formal measures, with the data sets combined across programs. It also includes data for the Less Formal measures. Since Less Formal measures are specific to a single program, there is no data aggregation.
- ▶ *Formal Measure Report Cards* – Individual report cards with accompanying analysis are included for each of the four Formal measures, with outcome data by program organized into three categories: Adults, Adults with Barriers, and Youth. Each program is assigned to one of the three categories in order to establish the greatest level of outcome equivalency and comparability.

Programs in the Adults with Barriers category meet at least one of four criteria as a characteristic of the participant population: economically disadvantaged, educationally disadvantaged, incarcerated, or

physically or mentally impaired and requiring adaptive or rehabilitative services. Data for these programs address the Council's mandate to report on work development programs that focus on welfare to work initiatives.

## Report Card Structure for Reporting and Evaluating Measures

- ★ **System Report Card (1)** – Aggregates and weights based on total participant population.
- ★ **Formal Measure Report Cards (4)** – Report by population segment, program, and aggregate.



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## REPORT CARD SERIES

The System report card shows the performance of Texas' workforce system and includes totals for each of the four Formal measures that have been aggregated and weighted by the number of program participants. The card also shows the number, percent where applicable, and rates of change for both the Formal and Less Formal measures. In this report, the change columns reflect the increase or decrease between values in the 2014 report and those reported for 2015, and the cumulative change from 2009 to 2015.

Following the System report card, a report card for each Formal measure is presented and discussed. The next section of the report presents the Less Formal measures by goal, definition, benchmark, and data sets.

The Council is required by statute to report program-level data and to provide an overall assessment of implementation of the workforce system strategic plan, *Advancing Texas*. As noted in the Data Treatment and Limitations section on page 4, the aggregate data presented in the report card series should be viewed as an approximation of overall system performance.

## System

<b>2015 Workforce System Report Card</b>				
<b>Formal Measures</b>	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Change 2014–2015</b>	<b>Cumulative 2009–2015</b>
Educational Achievement <sup>11</sup>	504,073	81.33%	-0.16%	6.92%
Entered Employment <sup>12</sup>	1,024,057	76.26%	2.96%	-1.36%
Employment Retention <sup>13</sup>	929,206	84.02%	1.21%	0.81%
Customers Served <sup>14</sup>	4,962,054	N/A	1.58%	-5.27%
<b>Less Formal Measures<sup>15</sup></b>				
CTE Concentrator Graduates <sup>A</sup>	119,668	82.33%	1.17%	2.90%
Vocational ESL Graduates <sup>B</sup>	<i>Final 2014 data published in the <b>Less Formal Measures</b> section.</i>			
Vocational ESL Employment <sup>B</sup>	<i>Final 2014 data published in the <b>Less Formal Measures</b> section.</i>			
Employer Satisfaction	<i>Agency-specific data published in <b>Less Formal Measures</b> section.</i>			

The report card series is a useful tool to present overall system performance, but the data presented should be taken in context. Most programs are designed to serve participants that meet specific eligibility criteria and have unique needs. Accordingly, program objectives and desired outcomes vary, and approved data definitions and methodologies are program-specific. Additionally, integrated service delivery strategies may result in duplication of customer counts across programs. The System report card contains aggregate data for all agencies' applicable programs by measure as noted on the Formal measure report cards. Due to known duplicates that cannot be removed from program-level data, adjustments have been calculated at the System level, with unduplicated data footnoted as applicable.

<sup>11</sup> The aggregate Educational Achievement rate, adjusted to exclude duplicate TWC customers, is 81.32%. The Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) previously reported that there were significant changes to the methodology for Secondary Technical Corrections. Comparable revised data were not available for the 2009 baseline year; therefore, the revised 2010 data for this program were used when calculating the cumulative change rate. The methodology for the TJJD's Secondary Academic Corrections measure was revised in 2014; however, comparable prior-year data were not available.

<sup>12</sup> The aggregate Entered Employment rate, adjusted to exclude duplicate TWC customers, is 75.90%.

<sup>13</sup> The aggregate Employment Retention rate, adjusted to exclude duplicate TWC customers, is 84.03%.

<sup>14</sup> The aggregate Customers Served count, adjusted to exclude duplicate TWC customers, is 4,813,885.

<sup>15</sup> Five of the six Less Formal measures are tied to pilot projects, with data becoming available in different reporting cycles. The workforce literacy pilots ended in June 2013, and pilot data are presented in the **Less Formal Measures** section. Senate Bill 307 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) mandated transfer of adult education and literacy programs from the TEA to the TWC. The program was transferred on September 1, 2013. The TWC's initial request for proposals met the intent of this *Advancing Texas* objective by requiring service providers to implement career pathways programs.

(A) 2010 baseline data were used to calculate the cumulative change rate.

(B) Reporting for the two Vocational ESL measures began in 2012. This year, the Council requested that the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board submit revised Less Formal measures data for the 2014 reporting cycle in order to have complete, final data set(s) for both measures.

Educational Achievement<sup>16</sup>

<b>2015 Educational Achievement Report Card</b>				
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Change 2014–2015</b>	<b>Cumulative 2009–2015</b>
<b>Adults</b>				
CTC Academic	19,801	26.32%	-1.87%	0.05%
CTC Technical	9,280	29.81%	5.29%	6.63%
Apprenticeship	3,473	80.94%	-0.72%	5.06%
Dislocated WIA I	1,958	94.77%	0.15%	0.07%
Adults WIA I	3,131	92.61%	-0.01%	-1.13%
<b>Adults Total</b>	<b>37,643</b>	<b>32.42%</b>	<b>-0.27%</b>	<b>0.83%</b>
<b>Adults with Barriers</b>				
Adult Education <sup>17</sup>	4,948	65.75%	-7.41%	2.79%
Postsecondary CTC Corrections <sup>18</sup>	1,330	40.23%	-0.48%	9.08%
Secondary Academic Windham	5,095	82.46%	-0.11%	0.27%
Secondary Technical Windham	4,619	78.02%	0.58%	-2.00%
<b>Adults with Barriers Total</b>	<b>15,992</b>	<b>69.74%</b>	<b>-2.74%</b>	<b>5.63%</b>
<b>Youth</b>				
Secondary CTE	140,083	96.36%	0.06%	7.83%
Secondary	308,727	92.63%	0.03%	4.63%
Youth WIA I	2,457	63.24%	-4.19%	10.40%
Secondary Academic Corrections <sup>19</sup>	297	40.14%	-7.38%	-0.41%
Secondary Technical Corrections <sup>20</sup>	204	28.10%	0.02%	13.89%
<b>Youth Total</b>	<b>451,768</b>	<b>93.34%</b>	<b>0.02%</b>	<b>6.45%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>504,073</b>	<b>81.33%</b>	<b>-0.16%</b>	<b>6.92%</b>

<sup>16</sup> Educational achievement includes participant outcomes for both educational and training programs. Data subsets (duplicates) include Postsecondary CTC Corrections. The card total has been adjusted to provide an unduplicated count.

<sup>17</sup> Senate Bill 307 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) mandated transfer of adult education and literacy programs from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). The program and the four Formal measures for Adult Education were transferred to the TWC on September 1, 2013. Methodologies were updated to reflect this change as well as revisions to the federal National Reporting System for Adult Education reporting requirements, as applicable. To ensure comparability across the *Advancing Texas* plan period, the TWC submitted revised data for the four Formal measures for 2009 (baseline year) through 2013. Revised data were published in the *Evaluation 2014 Data Addendum*.

<sup>18</sup> As required by SB 1 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature), administrative responsibility for postsecondary education programs transferred from the Windham School District to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's (TDCJ) Rehabilitation Programs Division on September 1, 2013.

<sup>19</sup> The Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) reported a methodology change, effective for the 2014 reporting cycle. Revised prior-year data were not available.

<sup>20</sup> Due to a definition and methodology change, the TJJD submitted revised data for the 2010 and 2011 reporting cycles in 2012. Revised data were not available for 2009; therefore, 2010 data have been used to calculate the multi-year change rate for this measure.

## Educational Achievement Analysis

### **Educational Achievement –**

*number and percent of all program participants who obtain a degree, other credential of completion, or complete the level enrolled in either a training or educational program.*

The data sets in the Educational Achievement report card are from system programs and services that have the acquisition of knowledge and skills as a significant, intended outcome for participants. Data limitations other than general limitations, such as the time lag of unemployment insurance wage matching, are contained within the card footnotes or narrative.

*... overall performance rose 6.92% over the six-year plan period, with 11 of 14 programs realizing percentage gains.*

### **Data**

#### *Adults*

The data range for Adults is from 26.32% for CTC Academic programs to 94.77% for Dislocated WIA I. Performance for two of the five programs increased from 2014, with the largest change reported for CTC Technical (5.29%). Three programs reported performance of greater than 80%. The segment total of 32.42% represents an annual decrease of 0.27% and a six-year increase of 0.83% for the group.

Only CTC Technical reported a one-year increase or decrease that exceeded the 5% variance range. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) cited two reasons for the 5.29% increase: (1) increased demand for technical awards due to the economic recovery, and (2) increased number of stackable certificates/awards due to the use of career pathways.

The largest six-year increases were reported for CTC Technical (6.63%) and Apprenticeship (5.06%), while Adults WIA I (-1.13%) posted the only decrease.

CTC Academic and Technical program data are based on a starting cohort and total awards earned within a six-year period. The data sets include certificates, associate's degrees, and higher degrees. While these data reflect the success of a specific cohort across time, they do not indicate the educational success of students in a 12-month period as measured by the awarding of certificates or associate degrees. In academic year 2013–14, 99,176 CTC academic and technical credentials were awarded, an increase of 6.00% from 2014 and a six-year increase of 67.42%. The number is more than triple the completions, or graduation rate, reported this year under the longitudinal definition. For this reason, the Council requested 12-month credential data from the THECB in order to provide a more complete representation of educational achievement in Texas' community and technical colleges. Of the 99,176 credentials awarded:

- ▶ Academic degrees awarded (45,270) increased 10.79% from the prior year and 90.19% over the six-year period. The THECB reported that the number of reverse transfer degrees (i.e., transfer from four-year to two-year institution) has continued to increase rapidly. In addition, initiatives were developed to increase the graduation rate.
- ▶ Technical certificates and degrees awarded (53,906) rose 2.28% and 52.12%, respectively, from 2014 and 2009. The THECB previously reported that technical programs developed as "pathways" matured, resulting in more awarded certificates and degrees.

#### *Adults with Barriers*

The data range for Adults with Barriers is from 40.23% for Postsecondary CTC Corrections, a program that deals with incarcerated adults, to 82.46% for Secondary Academic Windham. An overall annual decrease of 2.74% was noted for the group, but there was an overall six-year rise of 5.63%.

Adult Education declined 7.41% this year, but rose 2.79% over the six-year period. The TWC reported that the change to the 2014 GED created considerable challenges that affected performance. In Program

Year (PY) 2013–14, a large number of students tested prior to January 2014—when the new test was implemented—in order to complete their assessment battery using the old GED exam. This resulted in a large number of students testing during the PY, with those students posting a higher completion level due to the less rigorous nature of the previous GED test. PY 2014–15 was the first full year of implementation with the 2014 GED, which is considerably more challenging and requires stronger comprehension skills—particularly in math. Training is provided through the state professional development system to assist with teaching the higher-level competencies. In addition, the TWC noted that local programs have reported that current instructional staff may not have the skill sets needed to teach to the higher competencies and are seeking to hire staff with the required skill sets.

Although a significant six-year increase (9.08%) was reported for Postsecondary CTC Corrections, the rate fell slightly (-0.48%) again this year. Of 3,306 individuals served, 1,330 were awarded a community or technical college postsecondary degree or certificate, up from 1,293 of 3,176 last year, but significantly less than 2,055 of 6,597 in 2009. Over the plan period, state funding for college programming was significantly reduced, decreasing the number of offenders served and the resulting educational outcomes. Last year, the TDCJ reported that a new vocational course added during the spring and summer semesters and an additional location for academic courses added during the summer semester contributed to increased enrollment; however, participants did not have sufficient time to obtain certification or a degree.

#### *Youth*

The Youth category includes five programs, with a data range of 28.10% for Secondary Technical Corrections to 96.36% for Secondary CTE. In the Youth segment, 451,768 individuals achieved educational outcomes, a slight increase (0.02%) from 2014 and a significant one (6.45%) from 2009.

One of the five programs reported a change that exceeded the 5% variance range, Secondary Academic Corrections. The TJJD attributed the 7.38% decline to the reduction in the overall population of youthful offenders.

Significant six-year increases were reported for three programs: Secondary Technical Corrections (13.89%), Youth WIA I (10.40%), and Secondary CTE (7.83%).

#### *Total*

The absolute number of individuals with an educational achievement outcome (numerator) increased again this year, up to 504,073 compared to 447,195 in 2009. Of the 14 programs, six had absolute increases this year, compared to nine the previous year.

Of the 619,751 program participants, 504,073 (81.33%) achieved an educational outcome, a six-year rise of 6.92%. Postsecondary CTC Corrections' completion numbers of 1,330 in the Adults with Barriers segment were subtracted from the aggregate of all programs to achieve the unduplicated performance total and percent.

Overall performance rose 6.92% over with six-year plan period, with 11 of 14 programs realizing percentage gains. The largest six-year increases were reported for Secondary Technical Corrections (13.89%) and Youth WIA I (10.40%).

#### *Additional Data*

The following data sets were provided by partner agencies so that a more comprehensive picture of educational achievement could be presented, thereby providing important contextual information.

- ▶ Career schools and colleges awarded 84,250 degrees and certificates, a decrease of 11.71% from the prior year but a 29.65% increase from 2009. These awards include certificates reported by the TWC (52,885), as well as certificates and degrees reported by the THECB (31,365). With more career schools and for-profit institutions reporting to the THECB, the number of certificates and degrees awarded increased from 9,994 in 2009 to a high of 40,170 in 2013, declining to 31,365 this year. The 2015 figure includes 15,273 certificates, 7,606 associate's degrees, and 8,486 bachelor's

degrees. While the number of institutions reporting to the THECB increased earlier in the plan period, it decreased this year. The agency also noted that changes in federal Pell legislation, affecting the grant program available to undergraduate students, contributed to decreased enrollment and persistence at the for-profit institutions.

- ▶ Of Secondary Windham enrollments, 59.25% completed the level in which they were enrolled, based on a revised, more inclusive methodology. This represents decreases of 2.44% and 1.44% from 2014 and 2009, respectively.
- ▶ Of the 478,665 enrollments in Secondary and Secondary CTE programs, 14,081 were in Tech Prep, a six-year decrease of 92.08%. Higher enrollment in previous years was partially attributable to the availability of federal funds received under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and other one-time supplemental appropriations. In addition, Tech Prep education state grants were defunded in federal fiscal year 2011. The TEA has continued to track data for this comprehensive, articulated program that offers participants the opportunity to study in a career program in high school and either gain credit or experience, which will assist them in their transition to higher education.

Data reported by the agency represent a subset of career technical education (CTE) concentrators, those students who take two or more CTE courses for three or more credits. The TEA noted that when Congress defunded Tech Prep, states did not have funding to support these activities. While school districts report increasingly fewer Tech Prep students, the number of CTE concentrators is increasing. Tech Prep data collection will end with the 2015–16 school year, with reporting only for high school seniors over that time frame.

- ▶ Adult Education students completed the level in which they were enrolled at a rate of 52.19%, down from last year (-10.61%) and 2009 (-0.10%). The TWC noted that the post-testing rate was much lower this year, leading to lower achievement overall. The agency attributed this to challenges associated with the implementation of new adult education contracts following the program's transfer to the TWC. In some service areas, grant recipients remained the same under the new contracts, while other areas saw a shift in grant recipients and providers. In such cases, students had to move locations, causing attrition.

Prior to 2014, data were also reported for the number of adults who (1) enrolled, (2) were assessed, and (3) had the minimum of 12 hours of class time required for inclusion in federal reporting. Under the revised National Reporting System for Adult Education reporting requirements, the methodology duplicates the Customers Served measure for Adult Education.

## Entered Employment

<b>2015 Entered Employment Report Card</b>				
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Change 2014–2015</b>	<b>Cumulative 2009–2015</b>
<b>Adults</b>				
CTC Academic	32,656	88.98%	1.93%	-0.25%
CTC Technical	33,339	83.69%	-0.05%	-2.99%
Skills Development	793	98.51%	2.50%	2.48%
Trade Adjustment	1,169	75.76%	0.05%	-8.98%
Veterans E&T	27,034	72.89%	1.29%	-2.60%
Employment Services	737,765	76.28%	3.57%	-1.62%
Dislocated WIA I	4,675	85.42%	2.00%	-2.38%
Adults WIA I	14,272	87.05%	6.85%	2.37%
<b>Adults Total</b>	<b>851,703</b>	<b>77.07%</b>	<b>3.51%</b>	<b>-1.29%</b>
<b>Adults with Barriers</b>				
Blind Services	1,478	70.08%	-9.34%	-0.08%
Rehabilitation Services	13,680	66.60%	0.04%	9.68%
Adult Education <sup>21</sup>	4,813	43.72%	0.88%	-2.89%
SNAP E&T	21,938	78.08%	-3.56%	-5.36%
Self-Sufficiency	145	72.86%	-5.60%	-12.12%
SCSEP	132	51.97%	-2.22%	12.10%
TANF Choices	20,981	85.14%	2.51%	-2.18%
<b>Adults with Barriers Total</b>	<b>63,167</b>	<b>72.73%</b>	<b>-0.64%</b>	<b>-1.86%</b>
<b>Youth</b>				
Secondary CTE	104,778	72.19%	1.30%	-0.87%
Youth WIA I	4,409	75.95%	1.89%	4.46%
<b>Youth Total</b>	<b>109,187</b>	<b>72.34%</b>	<b>1.33%</b>	<b>-0.62%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,024,057</b>	<b>76.26%</b>	<b>2.96%</b>	<b>-1.36%</b>

<sup>21</sup> Senate Bill 307 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) mandated transfer of adult education and literacy programs from the Texas Education Agency to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). The program and the four Formal measures for Adult Education were transferred to the TWC on September 1, 2013. Methodologies were updated to reflect this change as well as revisions to the federal National Reporting System for Adult Education reporting requirements, as applicable. To ensure comparability across the *Advancing Texas* plan period, the TWC submitted revised data for the four Formal measures for 2009 (baseline year) through 2013. Revised data were published in the *Evaluation 2014 Data Addendum*.

## Entered Employment Analysis

### **Entered Employment –**

*number and percent of all program participants who secure employment after exiting a program.*

The data sets in the Entered Employment report card are from workforce system programs and services that have the acquisition of employment as a significant, intended outcome for participants. Data limitations other than general limitations, such as the time lag of unemployment (UI) wage matching, are contained within the card footnotes or narrative.

As noted in the **Introduction**, there is a delay in receiving and analyzing UI wage records for measuring performance such as entered employment. While the programs have different reporting cycles, most data reflect performance for mid-to-late 2013 and continue to reflect the economic recovery.

*... overall performance declined 1.36% over the six-year plan period, with five of 17 programs realizing percentage gains.*

### **Data**

#### *Adults*

The data range for Adults is from 72.89% for Veterans E&T to 98.51% for Skills Development. All eight programs reported performance of over 72%. An annual increase of 3.51% was noted for the group, while performance was down 1.29% from 2009.

While all eight programs experienced declines in 2010, several have reported increases since then, with seven reporting increases this year. A significant six-year decline was reported for Trade Adjustment (-8.98%), a federally funded program that helps workers who are adversely affected by foreign imports or off shoring of jobs.

Only Adults WIA I reported a change that exceeded the 5% variance range. The program had a one-year gain of 6.85%, with a six-year rise of 2.37%. The TWC attributed the continued increase to a strong hiring environment following the economic recovery.

The largest absolute change was reported for Employment Services, with 737,765 individuals entering employment (numerator) compared to 813,925 last year and 1,062,058 in 2010. However, the entered employment rate rose 3.57% from 2014, which continues to point to a strong economy.

Of note, the absolute number of individuals entering employment continued to rise for both CTC Academic and CTC Technical.

#### *Adults with Barriers*

The data range for this group is from 43.72% for Adult Education to 85.14% for TANF Choices. Of the seven programs, four reported entered employment rates of 70% or higher. After rising for three consecutive years, overall performance fell slightly (-0.64%), representing a six-year decrease of 1.86%.

Three programs reported positive changes this year and of the four reporting decreases, two exceeded the 5% variance range: Blind Services and Self-Sufficiency.

After posting a significant increase (10.86%) last year, Blind Services declined 9.34%, resulting in a slight loss (-0.08%) since 2009. The Health and Human Services Commission's Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) previously noted that the Division for Blind Services implemented procedures to increase the entered employment rate. For example, evaluation services before determining participants' eligibility were increased. In addition, management review of cases were conducted prior to unsuccessful closure in an attempt to identify strategies that might result in a successful closure based on established criteria.

This year, DARS reported that the number of successful case closures (numerator) for Blind Services—1,478 compared to 1,397 in 2014—increased over the previous year and exceeded the state legislative target. The 2015 employment rate of 70.08% also exceeded the state legislative target and the federal benchmark of 68.9%. Concurrently, a management-directed effort focused on counselors exercising case management best practices and closing cases where a successful outcome could not be achieved.

Self-Sufficiency declined 5.60% and 12.12% from 2014 and 2009, respectively. The TWC noted that while the employment rate declined, the number of participants receiving services under Self-Sufficiency rose—highlighting the high rate of clients unable to enter employment due to barriers such as lack of transportation or childcare.

#### *Youth*

The Youth category includes two programs, with the segment rising 1.33% from 2014, but falling 0.62% over the six-year period. Secondary CTE rose 1.30%, resulting in a 0.87% decrease from 2009. Youth WIA I rose 1.89% from 2014, representing a 4.46% increase over the six-year period.

#### *Total*

Of the 1,342,832 program participants, 1,024,057 (76.26%) entered employment. This figure represents an increase of 2.96% from 2014 but a six-year decrease of 1.36%. Twelve of 17 programs showed one-year percentage increases. Two programs posted six-year double-digit percentage changes: Self-Sufficiency (-12.12%) and SCSEP (12.10%).

After rising in 2010 and 2011, the absolute number of individuals served fell again this year and the number entering employment fell slightly compared to the prior year. The number of program participants (denominator) was 1,342,832, down from the 2011 high of 1,901,523. The number entering employment (numerator) decreased from 1,107,573 last year to 1,024,057, with 10 of 17 programs reporting absolute increases.

For most programs, data reported in 2010 reflected participants exiting during the recession. Performance declines were expected to continue in 2011 and possibly 2012 given the delay in UI wage reporting. Since then, gains reported by many programs reflect continued economic improvement.

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## Employment Retention

## 2015 Employment Retention Report Card

	Actual	Percent	Change 2014–2015	Cumulative 2009–2015
<b>Adults</b>				
CTC Academic	19,768	85.81%	-0.23%	-1.16%
CTC Technical	27,651	91.34%	-0.33%	-0.70%
Skills Development	22,779	96.30%	0.40%	2.45%
Trade Adjustment	1,051	91.39%	1.51%	-1.40%
Veterans E&T	31,160	86.40%	1.66%	-0.53%
Employment Services	746,431	84.29%	1.22%	0.89%
Dislocated WIA I	4,422	89.90%	0.33%	-0.30%
Adults WIA I	13,906	79.23%	-0.64%	-6.02%
<b>Adults Total</b>	<b>867,168</b>	<b>84.84%</b>	<b>1.19%</b>	<b>0.73%</b>
<b>Adults with Barriers</b>				
Blind Services	725	88.41%	1.23%	1.70%
Rehabilitation Services	9,628	87.36%	-0.40%	1.46%
Adult Education <sup>22</sup>	17,878	57.71%	2.44%	-2.69%
SNAP E&T	15,929	87.25%	-0.25%	4.67%
Self-Sufficiency	75	78.13%	-10.63%	-5.75%
TANF Choices	15,275	79.47%	0.27%	2.11%
<b>Adults with Barriers Total</b>	<b>59,510</b>	<b>74.02%</b>	<b>1.13%</b>	<b>0.86%</b>
<b>Youth</b>				
Youth WIA I	2,528	75.51%	2.43%	1.35%
<b>Youth Total</b>	<b>2,528</b>	<b>75.51%</b>	<b>2.43%</b>	<b>1.35%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>929,206</b>	<b>84.02%</b>	<b>1.21%</b>	<b>0.81%</b>

<sup>22</sup> Senate Bill 307 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) mandated transfer of adult education and literacy programs from the Texas Education Agency to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). The program and the four Formal measures for Adult Education were transferred to the TWC on September 1, 2013. Methodologies were updated to reflect this change as well as revisions to the federal National Reporting System for Adult Education reporting requirements, as applicable. To ensure comparability across the *Advancing Texas* plan period, the TWC submitted revised data for the four Formal measures for 2009 (baseline year) through 2013. Revised data were published in the *Evaluation 2014 Data Addendum*.

## Employment Retention Analysis

### **Employment Retention –**

*number and percent of all program participants who retain employment at a specified point after exiting a program.*

As with Entered Employment, the data sets in the Employment Retention report card are from workforce system programs and services that have the acquisition and maintenance of employment as a significant, intended outcome for participants. Data limitations other than general limitations, such as the time lag of unemployment insurance (UI) wage matching, are contained within the card footnotes or narrative.

*... overall performance rose 0.81% over the six-year plan period, with seven of 15 programs realizing percentage gains.*

There is a significant delay in receiving and analyzing UI wage records for measuring retention. The programs have different reporting cycles, with some reported measures reflecting the effects of the economic recession later than others. Despite expectations that the recession would be a significant factor in 2011 and possibly 2012, improved outcomes have been reported for the last five years.

### **Data**

#### *Adults*

The data range for Adults is from 79.23% for Adults WIA I to 96.30% for Skills Development. Overall, this segment increased from last year (1.19%) and over the six-year period (0.73%).

No programs reported an increase or decrease that exceeded the 5% variance range. Five of the eight programs reported increases this year. The largest increase was posted for Veterans E&T (1.66%), while Adults WIA I fell 0.64%. The largest six-year changes were reported for Adults WIA I (-6.02%) and Skills Development (2.45%).

#### *Adults with Barriers*

The data range for Adults with Barriers is from 57.71% for Adult Education to 88.41% for Blind Services, with five of six programs reporting retention of over 78%. Overall, performance increased 1.13% and 0.86% from 2014 and 2009, respectively. Three programs posted positive changes from the prior year.

Only one program reported a change that exceeded the 5% variance range. After increasing last year, Self-Sufficiency declined 10.63%—a six-year decrease of 5.75%. The Self Sufficiency program provides grants to community and technical colleges and community-based organizations to implement customized job training programs in cooperation with employers and to help low-income individuals and those receiving public assistance achieve self-sufficiency and independence. The TWC noted that participants often have one or more challenges (e.g., childcare, transportation) that affect the ability to obtain or retain employment. Projects continue to be designed with support services in an effort to increase employment retention.

The greatest six-year increase was reported for SNAP E&T (4.67%). This program promotes long-term self-sufficiency and independence by preparing recipients for employment through work-related education and training activities.

#### *Youth*

The Youth category includes only one program. Performance for Youth WIA I rose 2.43% from 2014 and 1.35% over the six-year period.

#### *Total*

Of the 1,105,896 program participants who entered employment, 929,206 (84.02%) retained employment. This represents increases of 1.21% from 2014 and 0.81% from 2009.

The absolute number of individuals entering employment and the number retaining employment fell this year. The number of individuals finding employment (denominator) was 1,105,896, compared to 1,148,409 in 2014. The number retaining employment (numerator) decreased from 951,054 to 929,206. The decreases are largely attributable to the Employment Services program, with lower service numbers expected as the economy continued to improve.

In 2010, data reported for most programs reflected individuals who exited during the recession. That accounted for the performance declines experienced by programs with positive trends during the last strategic plan period, which includes all programs in the Adults category. That trend was expected to continue in the 2011 and 2012 reporting cycles; however, the overall percentage of individuals retaining employment has risen annually the last five years.

Overall performance rose 0.81% over with six-year plan period, with seven of 15 programs realizing percentage gains. The largest six-year increases were reported for SNAP E&T (4.67%) and Skills Development (2.45%).

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Customers Served<sup>23</sup>

<b>2015 Customers Served Report Card</b>			
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Change 2014–2015</b>	<b>Cumulative 2009–2015</b>
<b>Adults</b>			
CTC Academic	450,663	0.65%	18.91%
CTC Technical	183,101	-3.55%	12.85%
Apprenticeship	4,648	8.32%	13.95%
Skills Development	26,040	101.27%	-5.48%
Trade Adjustment	3,886	0.60%	-39.77%
Veterans E&T	29,863	-38.26%	-67.65%
Employment Services	1,223,098	-3.73%	-32.39%
Dislocated WIA I	8,965	6.56%	-46.99%
Adults WIA I	38,053	30.71%	23.00%
<b>Adults Total</b>	<b>1,968,317</b>	<b>-2.32%</b>	<b>-22.15%</b>
<b>Adults with Barriers</b>			
Blind Services	11,038	4.39%	8.81%
Rehabilitation Services	75,738	7.80%	5.31%
Adult Education <sup>A</sup>	78,385	1.88%	-14.31%
SNAP E&T	55,435	33.36%	91.41%
Self-Sufficiency	1,517	702.65%	97.78%
SCSEP	964	-19.20%	-35.04%
TANF Choices	33,627	-17.98%	-44.53%
Postsecondary CTC Corrections <sup>A</sup>	3,306	4.09%	-49.89%
Secondary Academic Windham	54,773	0.50%	-26.08%
Secondary Technical Windham	10,554	14.87%	-6.52%
<b>Adults with Barriers Total</b>	<b>325,337</b>	<b>5.43%</b>	<b>-8.96%</b>
<b>Youth</b>			
Secondary CTE	1,210,587	6.07%	19.53%
Secondary	1,449,066	2.77%	11.18%
Youth WIA I	8,955	-7.01%	-74.77%
Secondary Academic Corrections	1,862	-5.24%	-50.35%
Secondary Technical Corrections	1,236	-7.14%	-62.10%
<b>Youth Total</b>	<b>2,671,706</b>	<b>4.19%</b>	<b>13.27%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,962,054</b>	<b>1.58%</b>	<b>-5.27%</b>

<sup>23</sup> Data subsets (duplicates) include Postsecondary CTC Corrections. The card total has been adjusted to provide an unduplicated count.

<sup>A</sup> Administrative responsibility changed effective September 1, 2013. Additional information provided in report narrative.

## Customers Served Analysis

### **Customers Served –**

*number of employers and individuals who received system services, including program participation.*

As with all other Formal measures, the data sets in the Customers Served report card are from Texas' workforce system programs and services. Data limitations other than general limitations addressed in the **Introduction** are contained within the card footnotes or narrative.

While Customers Served is typically defined and treated as a lag measure, it was recommended for inclusion as a Formal measure for two reasons:

- ▶ Customers Served may be used as a lead measure for the purpose of system strategic planning given its tie to program infrastructure usage and capacity; and
- ▶ Total Customers Served indicates the number of individuals served by system programs and services. It should be noted that a given individual might receive services from one or more programs, either concurrently or at different points in time. Thus, the absolute number of individuals served is typically less than the total presented on the Customers Served report card as it represents aggregate, program-level participation counts. While known duplicates cannot be removed from program-level data, adjustments have been calculated at the System report card level, footnoted as a point of reference on page 11.

*... the number served declined 5.27% over the six-year plan period, largely due to the economic recovery.*

As stated on the previous page (note A), administrative responsibility for two programs changed during the plan period:

- ▶ *Adult Education* – As required by Senate Bill (SB) 307 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature), administrative responsibility for adult education and literacy programs transferred from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). The program and the four Formal measures for Adult Education were transferred to the TWC on September 1, 2013. Methodologies were updated to reflect this change as well as revisions to the federal National Reporting System for Adult Education reporting requirements, as applicable. Prior to 2014, data were reported for all students; however, students must now have 12 contact hours and a baseline assessment. To ensure comparability across the *Advancing Texas* plan period, the TWC submitted revised data for the four Formal measures for 2009 (baseline year) through 2013. Revised data were published in the *Evaluation 2014 Data Addendum* and used for all calculations.
- ▶ *Postsecondary CTC Corrections* – As required by SB 1 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature), administrative responsibility for postsecondary education programs transferred from the Windham School District to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's Rehabilitation Programs Division, effective September 1, 2013.

Program data submitted this year reflect participation from August/September 2014 through August 2015. The beginning effects of the recession were evidenced by several programs in *Evaluation 2009*, with that trend continuing in 2010 and to a lesser degree in 2011. In many cases, significant decreases in service levels reported in 2011 were due to the expiration of supplemental funding such as that provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009. While some decreases are attributable to reduced federal or state funding levels, in large part the number served since 2012 reflects the improved economy. Notably, many reported decreases were for programs that typically have higher enrollment during adverse economic conditions.

## Data

### Adults

The data range for Adults is from 3,886 customers served by Trade Adjustment programs to 1,223,098 served by Employment Services through local boards' workforce centers and WorkInTexas.com. The nine programs in this segment reported serving 1,968,317 individuals, down 2.32% from last year and 22.15% from 2009.

Veterans E&T (-38.26%) decreased again this year, with a six-year decrease of 67.65%. Previously, the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) attributed declining performance to the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) issuance of Priority of Service guidelines (June 2010) that transferred more basic employment service functions to non-TVC workforce center staff. This transfer allowed the TVC staff to provide more one-on-one intensive services to those most difficult to serve who are identified through a comprehensive assessment process. These veterans often receive assistance overcoming numerous, serious barriers to employment. On April 10, 2014, the DOL issued new guidelines restricting the roles of disabled veterans' outreach program specialists and local veterans' employment representatives staff. The guidance was meant to limit the number of eligible veterans and eligible spouses served by the disabled specialists by requiring a focus on individuals with one or more of six specified, significant barriers to employment (e.g., disabled, homeless, recently released offender). The local employment representatives are to perform only those duties related to outreach to the employer community and facilitation within the state's employment service delivery system. This major policy change continued to affect performance in 2015.

Four TWC programs posted increases that exceeded the 5% variance range:

- ▶ *Skills Development* – The TWC attributed the 101.27% rise to an increase in the number of projects that had an earlier start date for training. The agency noted that some projects had a significant number of trainees connected to them, further contributing to the increase. For example, one project with 975 trainees has been very active from the onset. The number served varied greatly over the six-year period, ranging from 35,599 in 2010 to 12,938 last year.
- ▶ *Adults WIA I and Dislocated WIA I* – Adults WIA I (30.71%) and Dislocated WIA I (6.56%) rose this year. The TWC reported that the increases—higher than projected for fiscal year (FY) 2015—were due to the implementation of a service delivery strategy to provide one-time supportive services in a large workforce area. Examination of the strategy identified that it was being applied too broadly without regard to the comprehensive needs of the WIA customer population. The strategy is being modified to provide support services to participants after development of a complete employment plan.

Adults WIA I increased 23.00% over the plan period, while Dislocated WIA I decreased 46.99% over the six-year span. Dislocated WIA I peaked in 2010 (19,961)—due to the economic recession and the growing number of unemployed individuals, as well as availability of additional funding under the ARRA. The TWC previously noted that the number of Dislocated WIA I customers served tends to follow trends in the larger unemployment insurance (UI) program. As the number of UI claims drops, the number of Dislocated WIA I customers enrolled drops as well. In addition, to ensure that they could continue serving existing participants, many local boards reduced enrollment during the period of uncertainty regarding the potential impact of federal shutdown in 2014.

- ▶ *Apprenticeship* – The TWC reported an increase in the number of apprentices being trained in state FY 2015, rising to 4,648. This represents a gain of 8.32% from 2014 and 13.95% since 2009. There has been general growth across programs, as well as higher participation in new training programs. Of note, carpenters and millwrights added 163 apprentices during the reporting period.

Three education and training-focused programs also reported double-digit increases over the six-year plan period: CTC Academic (18.91%), CTC Technical (12.85%), and Apprenticeship (13.95%). With the exception of Veterans E&T, the programs experiencing double-digit declines from 2009 were those that

were expected to fall following the economic recovery: Trade Adjustment (-39.77%), Employment Services (-32.39%), and Dislocated WIA I (-46.99%).

#### *Adults with Barriers*

The data range for Adults with Barriers is 964 customers served by the SCSEP program to 78,385 customers served by Adult Education and literacy programs. The 10 programs in this segment reported serving 325,337 individuals, representing an increase of 5.43% from last year but an 8.96% decrease from 2009.

Rehabilitation Services rose 7.80% this year, with a six-year increase of 5.31%. The HHSC's Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services reported that the rise reflects a division goal to increase the number of eligible consumers served and the success of strategies employed in field offices throughout the state to accomplish this goal in state FY 2015. Strategies included focusing outreach to underserved populations (e.g., veterans with disabilities and individuals with mental, intellectual, and developmental disabilities); increasing collaboration with community partners; developing teams for outreach and referral tracking; assessing underutilized referral sources; and utilizing public service announcements.

Two TWC programs posted significant increases this year, with significant decreases reported for two:

- ▶ *Self-Sufficiency* – This program assists businesses by designing, financing, and implementing customized job training programs in partnership with public community and technical colleges, a higher education extension service, and community-based organizations, for the creation of new jobs and/or the retraining of the existing workforce. With 1,517 individuals served, performance rose 702.65% this year and 97.78% since 2009. The TWC reported an increase in the number of projects awarded, noting that one project with 310 trainees had been very active—providing training to a majority of the targeted individuals. The number served varied greatly over the six-year period, ranging from 50 in 2011—when the agency did not receive adequate proposals for funding—to 1,517 this year.
- ▶ *SNAP E&T* – After rising in 2010 and 2011, the number of SNAP E&T participants declined for three years before rising 33.36% this year, resulting in a six-year increase of 91.41%. SNAP assists participants in obtaining employment through participation in work programs and education and training activities. The TWC attributed the 2010 and 2011 gains to the weaker economy that resulted in increased caseloads. From 2012 through 2014, the number of new mandatory work registrants eligible for SNAP E&T and referred by the HHSC declined and the local boards continued to reach out to and engage the General Population mandatory work registrants to maintain service levels.<sup>24</sup> This year, the availability of additional funds allowed for an increase in the number of SNAP E&T customers served. However, the TWC noted that there is no certainty the state will receive additional funding in the future.
- ▶ *SCSEP* – The availability of ARRA and DOL additional funding made available through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010, allowed more low-income, older job seekers to receive paid, on-the-job training and employment services in 2010. Enrollments declined 35.04% since 2009, partly due to the expiration of ARRA funding and a reduction in SCSEP grants. While the number served was down 19.20% this year, the TWC reported that the 2014–15 grant was for 494 participants, an increase of eight positions. Under the 2013–14 grant, participants' hours were decreased to 16 per week for six weeks and more participants were able to enroll. The 2014–15 grant had a one-time healthcare grant and a large amount of the participants' wages went to training. The agency stated the DOL did not communicate that healthcare participants had to be paid from the regular 2014–15 grant until after it was awarded; therefore, participants' hours were not decreased until the last two weeks of the grant. With over 60 participants enrolled in healthcare training and using funds from the regular grant, not as many participants were able to enroll in the regular grant.

<sup>24</sup> SNAP recipients ages 16 to 59 who are not employed or are employed fewer than 30 hours per week, are considered SNAP E&T General Population mandatory work registrants, and are required to participate in SNAP E&T. ABAWDs (i.e., Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents—SNAP recipients who are at least 18 but less than 50 years of age and are not employed or are employed less than 20 hours per week) are considered mandatory work registrants and are required to participate in SNAP E&T.

- ▶ *TANF Choices* – The Choices program assists applicants, recipients, nonrecipient parents, and former recipients of TANF cash assistance to transition from welfare to work through participation in work-related activities, including job search, job readiness classes, basic skills training, education, vocational training, and support services. The number served declined 17.98% this year, resulting in a six-year decrease of 44.53%. The TWC reported that the decrease was due to continued reduction in the TANF caseload and the higher proportion of the caseload that is exempt for participation in work activities.

After declining annually since the 2010 high of 93,975, Adult Education rose 1.88% this year to 78,385 customers served; however, service levels declined 14.31% over the six-year plan period. Last year, the TWC changed the measure definition and calculation methodology to be consistent with revised federal requirements. Revised data, published in the *Evaluation 2014 Data Addendum*, were submitted to enable historic comparisons from the 2009 baseline. FY 2013 and FY 2014 were also transitional years for the state's adult education and literacy programs as administrative responsibility transferred from the TEA to the TWC. For FY 2015, the TWC issued a request for proposals for service delivery and negotiated aggressive increases in the number of customers to be served, with increases expected to be reflected in this year's performance data.

Secondary Technical Windham increased 14.87% in 2015, but declined 6.52% from 2009. The TEA reported that the change was due to an expansion in the number of programs available to students.

#### *Youth*

The data range for the Youth category is 1,236 customers served through Secondary Technical Corrections to 1,449,066 customers served by Secondary programs. The five programs in this segment served 2,671,706 individuals, up 4.19% from the prior year and 13.27% from 2009.

Four programs reported one-year changes that exceeded the 5% variance range. Significant six-year changes were reported for all five programs, ranging from an increase of 19.53% for Secondary CTE to a decrease of 74.77% for Youth WIA I.

Secondary CTE rose 6.07%, resulting in a six-year gain of 19.53%. The TEA indicated the change might be due to increased student enrollment in CTE courses in order to meet the requirements for CTE endorsement options under the Foundation High School Program.

Youth WIA I fell 7.01% this year, representing a six-year decrease of 74.77%. The TWC attributed the change to continuing improvement in the economy resulting in more employment opportunities for youth. The agency indicated the decrease might also be a reflection of changing job search options available to youth such as social networking and a proliferation of job posting sites, particularly those catering to specific occupations and industries.

Service levels for both programs administered by the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) fell this year. Secondary Academic Corrections has declined annually, with a 5.24% change this year and a cumulative decrease of 50.35%. The TJJD attributed the 2015 change to the reduction in overall youth population served by the program.

After rising 4.64% last year, Secondary Technical Corrections fell 7.14% in 2015. The TJJD continues to face challenges with hiring and retaining instructors for the workforce development program. In addition, several instructors retired this year.

#### *Total*

Partners in Texas' workforce system served 4,962,054 individuals, representing an increase of 1.58% from last year but a decrease of 5.27% from 2009. Of the 24 programs, service levels rose for 16 this year.

The TWC reported that 88,811 employers received services, up 5.54% from last year, but an overall decrease of 42.31% from 2009. In 2012, the agency noted that at the beginning of FY 2012, local boards were asked to focus on providing employers with more assistance related to hiring, such as through job postings and job fairs. The boards previously provided extensive labor market information (LMI) to employers, raising the question as to whether the employers were using the information. With the shift in focus, employers now obtain LMI assistance only upon request, thus reducing the number served but increasing the emphasis on hiring assistance.

This year, the TWC has prioritized services to employers across multiple programs. The agency noted that, in particular, employers' utilization of Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC) services has increased significantly. The WOTC is a DOL-administered, federal income tax benefit for employers who hire individuals from specified target populations. The WOTC reduces the federal tax liability for a business, serving as an incentive to select job candidates who may be disadvantaged in their efforts to find employment. The main objective of the program is to enable individuals to obtain employment, earn a steady income, and become contributing taxpayers.

In many cases, the higher participation rates reported in 2010 reflected service levels, and receipt of additional program funding, during the recession. This measure is not affected by the reporting delays inherent in post-program measures, such as entered and retained employment. Therefore, the effects of the economic downturn that began prior to 2009 were most evident in the data reported in 2010 for this measure.

While some 2012 decreases were attributable to reduced federal or state funding levels, in large part the 2013 and 2014 results were indicative of economic recovery. Programs associated with negative economic conditions and layoffs, such as Dislocated WIA I that saw significant increases in 2010, fell to lower levels during the recovery. Continued enrollment increases in some academic and skills-based programs such as Apprenticeship and Secondary CTE indicate increased efforts by system partners to provide individuals who are qualified or who are in preparation for shifting skill needs to meet the growing demand for middle-skills jobs.

## LESS FORMAL MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

### Action Plans

Approved by the Governor in October 2009, the six Less Formal measures were derived from action plans (AP) contained in the three key performance areas (KPA) of *Advancing Texas*. These strategy-critical measures established responsibility for end outcomes or outputs that were central to system partners' missions and linked directly to programmatic long term objectives (LTO).

### Actions and Outcomes

Five of the six Less Formal measures were tied to pilot projects, with data becoming available in different reporting cycles. For each measure, the first year of data availability (baseline year) established the benchmark. The measures and related LTOs are presented below, grouped by KPA. Additional details on AP implementation are provided in the **System Accomplishments** section.

#### ***KPA: Systems, Operations, Competencies, and Integration***

*LTO – By 2013, Texas will decrease high school dropout rates by implementing rigorous career technical education (CTE) as a part of the recommended or advanced high school graduation program.*

*LTO Measure:*

*CTE Concentrator Graduates – Percent of CTE concentrators (Code 2 and 3 CTE Participants) who graduate on the recommended or distinguished achievement high school program.*

*Benchmark (established by data submitted for the 2010 report): 79.43%*

*CTE Concentrator percentage: 82.33%*

*Data: 119,668 graduates from a population of 145,348*

*Change from data reported in 2014: 1.17%*

*Cumulative change 2010–2015: 2.90%*

**KPA: Customer Outcomes**

*LTO – By 2013, design and implement integrated Adult Education and workforce skills training programs to enhance employment outcomes for the English language learner population.*

Reporting for both Less Formal measures began in 2012. Prior to 2014, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) was the reporting agency for pilot projects operated under this AP. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), as the funding and managing agency for the projects, provided data to the TEA for review, confirmation, and submission to the Council. Effective last year, the THECB was directly responsible for reporting to the Council. This year, the Council requested that the THECB submit revised data for the 2014 reporting cycle in order to have complete, final data set(s) for both measures. Graduate data remained the same while employment data were updated.

For 2014, the agency noted that the number of students decreased due to the end of funding. Institutions were only required to report data for students funded under the grant, and funding extensions were approved for only three of eight pilot sites.

*LTO Measure 1:*

*Vocational ESL Graduates – Number of vocational English as a Second Language (ESL) graduates (subset of ESL population).*

*Benchmark (established by revised data submitted for the 2012 report): 111*

*Final data (2014): 69*

*Change from data reported in 2013: -65.33%*

*Cumulative change 2012–2014: -37.84%*

*Explanatory Information: Data represent the number of vocational ESL completers (subset of Adult Basic Education Innovation Grant (ABE-IG) participants). It was possible for a student to earn more than one certificate (level 1, state, or national) during the reporting period; however, data reflect an unduplicated count.*

*LTO Measure 2:*

*Vocational ESL Employment – Percent of vocational ESL graduates who obtain employment (subset of ESL population).*

*Benchmark (established by revised data submitted for the 2012 report): 56.19%*

*Employment percentage: 59.42%*

*Final data (2014): 41 counted as entering employment from a population of 69*

*Change from data reported in 2013: -2.89%*

*Cumulative change 2012–2014: 3.23%*

*Explanatory Information: Data represent the percent of vocational ESL program completers in the ABE-IG program who obtain employment after exiting a program (subset of ABE-IG participants).*

*LTO – By 2013, design and implement targeted Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs to enhance employment outcomes for populations requiring workplace literacy skills.*

The TEA began reporting both Less Formal measures in 2012. Senate Bill 307 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) mandated transfer of adult education and literacy programs from the TEA to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), and the program was transferred on September 1, 2013. The TWC's initial request for proposals met the AP's intent by requiring service providers to implement career pathways programs.

Related performance reporting by the TWC reflects this program requirement; therefore, the two Less Formal measures associated with the pilot programs were not transferred to the TWC. Data submitted by the TEA in 2012 and 2013 constitute final reporting for the pilots required under the AP. In 2013, the TEA also submitted other data for the two-year pilot period, including:

- ▶ Fast-track GED instruction integrated with career readiness was offered by adult education providers, with services available at 36 sites in 103 classes.
- ▶ Services were provided to 969 students, with 302 obtaining their GED.
- ▶ The average hours of instruction over a six-to-eight week period was 69.02, and 267 participants received extended class time via distance learning.

*LTO Measure 1:*

*Workforce Literacy Graduates – Number of workforce literacy graduates (subset of ABE population).*

*Benchmark (established by data submitted for the 2012 report): 482*

*Final data (2013): 506*

*Change from data reported in 2012: 4.98%*

*LTO Measure 2:*

*Workforce Literacy Employment – Percent of workforce literacy graduates who obtain employment (subset of ABE population).*

*Benchmark (established by data submitted for the 2013 report): 37.50%*

*Final data (2013): 3 counted as entering employment from a population of 8*

*Explanatory Information: In 2012, reporting for this measure was deferred. Data submitted in 2013 were for a partial program period only, representing outcomes for the initial year of the two-year pilot period. Given transfer of the program to the TWC, revised data were not requested or received in 2014 or 2015.*

**KPA: Programs, Products, and Services**

*LTO – Partner agencies will gather data from employer customers at appropriate intervals to determine employer needs and satisfaction.*

Five system partners had projects that addressed measurement of employer satisfaction with system products and services. Two projects owned by the THECB and the Texas Youth Commission were completed in 2011 and closed in conjunction with approval of the *2012 Update* to the system strategic plan, *Advancing Texas*. For the three active projects, agency-specific measures and definitions were developed during the *2012 Update* review process, with reporting beginning in 2012.

*LTO Measure – Health and Human Services Commission-Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS):*

*Employer Satisfaction – Percent of Vocational Rehabilitation business partners satisfied with services provided.*

*Benchmark (established by data submitted for the 2012 report): 83.02%*

*Satisfaction rate: 85.71%*

*Data: 18 counted as satisfied from a population of 21 survey respondents*

*Change from data reported in 2014: 7.14%*

*Cumulative change 2012–2015: 2.70%*

*Survey Response Rate: 52.50%*

*Explanatory Information: In fiscal year (FY) 2015, DARS redesigned its approach to staffing, tracking, and delivering business services. This effort was part of the priorities and strategies in the Health and Human Services System/DARS Strategic Plan for 2015–19 and was a management action approved by the Sunset Advisory Commission. To implement the recommendations, DARS developed a consolidated portfolio of services to businesses and implemented a single business services tracking and reporting system. As a result, the baseline data for employers was reset in the new database, resulting in fewer employers being surveyed.*

*This year, DARS also revised the survey tool; therefore, the results are not entirely comparable to FY 2014 results, but are a reasonable indicator of employer satisfaction. In FY 2016, DARS is considering options for a redesigned customer service survey that aligns with the services and system established for the consolidated employer relations functions of the Divisions for Blind and Rehabilitation Services.*

*LTO Measure – Texas Veterans Commission (TVC)*

*Employer Satisfaction – Percent of veterans business representative employer customers satisfied with services provided.*

*Benchmark (established by data submitted for the 2012 report): 92.31%*

*Satisfaction rate: 88.10%*

*Data: 74 counted as satisfied from a population of 84 survey respondents*

*Change from data reported in 2014: 0.04%*

*Cumulative change 2012–2015: -4.21%*

*Survey Response Rate: 48.00%*

*Explanatory Information: The TVC completes two employer satisfaction surveys annually as part of the agency’s efforts to increase employer outreach and partnerships. Due to guidance from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Veterans’ Employment and Training Service, the veterans employment representatives were integrated with the local veterans employment representatives. All veterans employer liaisons are being incorporated as team members in local workforce boards’ business service units to focus primarily on outreach to the employer community and facilitation within the state’s employment service delivery system.*

*LTO Measure – Windham School District (Windham)*

*Employer Satisfaction – Percent of employers satisfied with services provided.*

*Benchmark (established by data submitted for the 2012 report): 96.43%*

*Satisfaction rate: 94.29%*

*Data: 33 counted as satisfied from a population of 35 survey respondents*

*Change from data reported in 2014: -5.71%*

*Cumulative change 2012–2015: -2.14%*

*Survey Response Rate: n/a*

*Explanatory Information: Fifty-seven employer surveys were submitted. Of those, 35 included responses specific to calculation of the employer satisfaction measure. The response rate cannot be calculated as the base sample size is not known for each survey strategy. Aggregate data were reported for three survey distribution strategies, with the number of total employers responding for each presented below:*

<i>Method 1: Distribution by Texas Department of Criminal Justice Parole Division/metro areas</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>Method 2: Distribution by Windham staff at workforce centers, job fairs, and to other stakeholders</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Method 3: Distribution by Windham staff to employers that work closely with CTE instructors</i>	<i>10</i>

## SYSTEM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Action Plans

Action plans (AP) are the high-level plans that identify the major tasks, milestones, time frames, and performance measures necessary for achieving the 14 long term objectives (LTO) and/or system goals outlined in *Advancing Texas*. Typically, APs span multiple years and assign accountability to a system partner(s) for each major task or milestone. They are driven by the plan's overall mission, strategy statements, LTOs, and critical success factors.

Two types of APs were included in *Advancing Texas*:

- ▶ *System APs* affect the system as a whole, include multiple partners at various times, and are directly linked to the system LTOs.
- ▶ *Partner APs* affect a specific partner and are usually linked to a programmatic LTO of a specific agency.

### Key Outcomes

Outcomes for the 14 LTOs are presented below, grouped by the plan's three key performance areas (KPA). During the development of *Advancing Texas*, the KPAs were determined by examining similarities between the critical business issues and by identifying where those issues affect the state's workforce system.

#### ***KPA: Systems, Operations, Competencies, and Integration***

This KPA included four APs that addressed system issues, such as the need for current supply-demand information and several projects related to career and technical education (CTE).

*LTO – Produce each biennium, commencing in 2010, a report that documents an assessment of the number and type of postsecondary education and training credentials (certificate, level two certificate, associate, bachelor's and advanced degrees) required to match the demand for a skilled and educated workforce. The assessment will include the number of forecast net job openings by occupation at each level of postsecondary education and training and the number of credentials needed to match that forecast.*

This LTO addressed an integrated planning initiative that required partner coordination. Work has been completed by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to create a supply and demand database, through the TWC's Strategic Workforce Assessment Program (SWAP).

*... effectively integrating planning initiatives that require partner coordination to ensure alignment.*

Readily available supply-demand reports provide data that help education and training providers to plan and better align their programs to industry needs as customers can access local data and produce customized reports. SWAP provides pre-defined occupational subsets for local workforce area target occupations; AchieveTexas career clusters; and science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) occupations. Within SWAP, an occupations-to-programs crosswalk validated by the TWC uses the Standard Occupational Classification system and the Classification of Instructional Programs. New features, reports, data items, and analytical tools are in continuous development, dependent on user needs and available funding.

Initially, the TWC developed a *SWAP User's Guide* to introduce stakeholders to SWAP's analysis tools. The agency later created an interactive format to better guide users in developing reports and allow for continued evolution of online tools. User scenarios that pose hypothetical education or workforce planning issues were completed in 2013 to demonstrate how SWAP can be used to provide appropriate data and analysis.

The TWC planned to work through the local boards' planning departments to introduce SWAP to its education partners and to obtain feedback on whether the project met user needs. This plan was modified, and the TWC communicated directly with the community and technical colleges (CTC). In 2013, letters introducing SWAP were sent to all CTC presidents and to each school's Skills Development Fund program contact.

The TWC also planned to conduct a statistically valid user survey to assess interest in the product. While a survey was not conducted, the agency studied use of the tool by counting "hits" to the SWAP web pages. Analysis indicated usage varied month-to-month. A more in-depth analysis (e.g., user session, page views) was not possible since SWAP is housed as a module on another website.

House Bill (HB) 809 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) required dissemination of information regarding employment opportunities to secondary school students. At least quarterly, the TWC is to provide the Texas Education Agency (TEA) with information regarding disaggregated current and projected employment opportunities in the state. The TWC provides the required information through a new web-based tool, Help Wanted Online<sup>25</sup>, which allows secondary students and others to access up-to-date information for employment opportunities in any number of occupational areas—by county, educational service center region, or local workforce areas.

In June 2015, the TWC was awarded a three-year Workforce Data Quality Initiative grant from the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL). Grant funds will support development of a new Texas supply and demand analysis internet portal and the expansion and upgrading of other labor market and career information products. The new publicly accessible, web-based tool will improve the quality and availability of workforce data—benefiting workforce system partners, employers, and consumers.

The TWC and the THECB have worked independently and together on several related reports and online applications. Efforts will continue with emphasis on products designed to facilitate informed choices by individuals interested in pursuing postsecondary education. Through such efforts, labor market data are being used as part of the continuous improvement process at the individual student and institutional levels.

*LTO – By 2013, Texas will decrease high school dropout rates by implementing rigorous career technical education as a part of the recommended or advanced high school graduation program.*

CTE programs provide valuable skills training, and are proven to improve high school students' successful completion. Enhanced and more effective integration of academic and CTE options at both the secondary and postsecondary levels increases graduation rates and assists with student transition to further education or into the workforce. This LTO focused on college and career readiness, with the intent of increasing the availability of both academic and rigorous CTE courses to support students through a range of choices including two- and four-year degrees, apprenticeship, and the military.

*... college and career readiness will be achieved by the availability of both academic courses and rigorous career and technical education courses.*

Several of the AP's tasks were affected by passage of HB 5 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) which required changes to public school accountability, including to assessment and graduation requirements. The bill allows the education commissioner to join a multi-state consortium for developing CTE courses in high-demand career areas and allows school districts to develop CTE courses or career

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.texasindustryprofiles.com/apps/mHWOL/index.asp/>.

training programs. It also requires the TEA, in collaboration with the THECB and the TWC, to evaluate the changes to the curriculum requirements mandated by the bill.

Criteria were being developed for the Campus Distinction Designations for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Workforce Development program as required by HB 3 (81<sup>st</sup> Legislature); however, the 83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature discontinued this project. The TEA continues to make progress on all other AP tasks, including:

*CTE Course Development and Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)*—The CTE TEKS, the state-mandated curriculum, incorporating the College and Career Readiness Standards, were adopted by the State Board of Education (State Board) and implemented in 2010–11. The TEA reviews corresponding TEKS courses in an effort to ensure secondary/postsecondary alignment. In addition, the THECB reviews the *Workforce Education Course Manual* on a periodic schedule to ensure course currency.

The State Board completed review and revision of the CTE TEKS in September 2015, after having convened review committees in the summer and fall of 2014. The board-appointed committees included representatives from secondary education, postsecondary education, professional associations, and business and industry. With the exception of the financial mathematics course, effective for the 2015–16 school year, the revisions will be effective in the 2017–18 school year.

The TEA previously reported that about 200 CTE courses have been developed and adopted by the State Board. Courses were organized around the 16 national career clusters, and included multiple courses that met graduation requirements for fourth-year science or math as well as one option each for English, fine arts, and speech. However, HB 5 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) required significant changes to the high school graduation program/requirements, establishing the Foundation High School Program for all students entering high school beginning in 2014–15.

Under the Foundation High School Program rules adopted by the State Board, advanced CTE courses with substantively similar and rigorous academic content may satisfy the third and fourth mathematics credit, or the third and fourth science credits. During the CTE TEKS revision, additional CTE courses were considered for math or science credit. HB 5 also required that the State Board adopt at least six advanced CTE and technology education courses, including personal financial literacy and statistics courses, to satisfy the fourth mathematics credit.<sup>26</sup>

*Professional Development*—Professional development addressing the CTE TEKS has been under way for teachers since 2010. Initially, training was scheduled and facilitated through the state's Education Service Centers and courses are now available online through Project Share. This internet portal was designed to provide professional development resources for teachers across the state and to build professional learning communities where educators can collaborate and participate in online learning opportunities. The ninth and final CTE professional development course was deployed during the 2013–14 school year. All nine courses are monitored and updated as needed.

*Dual Credit and Credit Transfer*—The TEA works with the THECB to design, develop, and coordinate policies and processes related to dual credit courses and credit transfer. *Study of Early Assessment and Early Intervention Models*, prepared by Jobs for the Future, was published in 2012. It fulfilled the requirements of HB 3468 (82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature) which required the TEA, in consultation with the THECB, to conduct a study of best practices and existing programs offering early assessments of high school students to determine college readiness, identify any deficiencies in college readiness, and provide intervention to address any deficiencies before high school graduation.

*Early College High Schools*—The TEA continues to develop and deploy early college high schools (ECHS). These schools are located on or in proximity to a college campus to allow students in historically underrepresented college-going populations the opportunity to earn a high school diploma and an associate's degree or up to 60 hours of college credit over four years. The designation process is

<sup>26</sup> Texas Education Code (TEC), Title 2, Subtitle F, Section 28.00222.

required for all current ECHSs, as well as applicants seeking designation. Forty-four ECHS designations were announced in fiscal year (FY) 2015, increasing the total number to 154 for the 2015–16 school year.

Last year, the TEA entered into a memorandum of understanding with the TWC and the THECB to fund and operate a grant program that encourages the development and creation of CTE-focused ECHSs. The initial grants were awarded in June 2014, with six campuses approved through four grantees.

In addition, the TEA announced the designation of 19 new Texas Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (T-STEM) Academies for 2015–16, for a total of 104. T-STEM Academies are rigorous secondary schools focusing on improving instruction and academic performance in science and mathematics-related subjects and increasing the number of students who study and enter STEM careers. They are demonstration schools and learning labs that develop innovative methods to improve science and mathematics instructions.

End-of-Course (EOC) Exams—The EOC exams are being implemented in a multi-phase approach beginning with 2011–12 ninth-grade students and with successive grades added annually. Longitudinal data are expected to be available following the 2015–16 academic year. However, HB 5 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) reduced the number of EOCs from 15 to five, which required changes related to cumulative scores and related issues that may impact data availability.

With the reduced number of required exams, the TEA noted it was likely that most students will take all but one EOC exam prior to grade 11. Across the five required subject areas—algebra I, English I, English II, biology, U.S. history—most high school students are passing the EOC exams on the first try. Based on preliminary statewide results for the 2014–15 school year, 83.5% of students in the class of 2015 had already passed all five required assessments and faced no state-mandated tests during their senior year.”<sup>27</sup>

HB 3 (81<sup>st</sup> Legislature) required the TEA to conduct research to substantiate any correlation between EOC performance and success in military service or postsecondary workforce training. As noted above, data will not be available until the 2014–15 graduating seniors have joined the military and/or completed some level of postsecondary workforce training.

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*LTO – By 2013, education and training partners will have the infrastructure necessary (policies, procedures, data processes, rules, and capabilities) to facilitate the effective and efficient transfer of academic and technical dual credit courses from high schools to community colleges and four-year institutions.*

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More coordinated and integrated planning efforts are needed to improve programs and initiatives to ensure seamless education and career transitions. As noted above, HB 5 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) required changes to public school accountability, including to assessment and graduation requirements that directly affected several *Advancing Texas* APs.

*... clear and aligned educational policy and regulations for secondary and postsecondary transitions will improve the efficiency and effectiveness of educational outcomes.*

Work on this LTO focuses on the processes for transferring dual credit from high schools to postsecondary institutions. Dual credit enrollment at all Texas higher education institutions has risen significantly since record keeping began in 1999, reaching a high of 112,361 in 2014 (fall enrollment). Students enrolled in technical semester credit-hour courses

at Texas CTCs constituted 12.3% (fall 2013), 13.3% (spring 2014), 4.9% (summer 2014), and 13.7% (fall 2014) of total dual credit students.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> TEA press release (June 3, 2015).

<sup>28</sup> The THECB defines dual credit as a process by which a high school junior or senior enrolls in a course and receives simultaneous credit from both the college and the high school. Data include fractional dual credit semester credit hours (e.g., greater than zero, less than one hour).

The TEA and the THECB continue to work together on all aspects of the infrastructure for transferring academic and technical dual credit courses from high schools to community colleges and four-year institutions. Related research and publications include:

- ▶ *Study of the Intersection of Dual Credit Course Policies and End of Course Requirements Authorized by HB 3, 81<sup>st</sup> Texas Legislature* (January 2011) – Prepared by the TEA and Shapley Research Associates, the study addressed the HB 3 (81<sup>st</sup> Legislature) requirement for the commissioners of education and higher education to study the feasibility of allowing students to satisfy EOC requirements by successfully completing a dual credit course through a higher education institution, and to make recommendations to the legislature based on that study.
- ▶ *Research Study of Texas Dual Credit Programs and Courses* (March 2011) – The TEA, in collaboration with the THECB, contracted with American Institutes for Research and Gibson Consulting Group Inc. to conduct the study.
- ▶ *Dual Credit Report* (March 2012) – Published by the THECB, this report fulfilled the requirements of Rider 33, HB 1 (82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature).
- ▶ *Study of Early Assessment and Early Intervention Models* (November 2012) – As noted in the previous AP report, this study was prepared by Jobs for the Future to fulfill the requirements of HB 3468 (82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature).

Key actions over the six-year plan period include:

EOC Exams—As noted in the LTO report above, EOC exams are being phased in beginning with 2011–12 ninth-grade students, with successive grades being added annually. Longitudinal data are expected to be available following the 2015–16 academic year.

Data Systems Improvement—Beginning fall 2011, THECB data systems allow the tracking of students from dual credit into college-level courses with associated course grades included. This change provides greater opportunities to evaluate the preparedness level of students who take courses as dual credit versus as a traditional college course, as well as the success that each group has in successive college courses. Data analysis will be limited to the number of cohorts included in the system, beginning with the FY 2012 cohort.

The TEA implemented the Texas Student Data System as an alternative system. Early adopters began using the new system in the 2013–14 school year. The system is being rolled out to the remaining local educational agencies in Texas in three phases, ending in 2016–17.

The Texas Public Education Information Resource website ([www.texaseducationinfo.org/](http://www.texaseducationinfo.org/)) generates dual credit enrollment and outcome reports. A new report released this year provides Texas public college enrollment and employment outcomes for Texas public high school graduates, with data for CTE participants, non-CTE participants, and all graduates.

Learning Outcomes Consistency—The THECB continues to work with CTC and university faculty to develop explicit learning outcomes that will be consistent across academic courses taught statewide. The learning outcomes are distributed to all faculty in the discipline at the institutions for comment, with final recommendations made to the *Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM)* committee for adoption. The ACGM is the official list of approved courses for general academic transfer to public universities and, as such, serves as the academic course inventory for CTCs. Last year, the THECB reported that of over 1,000 active courses, this process had been completed for the most commonly used courses. Work will continue to develop outcomes for additional courses.

In addition to expanding learning outcomes in ACGM courses, the THECB is in the planning stage for developing programs of study for technical courses. HB 2628 (84<sup>th</sup> Legislature) requires the THECB to periodically review each field of study curriculum to ensure alignment with student interest, and with

academic and industry needs. It also sets out the process under which the THECB will collaborate with partner agencies, institutions of higher education, CTE experts, and college and career readiness experts to develop programs of study curricula. Programs of study provide understandable and viable education and career training pathways for students and facilitate transfer options. They may support higher completion and graduation rates, and an increasing number of individuals with licenses or credentials needed in today's job market.

*Dual Credit Mechanisms*—The TEA continues to deploy ECHSs. As noted in the LTO report above, 154 were approved for the 2015–16 school year, as well as 104 T-STEM Academies and the CTE ECHS campuses that were established as a result of the grant program jointly sponsored by the TEA, the THECB, and the TWC. The agency has implemented an annual application process for schools seeking initial or renewed ECHS designation. To operate as an approved ECHS, a district or charter school must partner with an institution of higher education and apply to the TEA. To receive ECHS designation, a school must implement the ECHS Blueprint which has been researched and designed to target, enroll, and serve students who may not otherwise consider attending college.

The TEA also continues to work with public high schools to meet the TEC, Section 28.009, mandate to offer all students at least 12 hours of college credit. School districts have local authority over which methods to use, with options including dual credit, advanced placement, international baccalaureate, and advanced technical credit courses, as well as locally articulated courses. HB 5 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) provides options for a performance acknowledgement on a student's diploma and transcript, including outstanding performance in a dual credit course. HB 181 (84<sup>th</sup> Legislature) limited the requirement to transcripts only, effective with high school diplomas issued at the end of the 2014–15 school year.

*LTO – By 2013, design and implement a demonstration program targeted to improve perception of career options that career technical education (CTE) programs enable.*

Career information and awareness may facilitate more effective transitions to further education or the workforce. This LTO focused on increasing awareness of CTE as preparation for either postsecondary education or careers. CTE options are increasingly important, as many high-skill, high-wage jobs critical to Texas' economy require some postsecondary education, but less than a four-year degree.

*... career and technical education provides preparation for desirable career options.*

During *Advancing Texas'* development, the Council elected to be responsible for this AP, with the Executive Committee

providing oversight. This role is consistent with the Council's charge in Texas Government Code (TGC), Section 2308.101(8), to encourage, support, or develop research and demonstration projects designed to develop new programs and approaches to service delivery.

To accomplish the AP's objective, the Council researched, identified, and validated best practices for providing information to improve understanding of educational pathways to careers. The Council published *Research Findings: Raising Awareness of Career Technical Education in Texas Schools* (September 2010) and in 2011 convened a workgroup to develop a model based on findings in the report. The resulting guide, *Career Awareness Model: A Guide to a Sequential, Cohort-Based Approach* (June 2013), details the model developed using the Council's best practices research. Posted on the Council's website (<http://gov.texas.gov/twic/work/>), the guide includes:

- ▶ an introduction stating the importance of understanding the career options available to students after high school and college and the educational requirements of these options,
- ▶ a short description of how the model was designed by a stakeholder team using the results from the Council's research study, and
- ▶ a detailed description of program components and implementation standards.

Last year, Council staff coordinated with the Career and Technology Association of Texas to request feedback on the guide and model. The association's listserv members were asked to indicate if they had used the guide or implemented elements of the model or plan to do so in the future, and to provide comments on the outcomes, both positive and negative. Survey responses were not sufficient to permit analysis.

### ***KPA: Customer Outcomes***

To meet the growing and changing demands of Texas' employers, everyone must be part of the critical pool of potential employees. *Advancing Texas* identified four target populations, addressed by the four LTOs outlined below.

*LTO – By 2013, the blind and disabled populations will achieve additional employment outcomes.*

The Health and Human Services Commission's Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) is responsible for developing system capabilities, including transition technologies, designed to ensure employment outcomes for workers with disabilities or who are blind or visually impaired.

*... with focused assistance the blind and disabled can achieve enhanced employment outcomes.*

For several years, DARS has been involved in successful, innovative models that have created and facilitated partnerships between business/industry and rehabilitation providers. DARS has also used an embedded training model when working with medium and large businesses in a variety of industries. DARS developed a template for fee-based embedded training and accompanying policies that went into effect on August 1, 2012. Cost reimbursement contracts were completed and replaced with ongoing, fee-based arrangements with community rehabilitation providers and businesses.

In FY 2014, DARS closed out all contract activities related to the embedded training model. Based on guidance from the federal Rehabilitation Services Administration, implementation of a revised model was deferred until issuance of a technical assistance circular about the use of work-based learning models. In the interim, DARS continued to work with consumers and employers to provide on-the-job training, as well as work adjustment training and job placement, through its contracts with community rehabilitation providers. Renewal or re-contracting decisions were generally based on an evaluation of factors such as the contractor's accomplishment of or progress toward measurable goals and the presence and resolution of monitoring findings. At the end of FY 2014, the number of fee-for-service contracts for employment-related services totaled 413 and 94, respectively, for the general and the blind vocational rehabilitation programs. The baseline FY 2015 number was expected to stay the same given that no substantive changes were anticipated for the first quarter of the new year.

The TWC's sunset bill, Senate Bill (SB) 208, continued the agency for 12 years, through September 1, 2027. Subject to federal approval, if required, the bill mandates transferring services to help people with disabilities from DARS to the TWC, effective September 1, 2016. By March 1, 2016, the agencies are to submit a transition plan to the legislative oversight committee and the Governor, to be finalized after consideration of the committee's comments and recommendations. The bill further requires integration of DARS' two separate vocational rehabilitation programs—those serving adults with disabilities, or the blind or visually impaired—to eliminate administrative duplication and better serve customers. The TWC is to create a designated state unit for vocational rehabilitation services to comply with federal regulations, and to integrate the two programs no later than October 1, 2017.

Last year, the DARS-Divisions for Rehabilitation Services (DRS) and Blind Services (DBS) began work to establish a consolidated DARS business relations team. Following DARS' sunset review, the Sunset Advisory Commission's decision report (January 2015) for DARS indicated that DARS would retain responsibility for immediate actions, with the TWC to ensure that the recommendation carry forward following the program transfer. The change was effective in September, and is expected to allow DARS to

better coordinate internal and external efforts in order to build stronger business relations and improve consumers' employment outcomes.

While working with the TWC on transition plans, DARS continues to work in partnership with businesses, local workforce boards and centers, secondary and postsecondary education institutions, and other community organizations. Examples of current initiatives include:

*Project HIRE*—In 2012, the Texas Council for Development Disabilities awarded the DRS a five-year, \$1.25 million grant. Project HIRE—Helping Individuals Reach Employment—partners include South Texas College, the University of Texas-Pan American, Communication Access Ability Group of South Texas, Easter Seals Rio Grande Valley, the Lower Rio Grande Valley local workforce board, the DBS, and an advisory committee drawn from the local disability, business, and education communities. The grant is assisting 50 individuals with developmental disabilities in Hidalgo County who are 18–35-years old to attend South Texas College. The intended outcome for each participant is a continuing education certificate, vocational certificate or degree, and ultimately, employment.

Focused, one-on-one assistance such as educational coaches, individual and family support, and both college and employment readiness are provided. The grant also supports work with local businesses to mentor and support the students, including opportunities for job shadowing and on-the-job-training.

Last year, DARS reported that 43 students had participated, including two who completed South Texas College certificate programs during year three. Another pilot site planned for El Paso was expected to assist DARS in evaluating this supported education model. Additional replication strategies will be identified and implemented based on DARS' initial findings, as well as the pilot evaluation planned for the final year of the grant.

*Project SEARCH*—Business-led, school-to-work internships provide work experience to help disabled individuals who are 18–22 years old transition to employment. By participating in the one-year training, DRS and DBS consumers benefit from career exploration, innovative adaptations, long-term job coaching, and continuous feedback from teachers, job coaches, and employers. The innovative workforce and career development model benefits the individual, workplace, and community.

*Work Matters*—In FY 2014, the DBS launched the Work Matters initiative to identify higher wage employment opportunities for consumers and to align division operations to maximize those opportunities. The DRS joined the initiative, enabling the divisions to work together to improve consumers' employment opportunities. The initiative has two projects: (1) strengthening business and partner relationships with federal contractors, state agencies, private industry, and local workforce boards and centers; and (2) increasing the use of data to help consumers define optimal vocational opportunities, and incorporating the data, tools, and strategies into counseling and guidance processes used by vocational rehabilitation counselors.

*Diversity Symposia and Job Fairs*—In May, DARS, the DOL's Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the Alamo Area Disability Alliance, and the Alamo local board hosted the third annual AHEAD: Alliances Helping Employers Achieve Diversity symposium and job fair. The event was designed to increase employment opportunities for veterans and other individuals with disabilities while helping employers, particularly federal contractors and subcontractors, diversify their workforce. The event was part of a DARS strategy to assist employers who are subject to recent changes to Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, which established a nationwide utilization goal (7%) for qualified individuals with disabilities. Last year, DARS reported plans to continue its partnership with this DOL office and to collaborate with workforce system partners to develop and implement a statewide strategy to connect contractors with qualified applicants. Similar events have been held in other Texas cities.

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*LTO – By 2013, the veteran population will achieve additional employment outcomes.*

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This LTO specified that the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) would work to ensure state and leveraged federal services provide veterans with the programs, products, and services necessary to accommodate their needs and to enable them to enter the workforce successfully. Key actions included:

*Employer and Participant Services*—The TVC offers employment services to Texas veterans and helps employers find qualified veteran job applicants. In 2009, the TVC launched a statewide initiative by hiring a dedicated business outreach coordinator to work more closely with employers, the TWC, and local workforce boards to leverage more training and placement services for veterans.

*... veterans with a wide range of disabilities receive training, referral, and placement services and return to the civilian workforce.*

The TVC expanded this successful initiative, with veterans business representatives strategically located in central Texas, the Dallas/Ft. Worth area, San Antonio, and Houston. At no cost, the representatives have assisted employers by providing personalized services and assessing employers' needs in order to match the skills, abilities, and experiences

of veteran job candidates. In response to new DOL's Veterans' Employment and Training Service (DOLVETS) guidelines, employment representatives are integrating with local boards' business service units to focus primarily on outreach to the employer community and facilitation within the state's employment service delivery system.

The TVC also works with the TWC on the annual statewide Hiring Red, White & You! hiring fair for Texas veterans, service members, and their spouses—with the fourth annual event scheduled for November 2015. The TVC prepares veterans by conducting workshops to assist with applications, resumes, and interviewing techniques, and by providing one-on-one counseling. In the first three years, 31,228 job seekers connected with 4,732 employers. Last year, 1,759 employers participated—up almost 200 statewide from the prior year. The event resulted in 431 onsite hires, as well as other networking that led to interviews and post-event job offers.

*Coordinating Council for Veterans Services*—SB 1796 (82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature) established the Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services to coordinate activities of state agencies that assist veterans; coordinate outreach efforts; and facilitate relationships among state, federal, and local agencies to identify and address issues affecting veterans. SB 1892 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) expanded the group's membership and simplified the workgroup structure to allow more flexibility. Chaired by the TVC, the group's first biennial report to the legislature (October 2012) included recommendations in six areas including employment and higher education. The second report (October 2014) included recommendations in eight areas, as well as cross-topic issues and an update on actions taken over the two-year period.

*Veteran Entrepreneurship*—SB 1476 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) formally created the Veteran Entrepreneur Program. Based on a pilot project launched in 2012, the program fosters and promotes veteran business ownership and entrepreneurship throughout Texas. Veterans interested in entrepreneurship receive assistance through a series of seminars that disseminate information regarding business plan development, financial guidance, government procurement, and information regarding franchise opportunities. In addition, a business training course and a government-contracting event have been offered. Since the seminars started in mid-2012, more than 1,000 veterans have received assistance.

This year, the TVC launched the Veteran Entrepreneur Academy, a five-month program followed by a two-year mentorship with a business counselor. With onsite and online classes, the program is designed to provide veteran entrepreneurs with a strong foundation in small business basics. Active duty and honorably discharged veterans or their spouses who complete the onsite and online components receive a certificate of completion and are eligible for loans up to \$35,000 at a fixed, 5% interest rate.

*State of Texas Soldier Employment Initiative*—The TVC and the TWC partnered on the State of Texas Soldier Employment Initiative. Funded by the DOL, the initiative was part of a \$750,000 pilot project to help returning U.S. Army veterans find employment prior to separating from the service, particularly in

growth industries such as the medical, energy, and technology fields. Texas was one of four states chosen for the project due to the high population of Army veterans and its history of collaboration with the DOL and the Army to improve veterans' employment access. Initiative representatives, all veterans themselves, were located in four local workforce areas that provide services to communities near Fort Hood in Killeen, Fort Bliss in El Paso, Camp Mabry in Austin, and Ellington Air Field in Houston. The pilot ended June 30, 2014; however, the TWC requested and received a no-cost extension from the DOL. Remaining grant funds supported ongoing activities for Forts Hood and Bliss through June 2015.

Collaborating with Federal Partners—Actions included:

- ▶ *REALifelines* – Working with the U.S. Department of Defense and the Veterans Administration, the TVC provided individualized job training, counseling, and reemployment services to assist severely injured veterans in returning to civilian life. *REALifelines* counselors were located at Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Bliss, and Fort Hood. In December 2012, the TVC was notified that the program would no longer be funded as a special initiative. The agency was able to retain the counselors as disabled veterans outreach program specialists. After the program was discontinued in December 2013, the TVC consulted with the DOLVETS and requested special initiative funding to support three disabled veterans outreach program specialists to provide employment services at military treatment facilities.
- ▶ *Transition Assistance Program* – The TVC previously coordinated with the DOL to facilitate seminars to provide job search and related services to military personnel within 180 days of separation or retirement. The number of seminars and participants increased with the military drawdown and enactment of the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011, which made participation mandatory for most service members. As required by the VOW Act, the program is now administered by contracted facilitators; however, the TVC continued to assist with some sessions.

Outreach and Recognition—During the plan period, the TVC launched a series of public service announcements and the Texas Veterans Portal<sup>29</sup>. The portal provides state and federal benefits information for veterans, active duty service members, spouses, and dependents.

The TVC recognizes employers that are committed to hiring veterans. An *Employer Spotlight* section is included on the agency's website and Employers of the Year are honored annually. Award categories have included large, medium, and small employer; large, medium and small public entity; disabled veteran employer; local workforce center; local workforce board; extra mile; and grantee of the year.

*LTO – By 2013, design and implement integrated Adult Education and workforce skills training programs to enhance employment outcomes for the English language learner population.*

This LTO required the TEA and the TWC to develop new and enhance existing methods, programs, and processes for programs targeted at the over 17 English language learner (ELL) population that integrated both language and occupational skill acquisition. The ELL population that was the focus of this AP consisted of individuals who have a high school diploma or postsecondary credential in their native country but for whom English is not their first language. This rapidly growing population requires additional skills for workforce-related success.

*... providing the growing population of English language learners with additional skills for workforce-related success.*

The Council collaborated with the state demographer, and in 2010 published the first companion paper to *A Primer on Adult Education in Texas* that included information on the nativity, education, and working age of Texas' population. Data showed that over 3.8 million individuals qualified for adult education services, with that number expected to double by 2040. Of the 3.8 million, almost 1.7 million were in the ELL population, with over 500,000 of those in the target population for this AP.

<sup>29</sup> Housed on the Texas.gov website at <http://veterans.portal.texas.gov/en/pages/default.aspx/>.

In 2010, a work group was formed to design and develop a pilot model to be executed through the CTCs and local boards. The group, assisting with this LTO and one focused on workplace literacy included representatives from the TEA, the TWC, the THECB, the CTCs, local boards, adult education providers, and Council staff.

The THECB supported the effort under Riders 45 and 56, SB 1 (81<sup>st</sup> Legislature) and was added as a participant on this AP in conjunction with the *2012 Update to Advancing Texas*. A request for applications was issued then later revised and reissued to allow the projects to be more flexible yet still focus on intended outcomes for integrated basic education and skills training.

Since 2010, the THECB and the TWC have partnered with 21 colleges to establish and support the Accelerate Texas (previously ABE-Innovation Grant) initiative, designed to engage Texas CTCs to implement integrated pathways for advancing lower-skilled adult learners into high-demand occupations. Of the 21 colleges, eight participated in the pilot that began in fall 2011 and ran through August 2013: Alamo Colleges, Amarillo Community College, El Centro College, Hill College, South Texas College, Tyler Junior College, and Wharton County Junior College. A previously funded program at El Paso Community College was also monitored as a pilot.

Performance reporting for the pilots began in 2012, with data published in the **Less Formal Measures** section. Seven of the pilot colleges were awarded funding to support student completion and data entry through FY 2014. One college did not have any students enrolled in certificate programs after the grant ended, so no additional funding for data submission was provided. The THECB reported there were fewer students during this period as the schools were tracking completers and only three colleges had new students.

A descriptive analysis of the Accelerate Texas programs was completed by Texas State University in November 2013. While the report did not focus solely on the pilot colleges, it provided information on barriers encountered and lessons learned. Key lessons learned include:

- ▶ Two barriers were identified by some of the mentoring colleges regarding their mentees: (1) identification of adult education and literacy providers to conduct the basic skills portion of the integrated pathway, and (2) changes in contracted providers. For example, not all colleges have a provider on their campuses or a strong relationship with one in their region. In some cases, grant funds have been used for a basic skills instructor.
- ▶ Colleges with a higher level of integration between workforce training programs and adult education or basic skills support staff and faculty had a greater likelihood of sustaining and scaling the model beyond the second year of funding.
- ▶ Funding the technical training portion of the integrated pathway was a challenge, including for the mentor colleges. Colleges identified a variety of funding streams (e.g., grants, scholarships, self-pay) to support tuition and fees for students working concurrently on GED and technical training. Local boards may assist with child care or transportation but few support tuition and fees for students who do not have a GED.

In addition, Texas A&M University's Public Policy Research Institute is conducting an ongoing evaluation of the programs, including the mentor colleges. Alamo, Amarillo, and South Texas—the remaining pilot colleges with continued funding—were included in the evaluation completed in December 2014. The Institute will continue evaluating Accelerate Texas colleges through December 2016.

These remaining pilot colleges with continued funding built sustainable Accelerate Texas models on their college campuses and within their districts. In FY 2013, they were identified as mentor colleges and continue to support newly funded colleges in the design and implementation of their integrated programs.

The 2015–2017 Accelerate Texas request for applications required that colleges offering an integrated pathway offer 75% of their workforce training certificates as Marketable Skills Achievement awards

(minimum nine semester credit hours or 144 contact hours) or level 1 certificates (minimum 15 semester credit hours or 360 contact hours). Twenty-five percent of the certificates can be identified through local employer, local industry association need, or real-time labor market demand.

Under the request for applications, colleges could apply as a single college or as a mentor college. Single colleges will be supported by a mentor college during the first two years of funding. If successful in sustaining the program with non-grant funds, the school will be eligible to be a lead, or mentor, college. The mentor approach to support scaling the model will continue.

HB 1 (84<sup>th</sup> Legislature) included a THECB appropriation of over \$4 million to support community college grants over the 2016–17 biennium. As directed by Rider 36, competitive grants will be used to scale and sustain Accelerate Texas program models for increasing the participation and success of adult education and literacy students transitioning into postsecondary education and/or training programs and for students assessed under the Texas Success Initiative Assessment as demonstrating basic academic skills.

*LTO – By 2013, design and implement targeted Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs to enhance employment outcomes for populations requiring workplace literacy skills.*

This LTO specified that the TEA and the TWC were responsible for developing new and enhancing existing methods, programs, and processes for programs that address workplace literacy acquisition targeted at the workforce literacy population over age 17. Workforce literacy skills are the basic and soft skills considered necessary to perform in entry-level occupations or the skills needed to adapt to technological advances in the workplace.

*... assisting those with low literacy levels through targeted literacy programs to gain or maintain employment.*

A nationally recognized career awareness curriculum, previously offered by some Texas sites with successful results, was selected for the pilot projects. The career exploration awareness component focused on workplace literacy skills designed to facilitate the transition from adult education to workforce training.

In 2010, the TWC completed an assessment that identified the Alamo, Capital Area, and Gulf Coast local workforce boards as pilot program candidates based on their strong relationships with adult education providers. The work group described in the previous LTO report designed a model of program outreach and delivery that fit within existing adult education funding, program offerings, and initiatives, and that could be offered concurrently with adult education levels 4 through 6 as defined by the National Reporting System.

The TEA committed \$400,000 in Adult Education State Leadership funds for the pilots, which were negotiated with multiple adult education providers in the three regions. Launched in July 2011, the pilots were extended for an additional year and ran through June 2013. To increase enrollment, adult education programs recruited from existing classes and accepted students below levels 4 through 6. Transition counselors/coordinators were hired to assist learners in making wise choices and successful transitions to postsecondary education, training, and employment.

Local workforce literacy resource teams assisted with service delivery design, as well as identification of partner roles and responsibilities and obstacles to success. In August 2013, Texas LEARNS completed a toolkit containing deliverables developed by the participating programs.

Council staff was charged with evaluating the pilots to determine strengths and weaknesses, and to make recommendations for improvement. A logic model and evaluation plan were presented to the Council in June 2013; however, a structured evaluation could not be conducted due to the lack of vigorous and reliable data collection. Available performance data are published in the **Less Formal Measures** section.

SB 307 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) mandated transfer of adult education and literacy programs from the TEA to the TWC, and the program was transferred on September 1, 2013. The TWC adopted program rules in

February 2014 and restructured the local provider system and state support and professional development services that deliver teacher training and program support and innovation.

The TWC's initial request for proposals incorporated key elements of the pilot model by requiring service providers to implement career pathways programs. The commission's goal is to incrementally increase the proportion of students who exit workforce services ready for work, or who are enrolled or co-enrolled in college and career training. This model provides opportunities for literacy and basic educational development and ensures these services link all students, regardless of academic and English levels, with employment, training, and college opportunities.

Program year 2014–15 grant recipients are required to provide: (1) college and career bridge activities; (2) individualized training, education, and career plans for students itemizing short- and long-term goals; and (3) career pathway models that include integrated education and training and work-based project models. To support increases in career and postsecondary education and training outcomes for the program, the TWC is implementing multiple strategies including enhanced enrollment and performance criteria, incentives for innovative acceleration, and integration and transition models, including Accelerate Texas, the integrated education and training model being implemented in coordination with the THECB.

### ***KPA: Programs, Products, and Services***

The six LTOs included in this KPA addressed issues ranging from the need for middle-skilled workers to increasing employer satisfaction with system products and services.

*LTO – Community and technical colleges will plan and execute education and training programs to address workforce skills gaps in their regions, as identified by local needs assessments or the biennial supply-demand report produced by the THECB and TWC.*

Middle-skill jobs require education and/or training beyond high school, but less than a four-year degree. Such jobs currently account for nearly half the jobs in the U.S. and in Texas, with that number projected to grow. However, given its success in job creation, Texas has an increasing need for workers with appropriate middle skills.

*... integrate and expand middle-skills training to meet current and future employer demand.*

Texas' CTCs serve a vital role in training individuals for middle-skill jobs. Better aligning customer needs with program development and delivery helps to ensure the availability of a population with the skills needed to meet current and future employer needs.

The tasks outlined for this LTO are dependent on delivery of the biennial supply-demand report required under another LTO. In 2011, the TWC and the THECB proposed a modified approach for the supply-demand analysis that centered on development of a web-based system to allow customers such as the CTCs to access their own local data and produce customized reports.

To support use of the online system, the TWC created user scenarios that pose hypothetical education or workforce planning issues, including several with applicability for higher education users. Letters introducing the SWAP scenarios were sent to all CTC presidents and to each school's Skills Development Fund program contact. They provide a reference for determining how closely aligned the CTC programs are to local workforce needs and for identifying gaps that require colleges to adjust program offerings.

In 2011, the THECB partnered with the Council to survey the CTCs to collect information on their strategies for determining employer satisfaction and using that information in institutional planning processes to improve program delivery. Blinn College and Lone Star College System were selected as models of promising practices and were formally recognized by the Council in December 2011. Sharing and possible replication of promising practices should result in opportunities for institutions to improve workforce training and employer satisfaction.

When developing new or expanding existing programs for emerging high-skill occupations, the CTCs consider program delivery methodologies and structures in an effort to increase both effectiveness and cost efficiency. Such efforts are ongoing and include work accomplished by South Texas College, Southwest Texas Junior College, and the Texas State Technical Colleges.

The Council contracted with the University of Texas' Ray Marshall Center to assess the availability and capabilities of supply and demand planning tools used in Texas and other states. The July 2014 report noted that there is a significant demand for better "gap analysis"—supply/demand reports that can generate current labor supply and projected labor demand and determine the differences in a regional area. The Council considered the report's findings during development of the next workforce system strategic plan and will continue to do so in its future work.

This year, the TWC was awarded a three-year grant that will support development of a Texas supply and demand analysis internet portal. The new publicly accessible, web-based tool will improve the quality and availability of workforce data available for CTC planning purposes.

*LTO – By 2012, design, develop, and implement a pilot program to demonstrate flexibility of the 'earn while you learn' model of traditional apprenticeship programs. Where appropriate, expand and replicate into new occupational areas by 2015.*

Under the Council's leadership, this LTO required expansion of the earn-while-you-learn model to address employer demand for skilled workers. The Council Chair assigned the Executive Committee the responsibility of overseeing implementation and reporting to the full Council. A project leadership team, including

*... expand the earn-while-you-learn model for deployment into middle-skills areas.*

members from system partners—the THECB, the TVC, and the TWC—was created in 2010 and charged with identifying

and recommending potential projects. The team reviewed projects in the following target industries: allied healthcare, health information technology, energy, aviation, and logistics and distribution.

The team then recommended, and the Executive Committee approved, six projects. Four remained active through the Council's pilot period or the end of their federal grant period, as applicable.

- ▶ *Pilots—defined as a partnership formed to develop a registered apprenticeship program in an occupational area that has not traditionally used apprenticeship as a means to train its workforce:*
  - Community Health Worker—Coastal Area Health Education Center
  - Health Information Technology—Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council Education and Research Foundation
  
- ▶ *Demonstrations—defined as a partnership formed to adapt an existing registered apprenticeship program to meet emerging industry demand:*
  - Comprehensive-National Electrician Solar Training—Austin Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee, ImagineSolar, and the Capital Area local workforce board [grant ended in July 2012; final report released in March 2013]
  - Distance Learning, Pre-Apprenticeship, and Outreach to Underserved Populations—Independent Electrical Contractors of Texas

The Council worked with the DOL and pilot project staff to develop action plans with major tasks and timelines for development and implementation of the new programs. The leadership team continued to provide support and technical assistance, help identify funding and other resources, and monitor progress through quarterly written and verbal reports. In March 2012, the team and Executive Committee met in a joint session and heard updates from all projects. Regular reports were provided via conference call through August 2013.

Challenges were encountered as the projects began during the recession and implementation continued during the economic recovery. However, many lessons were learned, including the awareness and willingness to adapt in response to changing needs, by both employers and current and potential participants. *Registered Apprenticeship as a Strategy to Meet Employer Demand for Skilled Workers* (December 2013), the Council's final report, included documentation of promising practices.

*LTO – The Council will produce a data set whereby system stakeholders can ascertain Texas' position relative to key indicators of competitiveness.*

Data are required to ensure that system initiatives will be developed and executed to strategically position Texas in the global marketplace. Data must be available to benchmark Texas against other states and countries in the most significant and strategic education, workforce, and market outcomes. Since 2005, the Council has compiled data and published the *Texas Index*, with the final version released in 2013.

The *2013 Texas Index (2013 Index)* research report compiled data for 38 indicators organized into four domains, based on the value proposition that skilled and well-educated people create innovations that result in products and services that are sold in the marketplace. This continuum generates economic activity that builds wealth for the state, and increases the level of wealth for Texans. In support of the proposition, data in the report focused on four critical, interrelated elements: intellectual capital, human capital, financial capital, and standard of living.

*... data are required to ensure that system initiatives will be developed and executed to strategically position Texas in the global marketplace.*

The *2013 Index* included 10-year trend data, as well as national and international comparative data. The report also contained a report card that indicated how Texas was performing across the four domains, thus identifying achievement as well as areas for improvement.

Results in the *2013 Index* showed that Texas was doing comparatively well, and continued to invest in the future of its residents. Texas successfully attracted businesses and created jobs through both the recession and recovery periods, with a competitive advantage over other states in areas such as labor productivity, gross state product per capita, and exports. The unemployment rate remained slightly elevated due to natural growth in the workforce and the return of previously discouraged job seekers to those counted as unemployed. However, the Texas unemployment rate was still more than one percent lower than the U.S. average.

The data indicated room for improvement in the areas of educational and workforce educational achievement. Strategies that increase enrollment and completion of postsecondary education, particularly supporting employment in middle-skill occupations, continue to be important. Skilled workers in these occupations are highly sought by employers. Higher education concentration in science, technology, engineering, and math disciplines increased, and Texas produced the second greatest number of patents of any state, indicating a strong focus on innovation.

The *2013 Index* displayed a comprehensive view of the state's recovery from the recession, with signs of an economy in full recovery prevalent in the data over the reporting cycle. Areas in training and education, research and development, and market composition were thriving, as the majority of indicators in these domains reflected a positive change. In addition, participant access indicators showed progress, indicating that prosperity in the state was on the rise. Data showed significant progress in recent years, and based on trends, more progress was expected for the state.

Since the Council first produced the index in 2005, other state entities have increasingly collected and disseminated similar data and information. The Comptroller's Office provides information on state revenue and budget, technology, jobs and education, and the economy. In June, the comptroller released a new 50-state scorecard that provides economic, demographic, and other comparisons ([www.comptroller.texas.gov/fiscalnotes/50states/](http://www.comptroller.texas.gov/fiscalnotes/50states/)). Other specialized websites include: [www.thetexasconomy.org/](http://www.thetexasconomy.org/) with economic indicators and financial trends; and <http://texasahead.org/> with

key economic indicators, forecasts, and in-depth reports. In addition, the TexasEDGE Data Center (<http://texasahead.org/regionalrpts/>) enables users to create custom reports using interactive maps and tools.

Of particular interest, the THECB examined how to benchmark Texas' education data to other states and nations. The Council for Continuous Improvement and Innovation in Higher Education was charged with developing a culture of continuous improvement in Texas higher education and a higher education system that is internationally competitive. The group recommended that an advisory committee be established to develop the new long-range plan for higher education in Texas. Approved by the Coordinating Board in July, *60x30TX* specifies an overarching goal: by 2030, at least 60% of Texans ages 25–34 will have a certificate or degree. The goal focuses on this population as an indicator of the economic future of the state and its ability to remain globally competitive, noting that the state's large population makes the Texas economy similar in size to that of many countries.

*LTO – Local boards will align with and support the workforce system strategic plan through their planning processes and related initiatives. This will be documented in board plans and plan modifications, which are submitted to the Council for approval.*

As the system's frontline partners, local boards must continue to enhance planning and collaborative efforts across workforce system components to meet employer and community needs. This LTO addressed local planning requirements and their relationship to the Council and the system strategic plan.

*... local boards must understand and meet the needs of their local communities by offering relevant workforce programs and services.*

Title 1, Section 118, of the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) required that each local board develop and submit to the Governor a comprehensive five-year local plan. TGC,

Section 2308.304(b), also requires each board to develop a local plan that must have goals and objectives that are consistent with statewide goals, objectives, and performance standards.

State law, and federal law under the WIA, required the Council to review local plans and modifications and make recommendations to the Governor for approval. Planning guidelines issued by the TWC typically included an appendix that specified the Council's request for information and data that would demonstrate alignment with the system strategic plan. While boards developed new local plans approximately every five years, plan modifications were generally required annually to update information and implement new state and local initiatives.

Given Congress' intent to reauthorize the WIA and the DOL Employment and Training Administration's revisions to state planning guidance, the DOL extended all WIA Title I state plans in 2011 and in 2012. In early 2012, the DOL issued guidance requiring states to submit a new five-year state plan for WIA Title I and the Wagner-Peyser Act.

In September 2012, the Council endorsed, and the Governor approved, the new state plan. The TWC then extended the local plans through March 2013 to allow time for boards to develop new five-year plans. In December 2012, the TWC further extended the local plans through June 2013, enabling boards to use the most recent labor market data in determining target occupations and industries and to provide adequate time for public comment.

The TWC issued Program Years 2013–2018 planning requirements for local boards, including instructions for documenting alignment with *Advancing Texas*, in December 2012. Boards documented strategies designed to meet the needs of three populations and to facilitate their entry into the workforce: (1) veterans, (2) the blind or disabled, and (3) those with low literacy or English language skills. They also described an innovative strategy that included collaboration with two or more system partners.

The TWC and Council staff conducted a joint plan review process, and the 28 board plans were approved by the TWC commissioners at the May 21, 2013, docket. The Council endorsed all 28 plans at its June

2013 meeting, and the Governor approved them later that month. The *Evaluation 2013* report included detailed examples of local board strategies and ongoing activities that aligned with *Advancing Texas*.

Last year, local boards were not required to submit new local plans or modifications. Implementation of *Advancing Texas* continued and work began to prepare for development of the next system strategic plan. In anticipation of the strategic planning process, formally launched in September 2014, the Council focused on better understanding issues related to system partners' workforce programs and services. Actions were taken to obtain local board input, with information provided in the *Evaluation 2014* report.

Due to the enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA, Public Law 113-128), new board plans or modifications were not required this year. Most provisions of the new law took effect July 1, 2015. The WIOA requires a single state plan that describes the state's overall strategy for workforce development and how the strategy will meet identified skill needs for workers, job seekers, and employers. Local plans must be aligned to the strategy described in the state plan and describe how services provided at the local level will be aligned to regional labor market needs. Additional information is provided in the **Local Board Alignment** section.

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*LTO – Partner agencies will gather data from employer customers at appropriate intervals to determine employer needs and satisfaction.*

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*LTO – Partner agencies will use the employment data/outcomes of their programs to understand and improve those programs.*

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The Council and system partners recognize employers as a primary customer of the state's workforce system. Data gaps regarding their needs and satisfaction hinder the ability to assess whether existing programs and services adequately meet customer requirements. To be effective, programs and services must address and adapt to changing employer needs. During the previous strategic plan period, several partner agencies increased their efforts to become more familiar with employers' awareness and

*... assessing employer needs and satisfaction ... and using employment data and outcomes to assist with program improvement efforts.*

perception of existing services and to gather information about projected hiring and training needs.

These two LTOs incorporated five and three agency projects, respectively, that were continued from the previous system strategic plan. Two projects associated with determining

employer satisfaction—one implemented by the THECB and one by the Texas Youth Commission (TYC)—were completed and closed in conjunction with approval of the *2012 Update to Advancing Texas*.

### THECB

After developing an online survey system, the THECB worked with the TWC to notify employers of the survey. The agency also informed the Texas Association of Community Colleges and local workforce boards in an effort to increase awareness and participation. Survey responses were not sufficient to permit statistical analysis of the programs or employers' satisfaction.

The THECB considered new options to meet the plan's intent, and in 2011 partnered with the Council to survey the CTCs. A two-phase survey process was used to collect information on the CTCs' strategies for determining employer satisfaction and using that information in institutional planning processes to improve program delivery. Blinn College and Lone Star College System were selected as models of promising practices and were formally recognized by the Council in December 2011.

Texas Juvenile Justice Department [formerly TYC]

In prior years, the TYC administered an annual survey during the state assessment process for Prison Industry Enhancement programs, a process instituted under the previous system strategic plan. No data have been collected since 2010 as there were no programs in operation.

An additional survey was developed and piloted for employers that work with youth on parole, with plans to implement it on a larger scale, and to shift from a paper-based to an electronic format. Due to an agency-wide reduction in force, implementation of this survey was deferred. With all major tasks completed, the project was closed in 2012.



Agencies use employer data and information collected through web-based, telephone, and in-person surveys to (1) measure satisfaction; (2) identify training and service needs; (3) identify modifications to current programs and services to better suit workforce requirements; and (4) serve as a resource for agency strategic plan development and in preparation for future legislative sessions. Tasks associated with the two LTOs complement and support each other.

Performance data for the three active projects are published in the **Less Formal Measures** section. Project updates for all active projects are presented below:

DARS

DARS' divisions continued to work on two employer-related projects. An online survey was developed to collect employer feedback upon service completion and/or after successful job placements. Survey data are used to assess employer satisfaction with DARS services and to identify opportunities for program and service improvements.

Last year, the DRS and the DBS launched a joint effort to develop a consolidated business relations function designed to improve services to businesses throughout the state and enable greater collaboration with local boards and workforce centers. A cross-divisional workgroup was charged with developing an implementation plan and coordinating implementation activities through FY 2015. The plan was also to incorporate the Sunset Advisory Commission's August 2014 recommendations related to a consolidated business relations approach and closer coordination with local workforce boards and centers. Business relations specialists were assigned to a region rather than operating as a separate unit at the central office. This structure enabled the specialists to provide ongoing and in-depth training and support to the field staff by focusing on the regional needs of the staff and businesses.

Following DARS' sunset review, the Sunset Advisory Commission's decision report (January 2015) indicated that DARS would retain responsibility for immediate actions and that the TWC would ensure that the recommendation carry forward following the program's transfer. The change was effective in September 2015, and is expected to allow DARS to better coordinate internal and external efforts in order to build stronger business relations and improve consumers' employment outcomes. While working with the TWC on transition plans, DARS continues to work in partnership with businesses, local workforce boards and centers, secondary and postsecondary education institutions, and other community organizations.

Other initiatives reported during the six-year plan period included:

"SWAT Immersions"—Since 2011, DARS' business relations unit has conducted "SWAT immersions" to train local field units. The sessions assisted units with business relations strategy development and implementation, and using key data on businesses, labor demands, job-ready consumers, and market trends. In FY 2015, SWAT training was replaced by regionally focused training and support. The unified approach to business relations was expected to result in training efforts similar to SWAT training, but revised to align with the agency's new approach. Business relations and employment assistance staff also continued their outreach through statewide initiatives with large and mid-sized companies, and through ongoing activities with employers, local boards and centers, and other community partners in each region.

Strategic Planning Grant—In 2012, DARS received a grant from the University of Massachusetts to work on strategic planning related to vocational rehabilitation processes and services. Following work sessions conducted through the grant, DRS staff reviewed existing policies and procedures to assess opportunities for clarification, change, or development of additional policies or procedures necessary to support effective program operations. Substantial policy revisions began in FY 2014, as did efforts to increase alignment between strategic and operational planning and to establish business processes to support achievement of the agency's strategic objectives.

Data System Development—DARS previously reported implementing a customized cloud-based site as a data system for business relations and a mechanism to create a link between job-ready consumers and employers. Last year, system expansion was suspended pending implementation of the joint business relations strategy and establishment of a consolidated business relations team. DARS planned to reassess system needs and explore options that would enable staff to more efficiently track and report business outreach activities and outcomes as envisioned for the new team, and as required to implement the agency's Sunset recommendations and the WIOA.

Employer Satisfaction Surveys—DARS continued to use SurveyMonkey to conduct the employer satisfaction survey, which became available through the online employer portal in June 2013. Selective use of SurveyMonkey continued as DARS worked to align business systems and operations with the Sunset recommendations. Surveys are sent to businesses upon completion of services provided (e.g., services and support in hiring a consumer referred by DARS, job retention services, training) and/or after successful consumer placements. The DRS and the DBS both use the data to assess employer satisfaction and to identify opportunities for program and service improvements, and also to identify opportunities for staff coaching and training, staff recognition, program improvements, and replication of successful practices.

### TVC

In 2009, the TVC launched a statewide initiative focused on placing veterans into employment by hiring a dedicated business outreach coordinator. The successful effort was expanded, with four business representatives strategically located across the state. The coordinators worked to establish partnerships with regional employers and to market TVC's employment services. Due to guidance from the DOLVETS, they were integrated with the local veterans employment representatives, and all veterans employer liaisons are being incorporated as team members in local boards' business service units.

In recent years, the TVC completed two employer satisfaction surveys annually, continuing the process as part of the agency's efforts to increase employer outreach and partnerships. Previously, Veterans Employment Services field staff was also surveyed. Based on data analysis, a Disabled Veterans Outreach Program focus group was convened and several changes were implemented to improve effectiveness and efficiency.

In addition, staff reviews data from monthly performance reports provided by the TWC and conducts annual trend analyses in order to evaluate service delivery models and make adjustments where appropriate. Trend analyses have been used to forecast staffing needs and for the Jobs for Veterans State Grant application that is submitted to the DOLVETS for approval. Data are also used in preparing for career fairs and hiring events.

Data review and analysis also facilitate communication of best practices to state, regional, and local staff, and to other stakeholders such as the DOLVETS. At the annual TVC conference, best practices are communicated through training and panel discussions and employer satisfaction data and comments are incorporated in staff training.

Annual employer awards are presented at the agency's fall conference. In addition, employers are featured on the agency's website and in their publications.

Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ)–Windham School District (Windham)

In 2011, Windham administered an electronic employer survey but encountered low response rates, incomplete responses, and data issues. For example, contact information derived from unemployment insurance wage records was used, but many of the contacts were unfamiliar with the program or unaware that employees were ex-offenders.

Since 2012, Windham has conducted the survey using several methods, including distribution (1) through the TDCJ's Parole Division in Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio metro areas; (2) at job fairs, workforce centers, and to various stakeholders; and (3) directly to employers. Windham has added a website link to the survey, and continues to review data to determine employer satisfaction and to plan program and management initiatives.

Windham also gathers information on targeted and high-demand occupations, emerging trends, and nontraditional careers identified by the 28 local boards and industry stakeholders. Windham staff meets annually with local board and industry representatives to tour job sites to keep abreast of new industry trends and to discuss career opportunities for ex-offenders.

Employer survey data are also used to assess satisfaction with the job knowledge and skills of program participants. Survey data and data collected from local board and industry representatives are used to evaluate training programs for alignment with current employer demand and suitability for ex-offenders. Based on the review, program modifications may be made. Last year, for example, Windham reported plans to begin offering welding, machining fundamentals, and CNC machining for female offenders to address the current demand in the manufacturing industry.

## ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY

### Mandate and Background

Under Texas Government Code (TGC), Section 2308.1016, the Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) is responsible for facilitating the efficient delivery of integrated adult education and literacy services in Texas. The Council is also charged with evaluating the adult education and literacy programs formerly administered by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). The Council's role is to identify duplicative planning efforts, lack of adequate client information sharing, or other challenges that adversely affect program delivery.

TGC, Section 2308.104, specifies that the Council will develop a single strategic plan for the workforce system that includes goals, objectives, and performance measures. It also states that the agencies administering a workforce program will use the system strategic plan in developing their operational plans.

Over the *Advancing Texas*' plan period, changes were implemented that significantly affected the delivery of adult education and literacy services in Texas. These included the transfer of adult education from the TEA to the TWC and the implementation of the Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA).

### Program Transfer

Senate Bill (SB) 307 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) mandated transfer of the adult education and literacy program from the TEA to the TWC, and the program was transferred on September 1, 2013. As a result, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and the TWC were accountable for the adult education English language learner and workforce skills training objective in *Advancing Texas*, and the TWC retained accountability for the workplace literacy for adults with low literacy objective. The outcomes for both plan objectives, addressed in the **System Accomplishments** section, focused on the identification and implementation of strategies that ensure an increasing number of students are prepared to attain some postsecondary credential. The Council supported partner agency implementation of both objectives.

Adult education and literacy programs funded by the TWC provide English language, math, reading, and writing instruction to help students acquire the skills needed to succeed in the workforce, earn a high school equivalency, or enter college or career training. Rules adopted by the commission on February 4, 2014, positioned the agency to prioritize services around education demands and workforce development needs in order to implement the objectives outlined in SB 307, as well as federal guidance, direction provided by the commission, and stakeholder input.

As stated in the rule<sup>30</sup> preamble and the TWC's initial request for proposals, the commission's goal is to incrementally increase the proportion of students who exit workforce services ready for work, or who are enrolled or co-enrolled in college and career training. This model provides opportunities for literacy and basic educational development and ensures these services link students at all academic and English levels with employment, training, and college opportunities.

#### Redirecting Adult Education and Literacy

**Goal:** *To support increases in employment, higher education transition, skill gains, and secondary completion through demonstrated approaches that integrate system services and leverage community partnerships.*

- Adopted by the Texas Workforce Commission on November 25, 2014

During the rule comment period, concerns were raised that the approach might have unintended consequences (e.g., serving higher-functioning students to the detriment of lower-functioning students).

<sup>30</sup> Texas Administrative Code, Title 40, Part 20, Chapter 805—Adult Education and Literacy.

However, as the TWC indicated, there are strategies in place and in development, often using interagency collaborations, which should allow the program to develop increased employment and workforce training outcomes over time, while serving more students regardless of functional level. One example cited was the THECB's Accelerate Texas initiative that provides students with lower skills or limited English with access to career and technical training.

In 2014, the TWC awarded over \$60 million in state and federal funds to a network of 35 education, workforce, and nonprofit entities to deliver enhanced adult education services statewide. The request for proposals incorporated key elements of the pilot model developed in response to the *Advancing Texas'* workplace literacy objective by requiring service providers to implement career pathways programs.

All program year 2014–15 grant recipients are required to provide: (1) college and career bridge activities; (2) individualized training, education, and career plans for students itemizing short- and long-term goals; and (3) career pathway programs that include education and training and work-based project models. To support increases in career and postsecondary education and training outcomes for the program, the TWC is implementing multiple strategies including enhanced enrollment and performance criteria, incentives for innovative acceleration, and integration and transition models, such as the Accelerate Texas integrated education and training model being implemented in coordination with the THECB.

### **Texas Success Initiative**

Texas public community and technical colleges (CTC) were created to expand access to higher education. Open admissions policies that facilitate broad access and emphasize enrollment resulted in institutions enrolling many students who may not be adequately prepared for college-level coursework. Underprepared students face significant barriers to completing college, and many do not complete. Since 1987, the legislature has guided a series of reforms that determine readiness for college-level coursework, including aligning public education and higher education through clearly defined college and career readiness standards, improving developmental education, and establishing a single threshold for measuring college readiness.

Developmental education courses are designed to help underprepared students transition into college-level coursework. However, data demonstrate that developmental education program delivery has not always been effective. Students placed in the lowest levels of developmental education are the least likely to progress into advanced coursework or complete the desired level of attainment, while those that test at higher levels may be required to repeat content that has been mastered. When a student's primary goal is employment, such delays become significant barriers to postsecondary completion.

#### ***Establishing a Standard College Readiness Measure***

A key component of the alignment effort between secondary and postsecondary education was the establishment of a college readiness measure based on the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). However, institutions used one or more of four different assessments to determine whether students met this standard, and each institution could set a passing standard above the THECB's minimum standard. These discrepancies resulted in vast inconsistencies between institutions in student advising and placement.

In 2011, House Bill (HB) 1244 (82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature) mandated adjustments be made to the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) to improve the academic preparedness of students enrolling in higher education. The legislation authorized the THECB to prescribe a single standard for assessment of college readiness and set a single threshold for enrollment across all Texas public institutions of higher education, effective with the 2013–14 academic year. To address the requirements, the THECB collaborated with the Council, the TEA, and the TWC in monthly discussions to consider the populations served, challenges, best practices, and opportunities to improve student outcomes and to benefit the workforce system. The workgroup also worked to align efforts with the transfer of adult education from the TEA to the TWC in order to ensure efficiency and eliminate duplication of services.

In 2012, the THECB began the process of determining and setting a single standard for assessment, as well as a single threshold for readiness and enrollment that would meet faculty expectations across institutions of higher education and that could be integrated into Texas public high schools. Contributing review teams included faculty leaders, assessment experts, and other stakeholders. The process included a review of standards and gap analyses, meetings with faculty members, and development and field-testing. The proposed standard and assessments were approved in the spring of 2013.

### ***Differentiating Student Needs—Texas Success Initiative Assessment***

Under the original TSI created in 2003, students were required to comply with the TSI (Texas Education Code, Section 51.3062(f)) in order to enroll in Texas public institutions of higher education. Presently, the majority of students are exempt from the TSIA, based on an ACT/SAT college readiness score, military service, enrollment as non-degree and non-certificate seekers, and other exemptions. The TSI is intended to support completion among students who face more significant challenges to postsecondary attainment.

Prior to 2013–14 and the implementation of the new TSI assessment, the four original testing instruments were designed to classify students as college ready or not college ready. Typically, students who did not meet the minimum passing standard of the exam, in any one or all three of the content areas, were placed into the same developmental education program. The HB 1244 requirement for a single assessment offered an opportunity to include a diagnostic component that would support identifying and remediating gaps between secondary and postsecondary learning. In the summer of 2012, the THECB met with review teams and conducted content and field-testing for a new TSIA. The assessment was aligned with the CCRS and the national adult education standards and designed to differentiate student needs, allowing for more individualized methods of remediation tailored to gaps in a student's learning.

#### **Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA)**

*The TSIA classifies student performance in three different skill levels: college ready, developmental education, and adult basic education. In addition, the assessment includes a diagnostic component that helps clarify the student's specific strengths and weaknesses, enabling institutions to accelerate students through appropriate remediation options designed to effectively help them meet their academic and workforce goals.*

Beginning with implementation in the fall of 2013, the new TSIA was also aligned with developmental education reform efforts. The assessment produces a diagnostic profile designed to help determine if an individual is academically ready for college-level course work or if the individual requires developmental education or additional remediation. The assessment is aligned to the National Reporting System (NRS) standards for adult education and literacy and provides a diagnostic for students assessed with skills below secondary school level in one, two, or all three skill areas. The TSIA Adult Basic Education (ABE) Diagnostic distinguishes between:<sup>31</sup>

- ▶ students whose skill levels are within secondary school ranges, i.e., developmental education students assessed at NRS levels 5 and 6; and
- ▶ students whose skill levels fall below high school, i.e., students scoring at NRS levels 1 through 4.

### ***Developing a Referral System***

In Texas, the CTCs continue to provide open access to any student and to develop programs and processes that help more students attain some postsecondary credential. In some cases, students require specialized services or access to programs and services. These are provided through partnerships with the postsecondary institution's credit or non-credit workforce training and/or continuing

<sup>31</sup> Developmental education includes courses/interventions that address students who are assessed by the Developmental Education Diagnostic or who are assessed at levels 5 through 6 on the TSIA ABE Diagnostic. Basic Academic Skills Education refers to the newly developed non-course competency-based options that address students with a high school diploma who assess within levels 3 through 4 on the TSIA ABE Diagnostic.

education department and adult education services, social service agencies, local workforce offices, credit recovery programs, and employer-based training programs.

Throughout development of the TSIA, stakeholders considered the needs of students assessed at skill levels that fall significantly below the knowledge and skills required for success in college-level courses. These students require more extensive assistance, as well as a different type of assistance, than students who are better prepared for college success.

Over the *Advancing Texas*' plan period, Council staff participated with the THECB and the TWC in a series of collaborative meetings to support development and implementation of the TSIA. The *TSI Operational Plan for Serving Lower Skilled Learners* (April 2014) focused solely on the role of community colleges, as the institutions that have the highest percentage and number of students testing at or below developmental education levels. It included 10 recommendations for more effectively serving students assessed at NRS levels 1 through 4 on the TSIA ABE Diagnostic.

One recommendation called for advising and referring students assessed in NRS levels 1 and 2 in all three content areas—reading, writing, and math. Options include continuing education on campus or, by referral, to an appropriate agency/organization (e.g., the TWC, the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, community-based organizations). The plan noted that, outside of the English language learner population, the disabled and learning disabled are two of the largest groups testing at these levels, and would be better served through evaluation or vocational rehabilitation offered outside the college or through continuing education.

Another recommendation addressed the development of a statewide referral system. In collaboration with partner agencies, the THECB would review and build on existing resources and determine the need to establish, with its workforce system partners, a statewide online resource and referral system for use by institutions of higher education, adult education providers, and other appropriate organizations to optimize the services provided to those assessed in NRS levels 1 and 2.

### ***Implications and Related Issues***

The state's adult education and literacy system has long been considered to be underfunded, and often operates at capacity. The new TSI requirements, accompanied by a more directed focus on individuals assessed at higher levels, may result in a service gap for individuals at lower literacy levels or who desire to access adult education for personal or family literacy purposes.

Due to the large number of eligible Texans seeking enrollment in adult education programs, wait lists are common with providers.<sup>32</sup> If the TSIA results in additional individuals being directed to these providers, the state's adult education system will need to find additional capacity through additional funding, lower costs, and/or delivery efficiencies, to meet the needs of a larger population in need of services.

Several related, or compounding, issues were noted in the operational plan, including:

- ▶ Students who have not completed a high school credential are ineligible for federal financial aid (e.g., Pell grant, loans, work-study). However, they are included in the population prioritized by federally funded adult education programs.
- ▶ Public community colleges have legislative mandates requiring the provision of adult literacy and other basic skills programs for adults.<sup>33</sup> While there are currently programs available at some community college campuses designed to address this need, such programs are not found on all campuses.

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<sup>32</sup> Texas Workforce Investment Council, *Results of the 2012 Research and Survey of Adult Education Providers in Texas* (June 2012).

<sup>33</sup> Texas Education Code, Section 130.003(e)(8).

- ▶ Additional funding for support services (e.g., day care, tuition assistance) would also be beneficial. Many students cannot afford the amount of time and money necessary to achieve a high school diploma or GED, much less a postsecondary credential.

HB 1054 (84<sup>th</sup> Legislature) requires that institutions of higher education include non-course competency-based developmental education programs and interventions designed for students whose performance falls significantly below college readiness standards. Through summer 2018, the THECB will analyze data and institutional utilization of such options that are serving students assessed below TSIA level 5. The THECB is currently working with the College Board on two research studies, the *SAT Validity Study* and the *TSI Assessment Validity Study*. The latter will be based on data from fall 2013–14 through fall 2014–15, and is expected to be completed in the fall of 2016.

The THECB has funded the TSI Professional Development Program at Texas State University, for the purpose of delivering statewide, multi-faceted professional development support targeting advising and placement, non-traditional instructional models and career pathways models. The THECB and Texas are surveying institutions in order to inform regional professional development activities offered in academic year 2015–16. In addition, an online resource portal of promising practices for underprepared students will be maintained.

## Future Considerations

The availability of a well-educated and skilled workforce is essential for competing in the global economy. Adult education, combined with skills training required by employers, is a strategy for meeting this need.

The Council will continue to monitor system partners' efforts to increase access to, referral between, and outcomes of adult education in Texas. Key initiatives and mandates to be tracked include:

*Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Implementation*—The WIOA expands the purpose of adult education, emphasizing activities that should increase an individual's ability to transition to postsecondary education and obtain employment. It also promotes the integration of adult education with occupational education and training, including the development of career pathways systems, and encourages collaboration with employers.

In March, the TWC submitted a transition year state plan for programs authorized under the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (WIOA, Title II) to the U.S. Department of Education. The state's *WIOA Combined State Plan* is being developed by the TWC and will be considered by the Council in February 2016. Following approval by the Council and the Governor, the state plan must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor by March 3, 2016.

*Accelerate Texas*—Accelerate Texas is an integrated career pathway model that supports the transition and success of lower skilled students into entry-level workforce training programs leading to credentials of value in regional labor markets. As noted in the **System Accomplishments** section, elements of the pilot model developed for English language learners have been incorporated in the initiative's design.

HB 1 (84<sup>th</sup> Legislature) included a THECB appropriation of over \$4 million to support community college grants over the 2016–17 biennium. As directed by Rider 36, competitive grants will be used to scale and sustain Accelerate Texas program models for increasing the participation and success of adult education and literacy students transitioning into postsecondary education and/or training programs and for students assessed under the TSIA as demonstrating basic academic skills.

### Focusing on Career Pathways

*The WIOA promotes the development of career pathways systems and encourages collaboration with employers.*

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*Accelerate Texas programs help adult students acquire skills and certificates in high-demand occupations by integrating basic skills with career and technical pathways.*

The TWC, in coordination with the THECB, is also implementing the Accelerate Texas model as one strategy to increase career and postsecondary education and training outcomes for the adult education and literacy program.

Statewide Strategic Plan for Adult Basic Education—TWC Rider 32, HB 1 (84<sup>th</sup> Legislature), requires the TWC, in consultation with the Council, to develop a comprehensive statewide strategic plan to address the projected future demand for adult education, gaps in the adult education system, improved efficiency of coordinated activities between state agencies, increased education and work-related outcomes for adult education students, and the types of programs and instruction necessary to help prepare adults for 21st century work and life. The TWC is to report on implementation and annual progress to the Council, the Governor, and the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) in December of every even-numbered year.

The strategic plan is being developed with input from program stakeholders, including the Adult Education and Literacy Advisory Committee. In November 2014, the commission approved a goal and four strategies for the program. Work on the draft plan continued in fall 2015.

Adult Education and Postsecondary Education Alignment—THECB Rider 27, HB 1 (84<sup>th</sup> Legislature), requires the THECB to coordinate with the TEA and the TWC to prepare a report on the alignment of adult education and literacy and postsecondary education. The rider specifies data and information to be included. It is also to present recommendations for the continued coordination and alignment of adult education and literacy assessments and the TSIA Assessment for appropriate student placement in adult education and literacy basic academic skills or developmental education courses and interventions. The report is to be submitted to applicable legislative committees, the Governor, the TWC, and the LBB by May 1, 2016.

Texas Success Initiative—Approved by the THECB in April 2014, the *TSIA Operational Plan for Serving Lower-Skilled Learners* proposed phased implementation, beginning in fall 2014, and close monitoring of outcomes to make informed adjustments. A formal validity study is expected to be complete in the fall of 2016. As noted in the plan, if data show that targeted interventions are not being utilized significantly by institutions of higher education or that they are of limited effectiveness at such a scale—suggesting that higher education institutions do not have the capacity (e.g., financial and labor resources, operational structures) to serve the lowest academically skilled population—the THECB will utilize stakeholder input to appropriately review and revise the plan’s recommendations.

Research Partnership—In July, the THECB approved a partnership with the RAND Corporation on a four-year, \$2.5 million research grant administered by the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Services. A working group—including representatives from Houston Community College, El Paso Community College, and South Texas College—will develop, implement, and refine innovative approaches to better serve students testing at the ABE level on the TSIA.

Referral System—During development of the new workforce system strategic plan, *The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023*, adult education was one of several identified key issues with cross-partner implications. The THECB and the TWC share a system partner strategy to increase access to, referral between, and outcomes of adult education programs and services. During fiscal years 2016–2019, the agencies will collaborate to develop and implement a student referral system between federally funded adult education and literacy providers and CTCs. The referral system will be designed to assist individuals seeking adult education services find a program responsive to their needs. If deemed appropriate, consideration will be given to integrating community-based providers into the referral system. A related performance measure will be developed prior to implementation of the new system.

**Building a Referral System**

*The TWC and the THECB will partner to develop and implement a student referral system between federally funded adult education and literacy providers and community and technical colleges.*

- *The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023*

Standards and Benchmarks Revisions and Alignment—Proposed regulations for the new WIOA require the TWC to align its adult education content standards with its state-adopted content standards by July 1, 2016. In July, the TWC issued a request for proposals for an initiative to update the Texas Adult Education Content Standards and Benchmarks; however, the request was canceled in August. The scope of work included revising and aligning the standards and benchmarks with the TSIA, the CCRS, the Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency, and the NRS guideline descriptors. The TWC plans to identify an entity to complete this work.

## Local Workforce Board Alignment with *Advancing Texas*

### Local Board Plan Alignment under *Advancing Texas*

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) is charged in both state and federal law with recommending to the Governor approval of local workforce development board plans and plan modifications as required under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and other applicable statutes. WIA, Section 118(a), required that each board develop and submit to the Governor a comprehensive local plan consistent with the WIA state plan. WIA, Section 111, stated that the Council, as the designated State Workforce Investment Board, shall assist the Governor in the review of board plans.

Texas Government Code (TGC), Section 2308.101(a)(5), requires the Council to review local plans for workforce development and make recommendations to the Governor for approval. In addition, TGC, Section 2308.304(b)(4), specifies that local plans must include a strategic component that sets broad goals and objectives for local workforce programs, and that outcomes must be consistent with statewide goals, objectives, and performance standards. *Advancing Texas* established statewide goals and objectives through fiscal year (FY) 2015. The plan contained 14 long term objectives with associated action plans to guide implementation. Local board plans were required to include goals and objectives that aligned with *Advancing Texas*.

Given the continued intent to reauthorize the WIA and the Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration's (DOLETA) revisions to state planning guidance, the DOLETA extended all WIA Title I state plans in 2011 and in 2012. In early 2012, the DOLETA issued the final planning guidance to states, which required the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to develop a new WIA Title I state plan for submission to the DOLETA by September 17, 2012.

In September 2012, the Council endorsed and the Governor approved the new state plan. The TWC then extended the local plans through March 2013 to allow time for boards to develop new five-year plans. In December 2012, the TWC further extended the local plans through June 2013, to enable boards to use the most recent labor market data in determining target occupations and industries, and to provide adequate time for public comment.

The new local board plans cover the five-year period of FY 2013–2018. In September 2012, the TWC initiated the planning process with the release of *Texas Workforce Development Board Planning Guidelines for Fiscal Years 2013–2018* [WD Letter 25-12, September 7, 2012; Change 1, December 19, 2012]. The guidelines provided instruction on required content, including documentation of alignment with local goals and objectives and the relevant statewide goals and objectives in *Advancing Texas*. They also outlined the Council's request for information and data to demonstrate alignment.

The TWC and Council staff conducted a joint review process for the board plans. The TWC reviewed plans for compliance with planning guidelines and requirements. Council staff reviewed each plan for alignment with the state strategic plan, *Advancing Texas*. Following review and evaluation, all 28 local plans were determined to meet the Council's requirements for demonstrating alignment with *Advancing Texas*. The 28 plans were approved by the TWC commissioners at the May 21, 2013, docket. The Council endorsed all 28 plans at its quarterly meeting on June 7, 2013, and the Governor approved them later that month.

The *Evaluation 2013* report included detailed examples of local board strategies and ongoing activities that aligned with *Advancing Texas*. It provided information on strategies and related performance measures/targets that, if applicable, are designed to meet the needs and facilitate workforce entry of three groups: veterans, Texans with low literacy or poor English language proficiency, and blind or disabled Texans. In addition, the report highlighted innovative strategies that include collaboration with

two or more system partners—including a description of the rationale for the strategy, intended outcomes, and how the strategy's process and outcomes would be evaluated to determine success over time.

## System Strategic Planning Input

Last year, local boards were not required to submit new local plans or modifications. When local plans or modifications are not required in a given year, the TWC has previously worked with Council staff to obtain local board information documenting alignment with the system strategic plan.

While implementation of *Advancing Texas* continued, work was underway to prepare for development of the next workforce system strategic plan. To prepare for the strategic planning process, which formally launched in September 2014, the Council focused on better understanding issues related to system partner workforce programs and services. Actions taken to obtain input from local boards included:

- ▶ *Regional Strategic Meetings* – The TWC held a series of regional strategic meetings with participation by the commissioners and agency staff. The Council Chair and director attended three meetings to gather information for consideration in the strategic planning process. Each board led two panel discussions focusing on:
  - key industry priorities and what the board is doing to address their needs, including their work with chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, or other industry officials; and
  - any other key area the board was working on locally (e.g., youth services, linkages with independent school districts/career technical education, child care, adult education).

In addition, each board presented local challenges and opportunities, including ideas for moving the system forward over the next five years. Following the presentations, the commissioners, TWC staff, and board representatives further discussed local opportunities, challenges, and ideas for moving the system forward over that time frame.

### Workforce System Strategic Plan

*As key workforce system partners, local board representatives actively participated in the implementation of Advancing Texas and in development of the new system strategic plan, The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023.*

- ▶ *Council Listening Sessions* – Local board representatives participated in listening sessions conducted by the Council prior to the start of strategic planning in September 2014. The sessions were designed to identify key issues and opportunities that must be addressed in the next five to eight years.
- ▶ *Texas Association of Workforce Boards (TAWB)* – In August 2014, the Council director attended a TAWB meeting to provide an update on the Council's planning activities and obtain input on the group's related questions and strategic issues.
- ▶ *System Integration Technical Advisory Committee (SITAC)* – The TAWB was represented on SITAC by the North Central board's executive director. Strategic priorities identified by system partners were presented at the June and September 2014 committee meetings, with TAWB information provided in September. Through facilitated sessions, SITAC discussed potential strategies for addressing partners' priorities, possible constraints, and opportunities for collaboration. Members then reviewed the priorities from a system-level perspective. A rank-ordered list was provided to the Council's Executive Committee, which was designated by the Council Chair as the strategic planning committee.

## Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act Implementation

Because of the significant workforce system reform initiated by the Texas Legislature in 1993 and 1995, the WIA contained provisions that allowed Texas to retain—or grandfather—major elements of its

workforce system that were consistent with the WIA, including its system of local workforce delivery. The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (WIOA, Public Law 113-128), which became effective July 1, 2015, repealed the WIA and maintained the provisions that allowed Texas to continue under prior consistent state law.

The WIOA requires states to submit a unified or combined state plan to the secretary of labor that outlines the state's overall strategy for workforce development and how the strategy will meet identified skill needs for workers, job seekers, and employers. The *WIOA Combined State Plan* is being developed by the TWC and will be considered by the Council in February 2016. Following approval by the Council and the Governor, the state plan must be submitted to the U.S. Department of Labor by March 3, 2016.

### **Local Area Designation**

WIOA, Section 106(b), outlines the requirements for local workforce area designation, including initial designation of any local area that was designated as such under the WIA. Texas rules developed under prior consistent state law meet the WIOA requirements for the designation and redesignation of workforce areas.<sup>34</sup>

In October, the TWC issued guidance to workforce boards regarding the process for requesting initial designation as a local workforce area under the WIOA. Area designations requested and recommended by the Commission will be included in the *WIOA Combined State Plan*, for approval by the Council and subsequently by the Governor.<sup>35</sup>

### **Local and Regional Planning**

New board plans or modifications were not required in 2015 due to enactment of the WIOA. Under the WIOA, local plans must be aligned to the strategy described in the state plan and also describe how services provided at the local level will be aligned to regional labor market needs.

States are required to establish regions to ensure that training and employment services support economic growth and meet regional labor market needs. Local boards and chief executive officers are charged with designing the system regionally, aligning workforce policies and services with regional economies that support the service delivery strategies and needs.

Regional partnerships help facilitate the alignment of workforce development activities with regional economic development activities and better support the execution and implementation of sector strategies and career pathways. Cooperation between regions also can lower costs and increase the effectiveness of service delivery to businesses and job seekers through the coordination of shared services, processes, and operations.

#### **Regional Collaboration**

*Texas has a history of supporting and encouraging regional planning and service delivery efforts ... benefits include collaborative planning, pooling and leveraging of resources, and capacity building.*

The 28 local boards and the TWC are working together to determine how WIOA requirements will be implemented in Texas. In the spring of 2015, a regional identification workgroup—with representatives from workforce areas and TWC staff—met several times. The group provided recommendations to TWC staff, providing the basis for a concept paper that articulated the rationale for determining regions in Texas.

The workgroup recommended that the commission recognize Texas' current workforce areas as their own independent regions. This will allow the areas to maintain their operations as currently structured and ensure that services are delivered efficiently and effectively. The concept paper noted that formally

<sup>34</sup> TGC, Section 2308.252, and Texas Administrative Code, Section 901.1.

<sup>35</sup> August 11, 2015 docket minutes.

designating new regions might have the adverse result of reducing potential collaborative efforts outside of the specified geographical boundaries. Regions will also be identified in the WIOA state plan.

Although regional planning is a new requirement under the WIOA, Texas' local boards have engaged in regional planning since their inception—demonstrating a history of promoting to and collaborating with stakeholders, leveraging resources, and ensuring that services are delivered efficiently and effectively to job seekers and employers beyond the designated workforce areas. Examples include:

- ▶ meeting the needs of industries through the collaboration of businesses;
- ▶ supporting the needs of the oil and gas industry;
- ▶ participating in a multi-state, grant-funded consortium that helps low-income, low-skill job seekers earn the skills and credentials needed to obtain in-demand occupations;
- ▶ establishing a multiregional coordinated strategy to recruit and train for the needs of businesses;
- ▶ meeting the needs of employers and job seekers through skills training and the creation and credentialing of a work-ready workforce; and
- ▶ responding to natural and other disasters by leveraging resources to help support those most in need.

### **Future Considerations**

As frontline partners in the workforce system, local boards must continue to enhance planning and collaborative efforts across workforce system components to meet employer and community needs. To meet the employers' needs, it is essential that service delivery strategies address regional demand in order to support economic growth. Local efforts and regional collaborations will continue and be based on labor market analysis and the needs of industry and economic development entities.

In the coming months the Council will work with the TWC and the boards to determine how local plans and modifications will demonstrate alignment under the statewide goals and objectives in the new system strategic plan, *The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023*.

## CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This report is the summative evaluation for the six-year strategic plan, *Advancing Texas*. Over the plan period, progress was made in many areas reflecting the efforts of system partners, the Council, and its System Integration Technical Advisory Committee (SITAC). Formed in late 2003 under the previous system strategic plan, SITAC was charged with implementation of *Destination 2010* and *Advancing Texas* and authorized to create and deploy cross-agency teams to attain integrated solutions to issues associated with implementation of each plan's long term objectives.

Working within their own organizations and with other system partners, SITAC members worked to strengthen system alignment and played a major role in the accomplishments realized over the last twelve years. Through increased collaboration, system partners leveraged opportunities in order to accomplish the majority of both plans' objectives and continued to build relationships and processes that would ensure additional progress in the future.

Each year, the Council and SITAC worked with system partners to address critical issues identified in the system strategic plan and to identify issues that may require action in the coming year. These included issues that directly related to the report's scope as outlined in the **Introduction**. Two such issues were identified last year: (1) adult education and literacy programs, and (2) system strategic plan implementation and reporting.

### Adult Education and Literacy Services

Last year, changes were implemented that significantly affected the delivery of adult education and literacy services in Texas. These included the transfer of adult education from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) and the implementation of the Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA).

#### *Program Transfer*

Senate Bill 307 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) mandated transfer of adult education from the TEA to the TWC. The program was transferred on September 1, 2013. In 2014, program rules were finalized and over \$60 million in state and federal funds were awarded to a network of 35 education, workforce, and nonprofit entities to deliver enhanced adult education services statewide. Of note, the TWC's initial request for proposals incorporated key elements of the pilot model developed in response to one *Advancing Texas* action plan by requiring service providers to implement career pathways programs.

#### *Texas Success Initiative Assessment*

House Bill 1244 (82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature), mandated adjustments be made to the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) to improve the academic preparedness of students enrolling in higher education. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) was authorized to prescribe a single standard for assessment of college readiness and set a single threshold for enrollment across Texas public institutions of higher education, effective with the 2013–14 academic year.

Council staff participated with the THECB and the TWC in a series of collaborative meetings to support development of the TSI implementation plan. The *TSI Operational Plan for Serving Lower Skilled Learners*, adopted by the THECB on April 24, 2014, focuses solely on the role of community colleges, as the institutions that have the highest percentage and number of students testing at or below developmental education levels. It includes 10 recommendations for more effectively serving students assessed at National Reporting System (NRS) levels 1 through 4 on the TSIA Adult Basic Education Diagnostic.

One recommendation addresses the development of a statewide referral system. In collaboration with partner agencies, the THECB would review and build on existing resources and determine the need to establish a statewide online resource and referral system for use by institutions of higher education, adult education providers, and other appropriate organizations to optimize the services provided to those assessed in NRS levels 1 and 2.

The state's adult education and literacy system has long been considered to be underfunded, and often operates at capacity. Due to the large number of eligible Texans seeking enrollment in adult education programs, wait lists are common with providers.<sup>36</sup> If the TSIA results in additional individuals being directed to these providers, the state's adult education system will need to find increased capacity through additional funding, lower costs, and/or delivery efficiencies, to meet the needs of a larger population in need of services.

During development of the new workforce system strategic plan, adult education was identified as a key issue with cross-partner implications. The THECB and the TWC share a system partner strategy to increase access to, referral between, and outcomes of adult education programs and services. During fiscal years (FY) 2016–19, the agencies will collaborate to develop and implement a student referral system between federally funded adult education and literacy providers and community and technical colleges.

The availability of a well-educated and skilled workforce is essential for competing in today's global economy. Adult education, combined with skills training required by employers, is a strategy for meeting this need. The Council will continue to monitor system partners' efforts to increase capacity and further improve adult education in Texas.

## System Strategic Plan Implementation and Reporting

As noted in the **Introduction**, state statutes require that the Council evaluate five elements in the workforce system, including (1) system strategic plan implementation and (2) Formal and Less Formal performance measures. Statute requires that the report include program-level data, which creates challenges related to the submission and presentation of aggregate versus unduplicated data. It is essential that comparable data sets be reported by agencies, per approved definitions and methodologies, for longitudinal tracking and analysis.<sup>37</sup>

Under both the previous system strategic plan—*Destination 2010*—and *Advancing Texas*, the Council worked with agencies and the Legislative Budget Board (LBB) to establish measures definitions that, where possible, align with existing federal common definitions, as well as LBB performance measures. In addition, established protocols (e.g., LBB '5% Variance') and standard rounding conventions are used.

The Council and partner agencies have worked to identify and implement process improvements for all work phases associated with preparation of the annual evaluation report. When agencies identify the need to revise prior-year data, the Council publishes the data in a report addendum and uses the revised figures in applicable calculations. Similarly, if a measure methodology is modified (e.g., legislation, data source availability), revised prior-year data are requested and treated in the same manner.

However, reporting is greatly facilitated for both parties when agencies notify the Council in a timely manner of potential changes required by federal or state legislation or by the issuance of new federal regulations or guidance. In addition, it is incumbent on partner agencies to communicate reporting requirements to appropriate staff and to ensure that data and information are submitted on a timely basis and meet agreed-to specifications.

<sup>36</sup> Texas Workforce Investment Council, *Results of the 2012 Research and Survey of Adult Education Providers in Texas* (June 2012).

<sup>37</sup> Texas Government Code, Section 2308.104.

The report **Overview** includes 12-year performance trend data for the four Formal measures. As required by statute, the annual evaluation report presents data by program rather than by agency. Conversely, the longitudinal trend lines present a summary-level view of system performance based on data from up to 24 programs and services focused on education, workforce education, and workforce training for three participant groups: adults, adults with barriers, and youth.

Over the last 12 years, strides have been made with regard to plan implementation and reporting to the Council. However, such functions remain a more adjunct process for some partner agencies, while more fully integrated by others. Lack of full integration may be appropriate for pilot projects; however, reporting for projects being scaled or for mainstream programs should be incorporated in the agency's standard business practices.

Under the new system strategic plan, the Council will continue to work with system partners to build upon process improvements made to date in an effort to more fully systematize these processes. In the coming year, staff will work with partner agencies to review and update the definitions and methodologies for all Formal measures, as well as to develop definitions and methodologies for the new Less Formal measures. The system evaluation structure will be redesigned, yet will continue to address all elements required by statute.

Program and other data from across the workforce system are critical in evaluating the extent to which workforce system programs, services, and products are meeting the needs of customers and stakeholders. The collection of key data, as well as the reporting and analysis of that data—in a consistent and useful manner—are essential in demonstrating outcomes, determining if changes are required or desired, and establishing benchmarks for future performance. To achieve these data-related organizational competencies relative to the performance measures noted in this plan, partner agencies may need to build or modify their existing data systems. By doing so, the Texas workforce system can measure what matters most and build the collection and analysis capabilities that are missing.



Approved by Governor Greg Abbott, the workforce system strategic plan—*The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023*—will be a primary focus of the Council in FY 2016. The first year of implementation of the new plan will include the development of a balanced scorecard approach to system evaluation.

## ADVANCING TEXAS ACTION PLANS

Action plans are the high-level plans that identify major tasks, milestones, timeframes, and performance measures necessary for attainment of the long term objectives specified in the workforce system strategic plan. *Advancing Texas* contained 14 such plans.

This attachment includes final versions of all 14 action plans.

Action Plan ID: S1		Action Plan Owner: SITAC	Action Plan – 2015 Review		Updated: 8/31/15	Rev: 2
Action Plan Status: FINAL		Long Term Objective				
Key Performance Area: Systems, Operations, Competencies and Integration		Produce each biennium, commencing in 2010, a report that documents an assessment of the number and type of postsecondary education and training credentials (certificate, level two certificate, associate, bachelor's and advanced degrees) required to match the demand for a skilled and educated workforce. The assessment will include the number of forecast net job openings by occupation at each level of postsecondary education and training and the number of credentials needed to match that forecast.				Plan Type:
Accountable Participants: THECB, TWC, Council						Partner
Critical Business Issue: Need for enhanced and more effective integration of academic and career and technical education (CTE) options at secondary and postsecondary levels to assist students to graduate and transition to further education or the workforce, and to reduce dropouts.		Key Performance Measures				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report, with data as specified.</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	1	Design overall project scope and plan, including user assessment via interagency task team. Considerations and determinations to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>geographical area,</li> <li>method of CIP-SOC match, and</li> <li>Potential limit on number of occupations forecast (priority, growth, other significance).</li> </ul>	09/2009	01/2010	Ongoing data collection: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>THECB (supply) – annual enrollment and graduation data.</li> <li>TWC (demand) – employment and job opening projections.</li> </ul>	Completed Strategic Workforce Assessment Program (SWAP) – by local workforce development area.
✓	2	Design and develop data collection tools and techniques, analysis requirements and reporting methods.	01/2010	03/2010		Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Validate occupations-to-programs crosswalk. [Completed]</li> <li>Develop process for updating and modifying crosswalk. [Completed]</li> </ul>
✓	3	Execute data gathering and analysis.	03/2010	06/2010		Completed
✓	4	Design and develop initial report deliverables.	07/2010	09/2010		Completed TWC modified plan of work: Develop <i>SWAP User's Guide</i> designed to introduce stakeholders to SWAP's analysis tools and allow individuals to perform specific supply-demand analyses. [Draft completed August 2011]
✓	5	Design and implement online, interactive user tools.	07/2010	ongoing		In Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TWC-develop interactive guide and case scenarios. [March 2012]</li> <li>TWC-partner with THECB to inform community colleges and other entities of online tool and potential uses. [Ongoing]</li> </ul>
✓	6	Distribute report to selected users and customers.  <i>NOTE: TWC determination made to build on user guide and develop online, interactive user tools rather than develop written report.</i>	09/2010	12/2010		Completed

<b>Action Plan ID: S1</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner: SITAC</b>	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated: 8/31/15</b>	<b>Rev: 2</b>
<b>Action Plan Status: FINAL</b>		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				<b>Plan Type: Partner</b>
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Systems, Operations, Competencies and Integration		Produce each biennium, commencing in 2010, a report that documents an assessment of the number and type of postsecondary education and training credentials (certificate, level two certificate, associate, bachelor's and advanced degrees) required to match the demand for a skilled and educated workforce. The assessment will include the number of forecast net job openings by occupation at each level of postsecondary education and training and the number of credentials needed to match that forecast.				
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> THECB, TWC, Council						
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Need for enhanced and more effective integration of academic and career and technical education (CTE) options at secondary and postsecondary levels to assist students to graduate and transition to further education or the workforce, and to reduce dropouts.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report, with data as specified.</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	7	Continuous improvement in data, compilation, review and distribution.	11/2011	ongoing		In Progress TWC awarded three-year Workforce Data Quality Initiative grant to develop Texas supply and demand analysis portal and upgrade/expand other labor market and career information products. [Awarded June 2015]

<b>Action Plan ID: S2</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner:</b> TEA	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated:</b> 8/31/15	<b>Rev:</b> 2
<b>Action Plan Status:</b> FINAL		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				<b>Plan Type:</b>  <b>Partner</b>
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Systems, Operations, Competencies and Integration		By 2013, Texas will decrease high school dropout rates by implementing rigorous Career and Technical Education (CTE) as a part of the recommended or advanced high school graduation program.				
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> TEA						
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Need for enhanced and more effective integration of academic and career and technical education (CTE) options at secondary levels to assist students to graduate, and to reduce the number of CTE students that drop out before graduation.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percent of CTE concentrators (Code 2 and 3 CTE Participants) who graduate on the recommended or distinguished achievement high school program. Achieve a minimum CTE concentrator rate of 81% annually.</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	1	Design, develop and adopt CTE courses to meet recommended or advanced high school program graduation requirements for the fourth year of math and science.	in progress	08/2010	SBOE adoption of CTE courses to satisfy a fourth math or science graduation requirement.	Completed TAC Chapter 74 Revisions.
✓	2	Embed college and career readiness standards (CCRS) into CTE TEKS.	04/2008	07/2009	HB 3485 and CTE Writing Teams.	Completed CTE Writing Teams embedded CCRS into new CTE TEKS.
✓	3	CTE TEKS to be adopted by the State Board of Education.	06/2007	07/2009	HB 3485 and SBOE adoption.	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CTE TEKS implementation 2010-2011 school year. [Completed]</li> <li>CTE TEKS revisions approved in 2015; changes effective for 2017-2018 school year. [Completed]</li> </ul>
✓	4	Design, develop and implement professional development initiatives related to CTE TEKS.	in progress	09/2010	District support for CTE teacher professional development (PD).	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TEKS implementation for 24,000 CTE teachers (face-to-face) offered 01/10 – 08/10. [Completed]</li> <li>TEKS PD available online 24/7 for ongoing training. [Ongoing]</li> <li>Final CTE professional development course deployed in 2013-2014 school year. [Completed]</li> <li>All nine courses monitored and updated as needed. [Ongoing]</li> </ul>
✓	5	Design, develop and coordinate with the THECB policies and processes regarding dual credit courses and credit transfer.  [Cont'd on next page]	in progress	12/2010	Work with the THECB regarding dual credit transfer.	Completed Implement and/or monitor new studies related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>dual credit costs (HB 3646) [Completed];</li> <li>effectiveness of dual credit courses (HB 3) [Completed];</li> <li>Study of Early Assessment and Early Intervention Models (Jobs for the Future, November 2012), fulfilling requirements of HB 3468 (82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature) [Completed];</li> <li>feasibility of successful completion of end-of-course (EOC) exams by successful completion of a dual credit course (HB 3) [In Progress]; and</li> </ul>

<b>Action Plan ID: S2</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner:</b> TEA	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated:</b> 8/31/15	<b>Rev:</b> 2
<b>Action Plan Status:</b> FINAL		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				<b>Plan Type:</b>  <b>Partner</b>
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Systems, Operations, Competencies and Integration		By 2013, Texas will decrease high school dropout rates by implementing rigorous Career and Technical Education (CTE) as a part of the recommended or advanced high school graduation program.				
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> TEA						
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Need for enhanced and more effective integration of academic and career and technical education (CTE) options at secondary levels to assist students to graduate, and to reduce the number of CTE students that drop out before graduation.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percent of CTE concentrators (Code 2 and 3 CTE Participants) who graduate on the recommended or distinguished achievement high school program. Achieve a minimum CTE concentrator rate of 81% annually.</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
	5  cont'd	<i>Cont'd from preceding page:</i> Design, develop and coordinate with the THECB policies and processes regarding dual credit courses and credit transfer.	in progress	12/2010	Work with the THECB regarding dual credit transfer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>correlation between performance on EOC assessments and success in military service or postsecondary workforce training (HB 3). [In Progress]</li> </ul> <p><i>NOTE: Grade 9 students will begin to take EOC exams in the 2011-2012 school year. Each successive year, the successive grade will transition from TAKS to EOC exams. Graduating seniors will take EOC exams beginning with the 2014-2015 school year. Therefore, data regarding a correlation between EOC performance and success in military service or postsecondary workforce training will not be available until those (2014-2015) graduating seniors have joined the military and/or completed some level of postsecondary workforce training.</i></p>
✓	6	Develop and deploy additional early college high schools (ECHS).	in progress	ongoing	TEA State Initiatives.	<p>In Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recommendations and actions in the Texas High School Program strategic plan. [Completed]</li> <li>154 ECHS approved for 2015-2016 school year. [Ongoing]</li> </ul>
✓	7	Develop criteria for Campus Distinction Designations for 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Workforce Development program.	09/2009	08/2010	Commissioner of Education to establish a committee to develop criteria.	<p>Completed</p> <p>Annual campus distinction designation for improvement in student achievement or diminish performance differentials between student subpopulations (HB 3).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Preliminary work: literature review, draft list of stakeholders, potential measurement criteria/indicators, and potential award methodologies. (August 2011) [Completed]</li> <li>Committee meetings. (Spring 2012) [Not Started]</li> <li>Initial distinction designations. (Concurrent with release of 2013 performance ratings) [Not Started]</li> <li>Discontinued under HB 5 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature). [Completed]</li> </ul>

Action Plan ID: S3		Action Plan Owner: THECB, TEA	Action Plan – 2015 Review		Updated: 8/31/15	Rev: 2
Action Plan Status: FINAL		Long Term Objective				Plan Type: System
Key Performance Area: Systems, Operations, Competencies and Integration		By 2013, education and training partners will have the infrastructure necessary (policies, procedures, data processes, rules, and capabilities) to facilitate the effective and efficient transfer of academic and technical dual credit courses from high schools to community colleges and four-year institutions.				
Accountable Participants: THECB, TEA		Key Performance Measures				
Critical Business Issue: Lack of alignment and clarity in educational policy and regulation for secondary and postsecondary transitions is limiting efficiency and effectiveness of overall educational outcomes.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of major tasks and deliverables.</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	1	Provide information and training to high school counselors about the differences between workforce and academic dual credit programs and the transferability of courses and programs.	10/2009	10/2011	TEA and THECB will build on THECB Challenge Access Grant training to 20 regional service centers and high school counselors.	Completed Progress reports.
✓	2	Work with higher education institutions that provide dual credit courses to develop processes and information to advise parents and students about dual credit educational choices and articulation to workforce and/or academic degrees (see information contained in step #1), including information regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>workforce and academic courses, credit differences;</li> <li>core curriculum; and</li> <li>application to two- and four-year degrees.</li> </ul>		3Q/2010		Completed THECB rulemaking process and rule approval.
✓	3	Design and execute a research study related to the cost/effectiveness of dual credit.		12/2010	TEA will draft an RFP and contract for the study in collaboration with the THECB.	Completed Report due 12/2010. [Published March 2011]
✓	4	Design and execute a research study regarding dual credit as a substitute for end of course exams.		12/2011	TEA will draft an RFP and contract for the study.	Completed EOC assessments to be phased in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2011-12;</li> <li>10<sup>th</sup> grade in 2012-13;</li> <li>11<sup>th</sup> grade in 2013-14; and</li> <li>12<sup>th</sup> grade in 2014-15.</li> </ul>
✓	5	THECB/TEA will improve data systems to more clearly track and evaluate student outcomes and efficacy of dual credit initiatives.	07/2009	06/2014	TEA and THECB will implement an IES Statewide Longitudinal Data System grant.	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Grant deliverables according to grant timelines.</li> <li>Data analysis limited to the number of cohorts in the system, to begin with FY 2012 cohort.</li> <li>TEA implemented Texas Student Data System as alternative system. Early adoptees began using in 2013-14 school year; three-phase rollout ending in 2016-17 school year.</li> <li>Texas Public Education Information Resource website generates dual credit enrollment and outcome reports.</li> </ul>

<b>Action Plan ID: S3</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner:</b> THECB, TEA	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated:</b> 8/31/15	<b>Rev:</b> 2
<b>Action Plan Status:</b> FINAL		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				<b>Plan Type:</b> <b>System</b>
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Systems, Operations, Competencies and Integration		By 2013, education and training partners will have the infrastructure necessary (policies, procedures, data processes, rules, and capabilities) to facilitate the effective and efficient transfer of academic and technical dual credit courses from high schools to community colleges and four-year institutions.				
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> THECB, TEA						
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Lack of alignment and clarity in educational policy and regulation for secondary and postsecondary transitions is limiting efficiency and effectiveness of overall educational outcomes.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of major tasks and deliverables.</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	6	Evaluate the manner in which dual credit courses are defined relative to course outcomes and understanding of learning objectives for instructors.		ongoing	THECB work with 2-/4-year institutions to develop explicit learning outcomes that will be consistent across academic courses taught at all institutions in the state. Phased review process for the most frequently used/taken courses.	In Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>THECB works with community and technical college and university faculty to develop learning outcomes that will be consistent across academic courses taught statewide. Adopted recommendations incorporated into THECB's <i>Academic Course Guide Manual</i>. [Ongoing] [NOTE: Workforce courses in <i>Workforce Education Course Manual</i> already have learning outcomes.]</li> <li>THECB in the planning stage for developing programs of study for technical courses; HB 2628 (84<sup>th</sup> Legislature; effective September 1, 2015). [Ongoing]</li> </ul>
✓	7	Continue to develop and deploy Early College High School programs to identify issues and to inform the evolution of dual credit policies and procedures.	ongoing	ongoing	TEA will develop grant applications and award grants to school districts.	In Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progress reports. [Ongoing]</li> <li>154 ECHS approved for 2015-16 school year. [Ongoing]</li> </ul>
✓	8	Continue to develop and deploy college credit programs in public high schools to ensure high schools meet the mandate to offer every student the opportunity to earn 12 hours of postsecondary credit.	ongoing	ongoing	Implemented by school districts.	In Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Data collection. [Ongoing]</li> <li>HB 5 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) included options for performance acknowledgement on student's diploma and transcript, including outstanding performance in a dual credit course. Modified by HB 181 (84<sup>th</sup> Legislature) to remove diploma requirement; effective May 13, 2015. [Ongoing]</li> </ul>

<b>Action Plan ID: S4</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner:</b> Council	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated:</b> 8/31/15	<b>Rev:</b> 3
<b>Action Plan Status:</b> FINAL		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				<b>Plan Type:</b>  System
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Systems, Operations, Competencies and Integration		By 2013, design and implement a demonstration program targeted to improve perception of career options that career technical education (CTE) programs enable.				
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> Council						
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Career and technical education is perceived by many as a less desirable career option.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of major tasks and deliverables.</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	1	Design and execute a research study to identify models of best and promising practices for Texas high schools.	12/2009	07/2010		Completed
✓	2	From the study results, determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>common characteristics that the models share,</li> <li>elements for replication,</li> <li>linkages to middle school, and</li> <li>measures of success (metrics).</li> </ul>	08/2010	09/2010		Completed <i>Research Findings: Raising Awareness of Career Technical Education in Texas Schools</i> (September 2010).
✓	3	Convene a team to design a model of CTE outreach and awareness that incorporates those characteristics, elements, middle school linkages and metrics (step # 2).	09/2010	12/2010		Completed
✓	4	<b>Note: Change of methodology from RFA to informational guide starting at this step.</b> Publish and distribute an informational guide supporting demonstration of the model of CTE outreach and awareness (Step 3).	09/2012	05/2013		Completed
✓	5	Reconvene the team for guidance on critical content of informational guide and possible incentives.	09/2012	01/2013		Completed
✓	6	Identify and collect existing career exploration and detailed career information resources, tools, videos, events, and online sites that support activities in the informational guide.	09/2012	01/2013		Completed
✓	7	Develop an informational guide for counselors and school administrators and CTE directors/teachers.	09/2012	01/2013		Completed <i>Career Awareness Model: A Guide to a Sequential, Cohort-Based Approach</i> (June 2013).
✓	8	Develop support materials for implementation of the model.	09/2012	04/2013		Completed
✓	9	Distribute the informational guide to interested public high schools in Texas.	04/2013	05/2013		Completed Distributed to school districts in partnership with Career and Technology Association of Texas (CTAT). [June 2013]
✓	10	Request feedback from schools regarding implementation, outcomes, and any success stories or lessons learned.	TBD			Completed Coordinated with CTAT to request feedback on guide and model. [November 2014]
✓	11	Request data from TEA for participating schools to gauge or explore possible outcomes associated with implementing the informational guide.	TBD			Completed In conjunction with survey noted in task 10.

<b>Action Plan ID: C1</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner: HHSC-DARS</b>		<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated: 8/31/15</b>		<b>Rev: 2</b>	
<b>Action Plan Status: FINAL</b>		<b>Long Term Objective</b>							
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Customer Outcomes		By 2013, the blind and disabled populations will achieve additional employment outcomes.							
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> HHSC-DARS		<b>Plan Type:</b>  <b>Partner</b>							
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Everyone must be part of the critical pool of potential employees that is and will be required by Texas employers, especially target populations. Target populations include the blind and disabled, who with focused assistance can achieve enhanced employment outcomes.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>							
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blind vocational rehabilitation services will achieve a minimum employment rate of 68.9%.</li> <li>• General disability vocational rehabilitation services will achieve a minimum employment rate of 55.8%.</li> <li>• Blind vocational rehabilitation services will achieve a minimum employment retention rate of 85%.</li> <li>• General disability vocational rehabilitation services will achieve a minimum employment retention rate of 70%.</li> </ul>							
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule			
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)					
✓	1	Blind and General Vocational Rehabilitation will develop and implement new and innovative projects that are partnerships between community rehab providers and employers. The outcome of these partnerships will be for consumers to become employed with the partner employer (or with an employer within a similar industry) and for employers to have access to trained potential employees.  Develop a Request for Proposal to solicit applications.	07/2009	12/2009		Completed Development and posting of Request for Proposal.			
✓	2	Award up to 15 partner projects across the state that take place within a business based on the key deliverables: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consumers receive industry specific training on business site.</li> <li>• Consumers acquire soft skills.</li> <li>• Consumers complete training, go to work and remain employed.</li> <li>• Work occurs with the employer partner or a company within the industry.</li> </ul> The projects can continue as a fee based service after the completion of the contracts.	12/2009	03/2010		Completed Evaluation of proposals and selection of contractors.			
✓	3	Implementation of contracts.	03/2010	08/2012		Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Ongoing monitoring and technical assistance; documentation of goals achieved first year for continued funding for second year; required ARRA and other state and federal reporting.</li> <li>▶ Scheduled to end March 2012; may extend as cost reimbursement contracts pending development of template for fee-based embedded training.</li> </ul>			
✓	4	Evaluation of projects and contractors for continuation.	09/2011	08/2012		Completed Sustainability plan.			

<b>Action Plan ID: C2</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner: TVC</b>	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated: 8/31/15</b>	<b>Rev: 2</b>
<b>Action Plan Status: FINAL</b>		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				<b>Plan Type:</b> <b>Partner</b>
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Customer Outcomes		By 2013, the veteran population will achieve additional employment outcomes.				
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> TVC						
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Everyone must be part of the critical pool of potential employees that is and will be required by Texas employers, especially target populations. Target populations include veterans. While they often have a wide range of disabilities, with training, referral and placement services they can return to the civilian workforce.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Achieve a minimum target for employment rate as approved by LBB.</li> <li>• Achieve a minimum target for employment retention rate as approved by LBB.</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	1	Coordinate with Family Support Centers & ACAP on military installations to provide increased seminars and schedule outgoing military personnel to attend.	08/2009	ongoing	ACAP facilities, Family Support Centers, DOL.	In Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Increase number of TAP seminars by a percentage relevant to the exiting number of military personnel.</li> <li>▶ Review of monthly TAP reports, report outcomes on semi-annual basis.</li> </ul>
✓	2	Coordinate with VA and DOD to identify exiting personnel that could benefit from Real Lifelines.	08/2009	ongoing	DOD, DOL, VA.	In Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Increase participation in Real Lifelines program.</li> <li>▶ Reported at the end of 4<sup>th</sup> quarter.</li> </ul>
✓	3	Outreach major corporations to inform them of the benefits of hiring veterans.	08/2009	ongoing	TWC, DOL, LWDBs.	In Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Increase employment and training opportunities within the Texas workforce development system.</li> <li>▶ WISPR, quarterly.</li> <li>▶ Statewide Business Outreach Coordinator. [November 2009]</li> <li>▶ Veterans Business Representatives initiative. [July 2011]</li> <li>▶ Texas Coordinating Council for Veterans Services' biennial report and recommendations to the Governor and legislature (SB 1796, 82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature). [October 2012 and October 2014]</li> </ul>
✓	4	Make a special benefits website, launch a public service announcement campaign through radio and TVC and perform direct mail outs.	08/2009	09/2010	TVC, TWC, DOL.	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Raise public awareness of the Texas Veterans Commission.</li> <li>▶ Total number of participants reported quarterly via WISPR.</li> </ul>

<b>Action Plan ID: C3</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner: SITAC</b>	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated: 8/31/15</b>	<b>Rev: 2</b>
<b>Action Plan Status: FINAL</b>		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				<b>Plan Type: System</b>
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Customer Outcomes		By 2013, design and implement integrated Adult Basic Education and workforce skills training programs to enhance employment outcomes for the English language learner population.				
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> TEA, TWC, THECB						
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Everyone must be part of the critical pool of potential employees that is and will be required by Texas employers, especially target populations. Target populations include English language learners, who constitute a growing population requiring additional skills for workforce-related success.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in the number of vocational English as a Second Language (ESL) graduates (subset of ESL population).</li> <li>Increase in vocational ESL graduate entered employment rate (subset of ESL population).</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	1	Design and conduct a market evaluation to determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>size of population (adult English language learner with educational outcome of high school or greater), and</li> <li>geographic distribution of population (rural/urban, LWDA), and other pertinent criteria.</li> </ul>	01/2010	06/2010	TWC.  Determination of specified geography.	Completed TWC LMI and/or the Texas State Demographer.
✓	2	Identify and assess local workforce occupational needs to determine potential high impact employment outcomes where significant local skills gaps exist.	06/2010	12/2010	Local workforce boards. Biennial supply- demand report.	Completed Labor market assessment at local level. Cross match outputs of steps # 1 and 2 to determine most significant training impact.
✓	3	Establish a work group, including members from TWC, CTCs, TEA and the Council, to design and develop a model (including funding) that can be executed through community and technical colleges and local workforce boards. The model will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an integrated program design (language and occupational skills) delivered through local CTCs.</li> <li>funding from multiple funding streams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a local workforce board, through workforce funding, as the occupational training purchaser,</li> <li>TEA, through ABE funding, as the language instruction purchaser.</li> </ul> </li> <li>an education/training outcome of certificate or higher.</li> <li>an educational/training duration that is of short to mid-term duration.</li> </ul>	06/2010	10/2010	TEA would need to know funding requirements by Oct/Nov the preceding year, for Feb/March for program initiation in July 2010. Resolve the question of new employment or upgraded employment and target audiences during working group model development. Wage gain aspects will also need to be discussed within the context of the model.	Completed Model and supporting documentation.
✓	4.	Negotiate with local providers and local boards.	10/2010	02/2011	Link to ABE grant applications if required.	Completed Agreement for pilot and dedicated funding allocation. Request for Applications with funding under THECB Riders 45 and 56, Senate Bill 1 (81 <sup>st</sup> Legislature).
✓	5	Design, develop and execute (a) pilot project(s) in targeted markets that includes the following process steps: outreach to target population and employers, program delivery, and marketing pilot participants to employers.	07/2011	06/2012	Work eligible participants, per WIA, with SSNs.	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pilot projects at seven community colleges. [August 2011-August 2013]</li> <li>Expanded to add eighth project. [Fall 2010-August 2013]</li> </ul>

<b>Action Plan ID: C3</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner: SITAC</b>	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated: 8/31/15</b>	<b>Rev: 2</b>
<b>Action Plan Status: FINAL</b>		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				<b>Plan Type: System</b>
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Customer Outcomes		By 2013, design and implement integrated Adult Basic Education and workforce skills training programs to enhance employment outcomes for the English language learner population.				
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> TEA, TWC, THECB						
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Everyone must be part of the critical pool of potential employees that is and will be required by Texas employers, especially target populations. Target populations include English language learners, who constitute a growing population requiring additional skills for workforce-related success.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in the number of vocational English as a Second Language (ESL) graduates (subset of ESL population).</li> <li>Increase in vocational ESL graduate entered employment rate (subset of ESL population).</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	6	Design, develop and execute evaluation tool to assess results and evaluate funding and implications for large-scale roll out.	06/2012 design develop	09/2012 execute	Influenced by # 3 and 5.	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess delivery, employment outcomes and establish performance measure targets. Recommend improvements.</li> <li>Descriptive analysis of Accelerate Texas programs, including colleges with ESL pilot programs. [Texas State University, November 2013]</li> <li>Evaluation of Accelerate Texas programs, including mentor colleges that built sustainable Accelerate Texas models. [Texas A&amp;M University, Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI), November 2014]</li> <li>PPRI contract extended to support evaluation of up to eight new Accelerate Texas colleges through December 2016. [July 2015]</li> </ul>
✓	7	Develop and execute roll out plan.	01/2013	08/31/15	Adjust model based on # 6.	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>THECB 2015-2017 Accelerate Texas request for applications incorporated elements of the pilot model, requiring colleges offering an integrated pathway to offer 75% of their workforce training certificates as Marketable Skills Achievement awards or level 1 certificates. Of the certifications, 25% can be local, portable certificates which require passing an industry, state, or national examination to work in that field. [January 2015]</li> <li>TWC 2015 request for proposals for integrated education and training services based on Accelerate Texas model. [March 2015]</li> </ul>

<b>Action Plan ID: C4</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner: SITAC</b>	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated: 8/31/15</b>	<b>Rev: 2</b>
<b>Action Plan Status: FINAL</b>		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				<b>Plan Type: System</b>
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Customer Outcomes		By 2013, design and implement targeted Adult Basic Education programs to enhance employment outcomes for populations requiring workplace literacy skills.				
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> TEA, TWC						
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Everyone must be part of the critical pool of potential employees that is and will be required by Texas employers, especially target populations. Target populations include those with low literacy levels, who can be assisted through targeted literacy programs to gain or maintain employment.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase in the number of workforce literacy graduates (subset of ABE population).</li> <li>• Increase in workforce literacy graduate entered employment rate (subset of ABE population).</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	1	Identify and assess current initiatives related to workplace literacy program delivery underway in Texas.	01/2010	06/2010		Completed Look for different regions to support both C3 and C4 pilots.
✓	2	Identify and assess how many workforce boards have robust ABE relationships already established. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review the 28 local workforce development board Program Year 2009 plans to see how they address Adult Basic Education (ABE).</li> <li>• Determine possible criteria for a “robust” ABE relationship between ABE providers and local boards.</li> <li>• Develop questions related to ABE and include those in the planning guidelines to be issued to local boards for PY 2010 during the Spring of 2010.</li> <li>• Evaluate responses from boards and provide a summary report by June 2010.</li> </ul>	01/2010	06/2010	TWC linkage for support and local providers.	Completed
✓	3	Determine content of workplace literacy skills program, and modify and/or add to existing curriculum.	06/2010	12/2010	Produce curriculum from existing courses, modules and resources.	Completed
✓	4	Establish a workgroup, including members of TEA, the Council and local program providers and boards, to design and develop a model of program outreach and delivery that fits within existing ABE funding and program offerings and initiatives and is offered concurrently with ABE levels 4-6, and includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a quarterly career exploration/awareness workshop for levels 4-6 students (the “what” a student can do).</li> <li>• a workplace skills program (the “how” a student can get there) that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ is accelerated (X hours over 2 to 3 weeks).</li> <li>○ is taken concurrently with ABE courses.</li> <li>○ focuses on essential workplace literacy skills (including soft skills and understanding of workplace documents, instructions, etc.).</li> <li>○ results in a certificate of accomplishment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>[Cont'd on next page]</i></p>	06/2010	10/2010	TEA would need to know funding requirements by Oct/Nov the preceding year, for Feb/March for program initiation in July of 2010.	Completed Model and supporting documentation.

Action Plan ID: C4		Action Plan Owner: SITAC	Action Plan – 2015 Review		Updated: 8/31/15	Rev: 2
Action Plan Status: FINAL		Long Term Objective				Plan Type: System
Key Performance Area: Customer Outcomes		By 2013, design and implement targeted Adult Basic Education programs to enhance employment outcomes for populations requiring workplace literacy skills.				
Accountable Participants: TEA, TWC						
Critical Business Issue: Everyone must be part of the critical pool of potential employees that is and will be required by Texas employers, especially target populations. Target populations include those with low literacy levels, who can be assisted through targeted literacy programs to gain or maintain employment.		Key Performance Measures				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase in the number of workforce literacy graduates (subset of ABE population).</li> <li>Increase in workforce literacy graduate entered employment rate (subset of ABE population).</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
	4 cont'd	<i>Cont'd from preceding page:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>linkage and referral to local workforce boards as determined in the program initiative design, for possible involvement in content delivery, assessment and certification, employment assistance.</li> <li>outreach to employers (possibly through a chamber of commerce) for program completers.</li> </ul>	06/2010	10/2010	TEA would need to know funding requirements by Oct/Nov the preceding year, for Feb/March for program initiation in July of 2010.	Model and supporting documentation.
✓	5	Negotiate with local providers and local boards.	10/2010	02/2011	Link to ABE grant applications if required.	Completed Agreement for pilot and dedicated funding allocation.
✓	6	Execute pilot.	07/2011	06/2012		Completed Pilot projects at 10 adult education providers in three local board areas. [September 2011-June 2013]
✓	7	Design, develop and execute evaluation tool to determine program strengths, weakness and any recommended changes.	01/2012 design develop	04/2014	Influenced by # 3 and 6.	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess delivery, employment outcomes and establish performance measure targets. Recommend improvements.</li> <li>Adult education and literacy programs transferred from TEA to TWC (SB 307, 83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature). [September 2013]</li> <li>TWC's initial request for proposals incorporated key elements of the model by requiring service providers to implement career pathways programs. [2014]</li> </ul>
✓	8	Prepare and execute roll out plan.	01/2013	08/31/15	Adjust model based on # 7.	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Adult Education and Literacy State Plan</i>, submitted to US Department of Education, supports continued development of content and models for integrated education and training career pathways, and other postsecondary transition models and workplace projects with employers. [March 2015]</li> </ul>

<b>Action Plan ID: P1</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner: CTCs</b>	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated: 8/31/15</b>	<b>Rev: 2</b>
<b>Action Plan Status: FINAL</b>		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				<b>Plan Type: System</b>
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Programs, Products and Services		Community and technical colleges (CTCs) will plan and execute education and training programs to address workforce skills gaps in their regions, as identified by local needs assessments or the biennial supply-demand report produced by the THECB and TWC.				
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> Council, CTCs						
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Increasing shortage of workers with appropriate middle skills created by a skills gap and future workforce retirements in a wide range of industries and occupations.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completion of major tasks and deliverables.</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	1	Determine how closely aligned college program offerings are to local workforce needs through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>undertaking a local needs assessment, or</li> <li>referencing the biennial supply-demand report produced by the THECB and TWC.</li> </ul>	ongoing	biennial	Supply-demand report to be produced as specified in LTO S1.	In Progress
✓	2	From the alignment assessment in step # 1, identify any areas of significant skills gaps.	ongoing			In Progress
✓	3	Where a skills gap is identified adjust college program offerings, by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>planning and implementing a new program in the occupational area, at the appropriate certificate or degree level. OR</li> <li>expanding an existing program to narrow the gap and address employers' short- and long-term needs.</li> </ul>	ongoing		Funding to create new or expand existing programs.  THECB program approval process.  Structural barriers.	In Progress
✓	4	The new or expanded programs and additional student enrollments may be in either for-credit or not-for-credit course/program offerings.	ongoing			In Progress
✓	5	When developing new or expanding existing programs, colleges will consider more than one and two-year programs for emerging high-skill occupations. They will also consider high demand occupations and certification in skilled trade areas such as welding, machining, field service technician, construction, pipefitting, plumbing and maintenance where those trades are critical to the economy and where the supply of skilled workers is limited.	N/A		College budget, available funding, facilities, instructors and equipment.  Program delivery (hybrid, online, industry-based) methodologies to increase both effectiveness and cost efficiencies.	In Progress
✓	6	The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) will survey community and technical colleges to identify innovative and best practices related to 1-5 above, and disseminate those results.	2014	2015	Elements to include analysis of decision, development, budget and student outcomes.	Completed <i>Estimating Labor Demand and Supply in Texas: How Planning Tools and Data are Used.</i> [University of Texas, Ray Marshall Center, July 2014]

<b>Action Plan ID: P2</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner:</b> Council	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated:</b> 8/31/15	<b>Rev:</b> 2
<b>Action Plan Status:</b> FINAL		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				<b>Plan Type:</b> System
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Programs, Products and Services		By 2012, design, develop, and implement a pilot program to demonstrate flexibility of the 'earn while you learn' model of traditional apprenticeship programs. Where appropriate, expand and replicate into new occupational areas by 2015.				
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> Council						
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Increasing shortage of workers with appropriate middle skills created by a skills gap and future workforce retirements in a wide range of industries and occupations.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Execution of pilot by specified date.</li> <li>• Evaluation of early-stage outcomes for program participants.</li> <li>• Evaluation of program completion outcomes for program participants.</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	1	Form statewide leadership team/ steering committee to guide the execution of the action plan and projects that are generated from it.	in progress	12/2009		Completed
✓	2	Identify up to three potential projects to address employer demand for skilled workers through registered apprenticeship training. Eligible projects would be engaged in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• modification of an existing registered apprenticeship program to incorporate the increased flexibility afforded by new DOL regulations, or</li> <li>• development of a new registered apprenticeship program in an occupation that is part of one or more of the Governor's six target industry clusters.</li> </ul>	12/2009	03/2010	2008 revisions to Title 29 CFR part 29, including but not limited to use of competency-based program design, a hybrid of competency-based and time-based program design, or use of electronic media and other tools to support technology-based and distance learning options.	Completed
✓	3	Identify and secure commitment to participate from the entities that will be necessary to develop/modify and implement the program. These entities form the Project Team for each project and will include representatives from some or all of the following, based on the needs and design of the project: the local education agency; community college; workforce board; employers; labor union; joint apprenticeship training committee; and U.S. Department of Labor.	03/2010	09/2010		Completed
✓	4	Project team works with DOL to modify/ register program.	09/2010	09/2012		Completed
✓	5	If additional federal funding becomes available for expansion of registered apprenticeship, the Project Team, in consultation with the statewide leadership team/steering committee, will prepare and submit a proposal for funding.	2010	ongoing	Availability of funding from the U.S. Department of Labor.	Completed Not applicable during the pilot period.
✓	6	Undertake formative evaluations of the programs in this initiative at the mid-point of the length of the program.	2013	2014	Pilot program duration.	Completed <i>Quarterly Updates</i> during the project period.
✓	7	Undertake summative evaluations of the programs in this initiative at the end-point of the length of the program.	2014	2015	Pilot program duration.	Completed <i>Registered Apprenticeship as a Strategy to Meet Employer Demand for Skilled Workers</i> (December 2013).

<b>Action Plan ID: P3</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner:</b> Council	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated:</b> 8/31/15	<b>Rev:</b> 2
<b>Action Plan Status:</b> FINAL		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				<b>Plan Type:</b> <b>System</b>
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Programs, Products and Services		The Council will produce a data set whereby system stakeholders can ascertain Texas' position relative to key indicators of competitiveness.				
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> Council						
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Data is required to ensure that system initiatives can be developed and executed to strategically position Texas in the global workforce marketplace.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publication of quantitative data and analysis report (<i>Texas Index</i> or its equivalent).</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	1	Develop and disseminate a report with specific strategic indicators that provide information on how Texas ranks relative to other states and nations. The indicators in the report will include those critical education, workforce, research and development, market (economy) data sets related to competitive position, and other data sets as appropriate.		ongoing		Completed Prior to each annual development cycle, the indicators in the reports will be reviewed to determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>if additional indicators are needed, and/or</li> <li>if any indicator should be discontinued.</li> </ul>
✓	2	Each indicator will include the following comparative data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large states (top 4 to 5).</li> <li>50-state league table (abbreviated).</li> <li>International data – OECD, top three.</li> <li>International data – BRIC, top two.</li> <li>U.S. average.</li> </ul>		ongoing	Available comparative data.	Completed
✓	3	2009 Index published and disseminated.		10/2009		Completed Index published and disseminated.
✓	4	2010 Index published and disseminated.		10/2010		Completed Index published and disseminated. <i>NOTE: Published in early 2011, the 2010 Texas Index contained 10 indicators with data sets identical to those in the 2009 report due to lack of new data.</i>
✓	5	2011 Index published and disseminated.		10/2011		Completed Index published and disseminated. <i>NOTE: Due to similar data unavailability, the 2011 Texas Index was compiled but not published.</i>
✓	6	Index published and disseminated.		per schedule		Completed Index published and disseminated in 2013.

<b>Action Plan ID: P4</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner:</b> LWDBs	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated:</b> 8/31/15	<b>Rev:</b> 2
<b>Action Plan Status:</b> FINAL		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				<b>Plan Type:</b> Partner
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Programs, Products and Services		Local boards will align with and support the workforce system strategic plan through their planning processes and related initiatives. This will be documented in board plans and plan modifications, which are submitted to the Council for approval.				
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> LWDBs						
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Local workforce boards must understand and meet the needs of their local communities because they are the system's front line partner in offering relevant programs and services.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alignment of local board plans to the workforce system strategic plan.</li> <li>Success of key strategies, as demonstrated by performance data or qualitative outcomes, as appropriate and relevant.</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	1	Each local workforce board will submit its local plan or plan modification to the Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council), which serves as the State Workforce Investment Board under the federal Workforce Investment Act, for approval.	06/2010	08/2015	Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) requirement to submit a local board plan or plan modification.	Completed Completed 2011 and 2013 requirements.
✓	2	Each local board plan or plan modification will demonstrate through the inclusion of specific strategies, processes and initiatives alignment with the workforce system strategic plan, and performance and/or progress from the previous plan submission.		n/a	TWC local board planning guidelines.	Completed Completed 2011 and 2013 requirements.
✓	3	Each local board plan or plan modification will address, in addition to requirements in step # 2 above, requests for information or data made by the Council as part of the Council's consideration of local plans.			Texas Workforce Commission Local Board Planning Guidelines development.	Completed Inclusion of an appendix in the planning guidelines that articulates the Council's request for information and data as it relates to alignment and performance. [Completed for 2011 through separate information request and for 2013 through planning guidelines]
✓	4	2010 submission of local board plan or plan modification.		06/2010		<i>NOTE: TWC extended existing, approved board plans through September 2011; therefore, Council action was not required.</i>
✓	5	2011 submission of local board plan or plan modification.  [Cont'd on next page]		06/2011		Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TWC extended existing, approved board plans through September 2012. Boards were required to update their plans through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>submitting amendments, as necessary;</li> <li>reviewing their Targeted Industries List and Statewide Target Occupation List; and</li> <li>submitting any changes to their Targeted Industries List and Statewide Target Occupation List, or providing a statement that the lists have been reviewed and no changes were needed.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> Two board submissions with substantive changes were determined

<b>Action Plan ID:</b> P4	<b>Action Plan Owner:</b> LWDBs	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>	<b>Updated:</b> 8/31/15	<b>Rev:</b> 2
<b>Action Plan Status:</b> FINAL	<b>Long Term Objective</b>			<b>Plan Type:</b> <b>Partner</b>
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Programs, Products and Services	Local boards will align with and support the workforce system strategic plan through their planning processes and related initiatives. This will be documented in board plans and plan modifications, which are submitted to the Council for approval.			
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> LWDBs				
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Local workforce boards must understand and meet the needs of their local communities because they are the system's front line partner in offering relevant programs and services.	<b>Key Performance Measures</b>			
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alignment of local board plans to the workforce system strategic plan.</li> <li>Success of key strategies, as demonstrated by performance data or qualitative outcomes, as appropriate and relevant.</li> </ul>			

Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
	5 cont'd	<i>Continued from preceding page:</i> 2011 submission of local board plan or plan modification.		06/2011		to be modifications. Following review by TWC and the Council, both were endorsed and recommended to the Governor for final approval. ▶ TWC assisted with the collection of summative data and information from local boards related to the implementation of <i>Advancing Texas</i> . All 28 local boards provided information pertaining to three action plans.
✓	6	2012 submission of local board plan or plan modification.		06/2012		<i>NOTE: In September 2012, TWC extended existing, approved board plans through March 2013, and in December 2012 further extended them through June 2013 to allow local boards additional time to develop new five-year plans. Council action was not required.</i>
✓	7	2013 submission of local board plan or plan modification.		06/2013		Completed New plans were approved for all 28 boards in June 2013. Boards were required to: ▶ document strategies designed to meet the needs of three populations and to facilitate their entry into the workforce: veterans, the blind or disabled, and those with low literacy or English language skills; and ▶ describe an innovative strategy that included collaboration with two or more system partners.
✓	8	2014 submission of local board plan or plan modification.		06/2014		<i>NOTE: New board plans or modifications were not required. The Council took several actions to obtain local board input for development of the new workforce system strategic plan.</i>
✓	9	2015 submission of local board plan or plan modification.		06/2015		<i>NOTE: New board plans or modifications were not required due to the enactment of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (PL 113-128).</i>

<b>Action Plan ID: P5</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner:</b> SITAC	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated:</b> 8/31/15	<b>Rev:</b> 2
<b>Action Plan Status:</b> FINAL		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				<b>Plan Type:</b> <b>System</b>
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Programs, Products and Services		Partner agencies will gather data from employer customers at appropriate intervals to determine employer needs and satisfaction.				
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> Partner agencies		Note: The work associated with this LTO is being carried over from <i>Destination 2010 FY2004-FY2009 Strategic Plan for the Texas Workforce Development System</i> . Some activities in the agency projects that support this LTO reflect activities that began prior to September 1, 2009.				
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Existing data gap regarding employers' needs and customer satisfaction hinders the ability to assess whether existing programs and services are adequately meeting customer requirements.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development and execution of a methodology to systematically and routinely identify relevant employers' needs and the level of satisfaction to which those needs are being met.</li> <li>By 2013, increase the level of customer satisfaction.</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	1	Health and Human Services Commission - Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (Blind and Rehabilitation Programs) Evaluation of Employer Needs and Satisfaction Project.	prior to 09/2009	08/2015		Completed See related project plan attached to this action plan.
✓	2	Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Community and Technical College Programs) Evaluation of Employer Needs and Satisfaction Project.	prior to 09/2009	08/2015		Completed See related project plan attached to this action plan.
✓	3	Texas Veterans Commission (Veterans Employment Services) Evaluation of Employer Needs and Satisfaction Project.	prior to 09/2009	08/2015		Completed See related project plan attached to this action plan.
✓	4	Texas Youth Commission (Career and Technical Education-related Program) Evaluation of Employer Needs and Satisfaction Project.	prior to 09/2009	08/2015		Completed See related project plan attached to this action plan.
✓	5	Windham School District, Texas Department of Criminal Justice, (Career and Technical Education-related Programs) Evaluation of Employer Needs and Satisfaction Project.	prior to 09/2009	08/2015		Completed See related project plan attached to this action plan.

## Evaluation of Employer Needs and Satisfaction Project [P5.1 – 2015 Review]

<i>Accountable Participant:</i>		Health and Human Services Commission – Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services		
<i>Target:</i>		90% satisfaction level		
<p><i>Goal(s): Evaluate the level of satisfaction of businesses with the services provided by DARS for:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>program planning and management efforts; and</i></li> <li>▶ <i>potential use as a resource in development of the agency's next biennial strategic plan.</i></li> </ul>				
No.	Task	Due Date	Deliverable(s)	Action(s) Taken
1 ✓	Determine data required to evaluate business satisfaction with DARS' services and how data will be collected and stored.	04/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Online surveys</li> <li>▶ Needs assessment of data infrastructure</li> <li>▶ Processes illustrating how surveys would be administered and used</li> </ul>	<p>Completed</p> <p><b>Developed survey questions</b> stemming from and relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The Services Inventory.</li> <li>▶ <b>32<sup>nd</sup> IRI Foundational Principles and employer expectations (National Network)</b> – Questions shaped to assess how well principles and expectations are being met. Developed matrix between questions and what they tell us.</li> <li>▶ Feedback obtained from business focus groups interviewed July-August 2009.</li> </ul> <p><b>One survey will evaluate:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Transactions</b> (short-term, immediate, available continuously, specific; <b>collected for each interaction or encounter</b>; all businesses could be surveyed).</li> <li>▶ <b>Relationships</b> (long-term, periodic, sample respondents, limited scope; <b>evaluate relationships over time</b>).</li> </ul> <p>Steps for August and September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Design survey</b> in web format.</li> <li>▶ Map out <b>survey logistics</b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Survey processes, feedback loops, survey administration schedule, sample selection</li> <li>- Survey format(s) and layouts</li> <li>- How surveys would tie in with ongoing business (continuous improvement)</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ Identify pilot survey audience.</li> <li>▶ Administer survey (mid-September).</li> </ul>
2 ✓	Complete system enhancements for data collection, if needed, and begin data collection.	09/09		Completed
3 ✓	After data is collected, evaluate the level of satisfaction among businesses and determine whether improvements are needed.	09/10-11/11		Completed Business partners' level of satisfaction was very high for DARS' services (e.g., potential hire, job retention assistance, accommodations and technical assistance, diversity awareness and other presentations). Comments related to service improvements were included; however, no negative responses were received. [November 2011]

<i>Accountable Participant:</i>	Health and Human Services Commission – Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services			
<i>Target:</i>	90% satisfaction level			
<i>Goal(s): Evaluate the level of satisfaction of businesses with the services provided by DARS for:</i>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <i>program planning and management efforts; and</i></li> <li>▶ <i>potential use as a resource in development of the agency's next biennial strategic plan.</i></li> </ul>				
<b>No.</b>	<b>Task</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Deliverable(s)</b>	<b>Action(s) Taken</b>
4 ✓	Report of evaluation and make recommendations.	08/31/15		<p>Completed</p> <p>Based on employer feedback, DARS modified processes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ DARS researches Diversity Policies and Practices for companies earlier in the business relationship. [Ongoing]</li> <li>▶ Business Relations Unit launched and successfully completed five “SWAT Immersions” with field units. The three-day sessions assist units with business relations strategy development and implementation, utilizing key data on businesses, labor demands, job ready consumers and market trends. [Completed 2011]</li> <li>▶ “SWAT Immersions” continued through FY 2014; replaced by regionally focused training and support in FY 2015. [Ongoing]</li> </ul>
5 ✓	Design and implement changes as appropriate to increase business satisfaction with DARS' services.	ongoing		<p>In Progress</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Purchased licenses for cloud based subscriptions for business relations management software and customized site for DARS' use. [November 2011]</li> <li>▶ Beta testing by key DARS' staff. [December 2011]</li> <li>▶ Entered business, contact and job information for larger business accounts. Issued licenses to additional staff; fully operational. [February 2012]</li> <li>▶ Employer satisfaction survey available through online employer portal. [June 2013]</li> <li>▶ Evaluate system expansion plans, considering: [FYs 2014–15] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– implementation of joint business relations strategy,</li> <li>– establishment of consolidated business relations team,</li> <li>– implementation of agency's Sunset recommendations, and</li> <li>– implementation of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014 (PL 113-128).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Evaluation of Employer Needs and Satisfaction Project [P5.2 – 2015 Review]

Accountable Participant:	Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board			
Target:	<i>Closed: Project modified and completed in 2011.</i>			
<b>Goal(s):</b> Collect data on employer satisfaction with programs administered by community and technical colleges (CTCs).				
No.	Task	Due Date	Deliverable(s)	Action(s) Taken
1 ✓	Develop method by which the state will be able to survey employers statewide regarding the quality and applicability of degree and certificate programs from community colleges to the workplace environment.	05/09	THECB will develop an online system by which employers, notified by TWC, will be able to identify the community college programs from which they receive graduates and respond to an online survey for each program.	Completed THECB IT staff have agreed to develop the necessary web portal.
2 ✓	Obtain from TWC the necessary Employer Identification numbers to allow access to the web portal.	09/09	List of Employers with Employer Identification Number received by THECB.	Completed IT Staff are working to obtain the list of eligible employers from TWC.
3 ✓	Verify the survey questions with TWIC.	06/09	Confirmation from TWIC of the appropriate survey questions for inclusion in web survey.	Completed
4 ✓	Develop web portal for use by statewide employers and build database necessary to develop a report for each degree or certificate program at each institution.	09/09	THECB will develop fully functional web portal for state employers to respond to surveys for each individual degree or certificate program by institution.	Completed Web Developers have identified the necessary items for the website and are working to develop the necessary structure. When the website is operational, THECB will develop materials to be distributed electronically to employers.
5 ✓	Notify employers of the survey website location and the opportunity to provide feedback regarding employed graduates of the programs. Window for employers to respond is two months; survey access will be closed at that time.	10/09	THECB will provide TWC with information to be included in official mail to employers statewide notifying them of the web portal.	Completed After developing an online survey system, THECB worked with TWC to notify employers of its availability, also informing the Texas Association of Community Colleges and local workforce boards in an effort to increase awareness and participation.
6 ✓	Provide summary data of survey responses by program and institution.	01/10	THECB will provide a summary of degree and certificate survey results by institution or degree/certificate program.	Completed Insufficient number of responses for statistically significant analysis of the programs or employers' satisfaction.
7 ✓	Colleges analyze data and establish employer satisfaction target(s) where relevant and applicable.	03/10	Target(s), as appropriate.	Completed Insufficient number of responses for statistically significant analysis of the programs or employers' satisfaction.
8 ✓	Assess process and procedures, and modify as necessary to improve survey process and/or utility of website and results. May include elements such as: timeline, actions required by THECB, process used by TWC, and the number and distribution of employers (sample) surveyed.	03/10	Determination regarding changes to survey, process, sample, website to be used as inputs into step 9.	Completed THECB considered new options to meet the plan's intent and in 2011 partnered with the Council to survey CTCs to determine methods and activities related to employer satisfaction.
9 ✓	Conduct annual survey and report results that specify employer satisfaction by institution and degree/certificate program, and identify best practices, if applicable.	09/10-ongoing	Review data and report satisfaction measurement.  Adjust benchmark(s) as necessary.	Completed A two-phase survey process was used to collect information on CTC strategies for determining employer satisfaction and using that information in institutional planning processes to improve program delivery. Blinn College and Lone Star College System were selected as models of promising practices and were formally recognized by the Council in December 2011.

## Evaluation of Employer Needs and Satisfaction Project [P5.3 – 2015 Review]

Accountable Participant:	Texas Veterans Commission			
Target:	80% satisfaction level			
Goal(s): Develop new and/or modify current survey efforts in order to obtain employer data for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ program planning and management efforts; and</li> <li>▶ use as a resource in development of the agency's next biannual strategic plan.</li> </ul>				
No.	Task	Due Date	Deliverable(s)	Action(s) Taken
1 ✓	Develop design issues for implementing internally-administered employer survey, taking into consideration: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– timing (e.g., odd-numbered year of biannual strategic planning cycle vs. <b>X</b> months post-placement);</li> <li>– implementation options (e.g., web-based SurveyMonkey.com, email, telephone); and</li> <li>– staff/resource requirements (e.g., state and/or regional staff).</li> </ul>	05/08	Task list and timeline	Completed 05/09 – Tasking and timeline complete: Employer survey to be conducted concurrent with the strategic planning cycle by email and phone using 1-2 staff per TVC region.
2 ✓	Draft survey questions.	05/08	Draft survey	Completed 06/09 – Draft survey questions complete.
3 ✓	Sample specifications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– Establish time frame (e.g., last PY or CY) and obtain estimates of number of applicable employers by local board area.</li> <li>– Develop sample specifications (e.g., <b>n</b> size for state, regional, or local board implementation).</li> </ul>	05/08-07/08	Employer sample plan	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 4/08 – Determination made to begin with employers identified as being aware that placed individuals received vet services.</li> <li>▶ 05/09 – Confirmed pool of 150+ employers statewide who have received TVC services to be surveyed. Diverse set of employers includes large, medium and small along with a mix of urban and rural.</li> </ul>
4 ✓	Obtain employer contact information.	08/08-05/09	Employer sample with required contact information	Completed 05/09 – Employer contact information confirmed.
5 ✓	Finalize and implement plan.	10/08-09/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Roles, responsibilities and timelines identified for TVC state vs. regional staff</li> <li>▶ Standardized survey finalized and conducted</li> </ul>	Completed New implementation date 07/09-09/09: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 07/09 – Survey conducted.</li> <li>▶ 08/09 – Nearly 150 employer responses received statewide.</li> </ul>
6 ✓	Review and analyze data.	10/09	Data analysis and report, if applicable	Completed
7 ✓	Assess the process and procedures, modifying the survey as considered necessary (e.g., sample size/stratification, longer time frame to allow for analysis vs. Employment Retention data).	06/10	Task list and timeline	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Input into step 9.</li> <li>▶ Electronic survey developed. [Completed 2011]</li> </ul>
8 ✓	Use data obtained to recognize opportunities for program improvement or best practices.	12/09-ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Perform data analysis and establish benchmark</li> <li>▶ Deliver feedback to field staff</li> </ul>	In Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Business Outreach Coordinator. [November 2009]</li> <li>▶ Veterans Business Representative initiative. [July 2011]</li> </ul>
9 ✓	Conduct annual employer survey and review results to determine employer satisfaction and target improvement. Strive to improve established benchmark set by historical surveys.	10/09-ongoing	Data analysis, report and adjust benchmark if necessary	In Progress Survey conducted and analysis completed annually.

## Evaluation of Employer Needs and Satisfaction Project [P5.4 – 2015 Review]

Accountable Participant:	Texas Youth Commission			
Target:	<i>Closed: Project modified and completed in 2011. NOTE: Senate Bill 653 (82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature) abolished the Texas Youth Commission (TYC) and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. Effective December 1, 2011, duties assigned to the two agencies were transferred to the newly created Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD).</i>			
Goal(s): Utilize standardized questions to obtain employer satisfaction information related to PIE programs. Potential data uses might include, but are not limited to:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ program planning and management efforts;</li> <li>▶ resource in development of the agency's next biannual strategic plan; and</li> <li>▶ resource in preparation for future legislative sessions.</li> </ul>				
No.	Task	Due Date	Deliverable(s)	Action(s) Taken
1 ✓	Review federal PIE program Federal Assessment guidelines to assess the need for, desirability and feasibility of developing a small number (3-4) of standardized questions to measure employer feedback on program relevance, importance and satisfaction.	08/07	Guideline review	Completed Reviewed federal assessment and identified a place in the process for including Employer Survey questions. Obtained approval from state assessor and liaison to the National Correctional Industries Association about the appropriateness of including the survey.
2 ✓	Based on Task 1 outcome, assess and determine survey options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ implementation timing (e.g., X months post-exit); and</li> <li>▶ staff/resource requirements.</li> </ul>	01/08	Task list and timeline	Completed Determined survey will be administered annually during the state assessment process. TYC staff will administer survey at the wrap up of the PIE program assessment as part of the exit. Survey will be an additional document to the PIE Program Assessment.
3 ✓	Draft and finalize survey questions.	02/08	Survey questions	Completed Survey finalized.
4 ✓	Implement modified survey.	03/08	Survey data	Completed State assessment date for TYC PIE programs rescheduled for June 20, 2008. Survey will be implemented at this time.
5 ✓	Review and analyze data.	04/08		Completed Due date modified to 7/08; task completed.
6 ✓	Utilize data as a resource for strategic plan development, in preparation for future legislative sessions and other purposes, as appropriate.	05/08-06/09		Completed Due date modified to 7/08-8/09; in progress.
7 ✓	Assess the desirability and feasibility of modifying and replicating the survey for use with other TYC-administered programs.	ongoing		Completed Determine the feasibility and value in developing surveys for WD field staffs and youth participants.
8 ✓	Develop a small standardized survey to measure Career & Technical Education teacher and student feedback on program relevance, importance and satisfaction.	03/09	Survey questions	Completed Completed development of surveys for CTE Teachers and students.
9 ✓	Develop a small standardized survey to measure employer feedback on reentry program relevance, importance and satisfaction.	06/09	Survey questions	Completed Survey for Reentry Employers Survey is underway for 6/09.
10 ✓	Submits surveys to Research Department for review and approval.	09/09		Completed
11 ✓	Based on approval for use of the surveys, hold field staff training at the Workforce Development/Reentry Conference in February, 2010.	02/10	Survey procedures	Completed Field staff participated in development of survey implementation process.

### Evaluation of Employer Needs and Satisfaction Project [P5.4 – 2015 Review]

Accountable Participant:	Texas Youth Commission			
Target:	<i>Closed: Project modified and completed in 2011. NOTE: Senate Bill 653 (82<sup>nd</sup> Legislature) abolished the Texas Youth Commission (TYC) and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. Effective December 1, 2011, duties assigned to the two agencies were transferred to the newly created Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD).</i>			
Goal(s): Utilize standardized questions to obtain employer satisfaction information related to PIE programs. Potential data uses might include, but are not limited to:				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ program planning and management efforts;</li> <li>▶ resource in development of the agency's next biannual strategic plan; and</li> <li>▶ resource in preparation for future legislative sessions.</li> </ul>				
No.	Task	Due Date	Deliverable(s)	Action(s) Taken
12  ✓	Implementation of all surveys.	03/10-ongoing annually	Survey implementation	Completed Review survey results and determine appropriate satisfaction target(s). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Pilot survey (paper-based) completed; small number of responses yielded overall positive results. [December 2010]</li> <li>▶ Change to electronic format with implementation of annual survey to larger employer sample planned for June 2011. Implementation on hold due to reduction in force impacting the agency.</li> <li>▶ Agency plans to continue implementation when budget and staff are available.</li> </ul>

## Evaluation of Employer Needs and Satisfaction Project [P5.5 – 2015 Review]

Accountable Participant:	Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) – Windham School District (WSD)			
Target:	70% satisfaction level			
<p>Goal(s): Develop post-placement evaluation tool(s) and implement with applicable employers. Potential data uses might include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ program planning and management efforts;</li> <li>▶ modification and replication for additional Windham-/TDCJ-administered programs;</li> <li>▶ resource in development of the agency's next biannual strategic plan; and</li> <li>▶ resource in preparation for future legislative sessions.</li> </ul>				
No.	Task	Due Date	Deliverable(s)	Action(s) Taken
1 ✓	Assess and determine appropriate option(s) (e.g., staff-administered survey/checklist for use in-person or by phone, written survey) for collecting data to measure employer feedback on program relevance, importance and satisfaction.	04/08		Completed A survey to measure employer satisfaction of training programs was drafted for use by unit level RIO staff and Workforce Coordinator either in person or by telephone.
2 ✓	Draft and finalize data collection tool(s).	05/08	Data collection tool(s)	Completed Draft document finalized and ready for appropriate staff usage.
3 ✓	Implement data collection efforts.	06/08-ongoing	Employer data	Completed Data collection started, utilizing written survey.
4 ✓	Review and analyze data.	07/08-ongoing	Collection of data	Completed Feedback from companies that have ex-offenders currently employed has been positive. Employers indicate the training received while incarcerated is appropriate and meets workplace needs.
5 ✓	Utilize data as a resource for strategic plan development, in preparation for future legislative sessions and other purposes, as appropriate.	08/08-ongoing	Review of data	Completed Data gathering continued although somewhat slowed due to economy and fewer employers attending career awareness days. Training program evaluation ongoing.
6 ✓	Document 'lessons learned' for future data collection efforts.	08/09	Review of final data	Completed Review of employer surveys indicates no changes for future collection efforts.
7 ✓	Assess the desirability and feasibility of modifying and replicating the survey for use with other Windham-/TDCJ-administered programs.	10/09	Review survey document	Completed TDCJ/WSD completed review; determined survey document acceptable.
8 ✓	Review and evaluate information gathered from employer groups to determine appropriateness of training provided to incarcerated offenders within TDCJ.	01/10	Identification of programs in need of redirection	Completed TDCJ/WSD completed evaluation; determined no programs in need of redirection.
9 ✓	Establish target for employer group's satisfaction with training programs available to incarcerated offenders within TDCJ.	04/10	Target is set at specific satisfaction level	Completed 70% target
10 ✓	Conduct annual survey and review survey results to determine employer satisfaction level of training programs.	08/10	Review data and report satisfaction measurement	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ TDCJ/WSD conducted survey and completed analysis.</li> <li>▶ TDCJ/WSD developed plan to improve response rates.</li> </ul>

### Evaluation of Employer Needs and Satisfaction Project [P5.5 – 2015 Review]

Accountable Participant:	Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) – Windham School District (WSD)			
Target:	70% satisfaction level			
<p>Goal(s): Develop post-placement evaluation tool(s) and implement with applicable employers. Potential data uses might include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ program planning and management efforts;</li> <li>▶ modification and replication for additional Windham-/TDCJ-administered programs;</li> <li>▶ resource in development of the agency's next biannual strategic plan; and</li> <li>▶ resource in preparation for future legislative sessions.</li> </ul>				
No.	Task	Due Date	Deliverable(s)	Action(s) Taken
11 ✓	Conduct annual survey and review survey results to determine employer satisfaction level of training programs.	08/11	Review data and report satisfaction measurement	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ TDCJ/WSD developed and administered electronic survey.</li> <li>▶ TDCJ/WSD identified data issues.</li> </ul>
12 ✓	Conduct annual survey and review survey results to determine employer satisfaction level of training programs.	08/12	Review data and report satisfaction measurement	Completed TDCJ/WSD developed alternative instrument and methodology.
13 ✓	Conduct annual survey and review survey results to determine employer satisfaction level of training programs.	08/13	Review data and report satisfaction measurement	Completed
14 ✓	Conduct annual survey and review survey results to determine employer satisfaction level of training programs.	08/14	Review data and report satisfaction measurement	Completed TDCJ/WSD continues to use survey data and data collected from local board and industry representatives to evaluate training programs for alignment with current employer demand and suitability for ex-offenders. Based on the review, program modifications may be made or new programs added.

<b>Action Plan ID: P6</b>		<b>Action Plan Owner:</b> SITAC	<b>Action Plan – 2015 Review</b>		<b>Updated:</b> 8/31/15	<b>Rev:</b> 2
<b>Action Plan Status:</b> FINAL		<b>Long Term Objective</b>				
<b>Key Performance Area:</b> Programs, Products and Services		Partner agencies will use the employment data/outcomes of their programs to understand and improve those programs.				<b>Plan Type:</b> <b>System</b>
<b>Accountable Participants:</b> Partner agencies		<small>Note: The work associated with this LTO is being carried over from <i>Destination 2010 FY2004-FY2009 Strategic Plan for the Texas Workforce Development System</i>. Some activities in the agency project plans that support this LTO reflect activities that began prior to September 1, 2009.</small>				
<b>Critical Business Issue:</b> Existing data gap regarding employers' needs and customer satisfaction hinders the ability to assess whether existing programs and services are adequately meeting customer requirements.		<b>Key Performance Measures</b>				
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development and execution of a data-driven methodology to analyze data, and use of that analysis for program management purposes: namely, identification of best practices, areas for improvement, and opportunities to leverage existing practices and infrastructure.</li> </ul>				
Status	No.	Major Tasks/Milestones	Schedule		Dependencies	Tracking Measures, Interim Outputs & Recommended Reporting Schedule
			Start (mm/yy)	Completion (mm/yy)		
✓	1	Health and Human Services Commission - Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (Blind and Rehabilitation Programs) Use of Data for Program Improvement Project.	prior to 09/2009	08/2015		Completed See related project plan attached to this action plan.
✓	2	Texas Veterans Commission (Veteran Employment Program) Use of Data for Program Improvement Project.	prior to 09/2009	08/2015		Completed See related project plan attached to this action plan.
✓	3	Windham School District, Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Use of Data for Program Improvement Project.	prior to 09/2009	08/2015		Completed See related project plan attached to this action plan.

## Use of Data for Program Improvement Project [P6.1 – 2015 Review]

Accountable Participant:	Health and Human Services Commission – Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services			
Target:	N/A			
<p>Goal(s): To improve DARS' services to businesses by evaluating the effectiveness of services provided. Evaluate the level of use by businesses of the services provided by DARS to determine whether DARS is meeting business needs for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ program planning and management; and</li> <li>▶ potential use as a resource in development of the agency's next biennial strategic plan.</li> </ul>				
No.	Task	Due Date	Deliverable(s)	Action(s) Taken
1 ✓	Determine the services DARS VR programs offer to businesses.	11/08	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Inventory of Services</li> <li>▶ Glossary of Terms</li> </ul>	<p>Completed</p> <p>The Inventory of Services outlines services DBS and DRS VR programs offer to businesses. These services fall under four categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Outreach &amp; Education</li> <li>▶ Providing Qualified Candidates</li> <li>▶ Job Retention</li> <li>▶ Accommodations &amp; Technical Assistance</li> </ul>
2 ✓	Determine the parameters under which DARS VR programs offer these services to business.	01/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Inventory of Services</li> </ul>	<p>Completed</p> <p>Most parameters are numerical – e.g., number of contacts, number of visits made to a given employer, or employers who hired more than one consumer. Surveys and feedback processes to provide information about employer satisfaction and perceptions of effectiveness.</p>
3 ✓	Determine the data required to evaluate the services provided to businesses by DARS and how data will be collected.	04/09	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Online surveys</li> <li>▶ Needs assessment of data infrastructure</li> <li>▶ Processes illustrating how surveys would be administered and used</li> </ul>	<p>Completed</p> <p><b>Developed survey questions</b> stemming from and relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ The Services Inventory</li> <li>▶ <b>32<sup>nd</sup> IRI Foundational Principles and employer expectations (National Network)</b> – Questions shaped to assess how well principles and expectations are being met. Developed matrix between questions and what they tell us.</li> <li>▶ Feedback obtained from business focus groups interviewed July-August 2009.</li> </ul> <p><b>One survey will evaluate:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Transactions</b> (short-term, immediate, available continuously, specific; <b>collected for each interaction or encounter</b>; all businesses could be surveyed).</li> <li>▶ <b>Relationships</b> (long-term, periodic, sample respondents, limited scope; <b>evaluate relationships over time</b>).</li> </ul> <p>Steps for August and September:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Design survey</b> in web format.</li> <li>▶ Map out <b>survey logistics</b>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Survey processes, feedback loops, survey administration schedule, sample selection</li> <li>- Survey format(s) and layouts</li> <li>- How surveys would tie in with ongoing business (continuous improvement)</li> </ul> </li> <li>▶ Identify pilot survey audience.</li> <li>▶ Administer survey (mid-September).</li> </ul>
4 ✓	Complete system enhancements for data collection, if needed, and begin data collection.	09/09		Completed

Accountable Participant:	Health and Human Services Commission – Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services			
Target:	N/A			
<p>Goal(s): To improve DARS' services to businesses by evaluating the effectiveness of services provided. Evaluate the level of use by businesses of the services provided by DARS to determine whether DARS is meeting business needs for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ program planning and management; and</li> <li>▶ potential use as a resource in development of the agency's next biennial strategic plan.</li> </ul>				
No.	Task	Due Date	Deliverable(s)	Action(s) Taken
5 ✓	After data is collected, evaluate the level of DARS services provided. Determine appropriate level, and measure how well DARS meets that level. (This will incorporate entered employment, employment retention and trend analysis.)	09/10		Completed Business partners' level of satisfaction was very high for DARS' services (e.g., potential hire, job retention assistance, accommodations and technical assistance, diversity awareness or other presentations). Comments related to service improvements were included; however, no negative responses were received from respondents. [November 2011]
6 ✓	Report on results of evaluation making recommendations to improve DARS services to businesses.	08/31/15		Completed Based on employer feedback, DARS modified processes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ DARS researches Diversity Policies and Practices for companies earlier in the business relationship. [Ongoing]</li> <li>▶ Business Relations Unit launched and successfully completed five "SWAT Immersions" with field units. The three-day sessions assist units with business relations strategy development and implementation, utilizing key data on businesses, labor demands, job ready consumers and market trends. [Completed 2011]</li> <li>▶ "SWAT Immersions" continued through FY 2014; replaced by regionally focused training and support in FY 2015. [Ongoing]</li> </ul>
7 ✓	Design and implement changes as necessary to the level of services to businesses.	ongoing		In Progress <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Purchased licenses for cloud based subscriptions for business relations management software and customized site for DARS' use. [November 2011]</li> <li>▶ Beta testing by key DARS' staff. [December 2011]</li> <li>▶ Entered business, contact and job information for larger business accounts. Issued licenses to additional staff; fully operational. [February 2012]</li> <li>▶ Employer satisfaction survey available through online employer portal. [June 2013]</li> <li>▶ Evaluate system expansion plans, considering: [FYs 2014–15] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– implementation of joint business relations strategy,</li> <li>– establishment of consolidated business relations team,</li> <li>– implementation of agency's Sunset recommendations, and</li> <li>– implementation of Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (PL 113-128).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

## Use of Data for Program Improvement Project [P6.2 – 2015 Review]

Accountable Participant:	Texas Veterans Commission			
Target:	N/A			
Goal(s): Utilize Veterans E&T Entered Employment and Employment Retention data (board-level and aggregate) obtained from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ program planning, management and refinement efforts; and</li> <li>▶ identification of best practices.</li> </ul>				
No.	Task	Due Date	Deliverable(s)	Action(s) Taken
1 ✓	Review current TWC reports to determine if additional/modified reports are needed.	09/07	TWC data/report request, if applicable	Completed 7/09-Reviewed all Workforce Investment Streamlined Performance Reporting (WISPR) reports concerning veterans employment, determined additional monthly performance reports might be beneficial.
2 ✓	Where relevant, conduct trend analysis, taking into consideration criteria such as local area service structure (e.g., are vet services offered directly by Veterans Employment Staff, through the board's Business Services Unit or a combination).	01/08	Trend analysis checklist, including timeframe designation (i.e., monthly, quarterly, annually, one-time)	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 4/09-Completed trend analysis on close to 90 offices statewide.</li> <li>▶ 5/09-Evaluated selected service delivery models identified in trend analysis and made adjustments where appropriate.</li> </ul>
3 ✓	Utilize data: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>– as input to planning; and</li> <li>– in conjunction with surveys for program improvement efforts.</li> </ul>	02/08	Standardized employer satisfaction survey	Completed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ 7/09-Survey conducted.</li> <li>▶ 8/09-Nearly 150 employer responses received statewide.</li> <li>▶ 8/09-TBD – Data analysis to identify best practices.</li> </ul>
4 ✓	Approach TWC regarding purchasing customized monthly performance reports	03/08	Custom monthly performance reports	Completed 8/09-Engaged TWC reporting official in discussion concerning feasibility and associated cost.
5 ✓	Communicate best practices information with appropriate state, regional and local staff to facilitate program improvement.	annually		In Progress Trend analysis data and reports.
6 ✓	Conduct trend analysis, analyze results and distribute results/information, as appropriate.	annually		In Progress Use as input to employer survey, as possible avenue to test or validate conclusions drawn from the data.
7 ✓	Utilize data as a resource for agency strategic plan development, in preparation for future legislative sessions and other purposes, as appropriate.	04/10-ongoing		In Progress Trend analysis utilized to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ forecast staffing needs,</li> <li>▶ update Jobs for Veterans State Grant state application/plan (submitted to DOL's Veterans' Employment and Training Service), and</li> <li>▶ prepare for career fairs and hiring events.</li> </ul>

## Use of Data for Program Improvement Project [P6.3 – 2015 Review]

Accountable Participant:	Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) – Windham School District (WSD)			
Target:	N/A			
<p>Goal(s): Implement use of program evaluation tool(s) with local board and/or workforce center staff. Potential data uses might include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ program planning and management efforts;</li> <li>▶ modification and replication for additional Windham-/TDCJ-administered programs;</li> <li>▶ resource in development of the agency's next biannual strategic plan; and</li> <li>▶ resource in preparation for future legislative sessions.</li> </ul>				
No.	Task	Due Date	Deliverable(s)	Action(s) Taken
1 ✓	Review tool(s) currently used to collect data for assessing local board/center feedback related to training program relevance and quality, participant placement success and employer satisfaction.	03/08	Tool assessment	Completed Assessment instrument (survey) for data collection developed and tested in visits to several workforce boards/centers.
2 ✓	If applicable, revise and finalize data collection tool(s) (e.g., staff-administered survey/checklist for use in-person or by phone, written survey).	04/08	Data collection tool(s)	Completed Assessment instrument revised and finalized after visits to the Brazos Valley and Alamo Workforce boards/centers.
3 ✓	Implement data collection efforts.	04/08-ongoing	Local board/center staff data	In Progress As of July 31, 2009, all 28 boards/centers have been visited. Follow-up visits planned for some of the larger boards.
4 ✓	Review and analyze data.	05/08-ongoing	Collection of data	In Progress Visits to boards/centers reveals support for vast majority of Career and Technology Vocational training programs offered. Utilization of electronic data of offender demographics and achievements received from TDCJ also discussed with board/center staff.
5 ✓	Utilize data as a resource for strategic plan development, in preparation for future legislative sessions and other purposes, as appropriate.	06/08	Review of data	Completed Appropriateness of offender training programs reviewed with board/center staff. Staff analyzing data to determine if program redirections are needed. Boards with high demand occupations for ex-offenders have been identified and information shared with unit Project RIO staff.
6 ✓	Document 'lessons learned' for future data collection efforts.	08/09	Review of final data	Completed Data collection and board visits proved to be highly successful. No recommended changes for data collection tool.
7 ✓	Assess the desirability and feasibility of modifying and replicating the survey for use with other Windham-/TDCJ-administered programs.	10/09	Review survey document	Completed TDCJ/WSD completed review; determined survey document acceptable.
8 ✓	Review information gathered during workforce board visits to determine appropriateness of training provided to incarcerated offenders within TDCJ.	01/10	Identification of programs in need of redirection	Completed TDCJ/WSD completed review; determined no programs in need of redirection.
9 ✓	Assess feasibility of co-sponsoring training conference for local board staff and TDCJ/TDC Project RIO staff.	03/10	Feasibility assessment	Completed TDCJ/WSD completed assessment; determined not feasible due to budgetary constraints.
10 ✓	Assess data collected to assist (if warranted) with the 2010 agency strategic plan or legislative appropriation request.	06/10	Data review	Completed TDCJ/WSD analysis confirmed validity of current training offerings and the need for continuing annual evaluations.
11 ✓	Annually assess feasibility of and need for future board visits or contacts.	08/10-ongoing	Annual assessment	In Progress TDCJ/WSD continues to confirm validity of current training offerings and the need for continuing annual evaluations.

## DATA ADDENDUM TO *EVALUATION 2014*

This year, three agencies identified the need to submit corrected data for prior reporting cycle(s): the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC), and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC). In addition, revised Less Formal measures data were requested from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). Percentage point differences published in the **Report Card Series** for Change 2014–2015 and Cumulative 2009–2015, as well as all report narrative, reflect the revised data submitted by the agencies.

### Texas Education Agency Revised Data

The TEA reported that the revision was due to a calculation error.

Revised Formal measure data for the 2014 reporting cycle:

Program	Education Achieved	Rate
Secondary	304,258	92.60%

### Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Agency Revised Data

This year, the Council requested that the THECB submit revised Less Formal measures data for the 2014 reporting cycle in order to have complete, final data set(s) for both measures. New data for the 2015 reporting cycle were not requested. Additional information is provided in the **Less Formal Measures** section.

Revised Less Formal measure data for the 2014 reporting cycle:

Program	Number Employed	Rate
Vocational ESL	41	59.42%

### Texas Veterans Commission Revised Data

The TVC reported that revisions were due to data updates following further data entry by local boards, clarifications in federal/state reporting specifications, or improvements in coding. The TWC provides data to the TVC for review and verification.

Revised Formal measures data for the 2014 reporting cycle:

Program	Number Employed	Rate	Retained Employment	Rate	Number Served
Veterans E&T	32,386	71.60%	31,801	84.75%	48,366

### Texas Workforce Commission Revised Data

The TWC reported that revisions were due to data updates following further data entry by local boards, clarifications in federal/state reporting specifications, or improvements in coding.

Revised Formal measures data for the 2014 reporting cycle:

Program	Education Achieved	Rate	Number Employed	Rate	Retained Employment	Rate	Number Served
Adults WIA I	3,523	92.61%	15,121	80.20%	13,017	79.87%	29,113
Apprenticeship	-	-	-	-	-	-	4,291
Dislocated WIA I	2,690	94.62%	5,186	83.42%	4,799	89.57%	8,413
Employment Services	-	-	813,925	72.71%	772,517	83.08%	1,270,552
SCSEP	-	-	97	54.19%	-	-	1,193
Self-Sufficiency	-	-	-	-	-	-	189
Skills Development	-	-	-	-	18,144	95.90%	-
SNAP E&T	-	-	25,381	81.63%	17,155	87.50%	41,567
TANF Choices	-	-	25,028	82.63%	17,078	79.20%	40,998
Trade Adjustment	-	-	910	75.71%	-	-	3,863
Youth WIA I	2,727	67.43%	4,268	74.06%	2,812	73.08%	9,630

Revised supplemental data for Employer Customers Served for the 2014 reporting cycle:

Evaluation Cycle	Number Served
2014	84,146

Revised Formal – Unduplicated data for the 2014 reporting cycle:<sup>38</sup>

Evaluation Cycle	Education Achieved	Rate	Number Employed	Rate	Retained Employment	Rate	Number Served
2014	9,551	82.12%	823,876	72.71%	798,966	83.33%	1,315,514

<sup>38</sup> As noted in the **Report Card Series** section, the series is a useful tool to present overall system performance, but the data presented should be taken in context. The System report card contains aggregate data for all agencies' applicable programs by measure as noted on the Formal measure report cards. Due to known duplicates that cannot be removed from program-level data, adjustments are calculated annually at the System level, with unduplicated data footnoted as applicable. The data are not used to calculate or publish change rates.

## PROGRAM LEVERS – CONTRIBUTIONS TO TREND LINE CHANGES

The Council collects and disseminates performance data and descriptive information on 19 workforce programs, as well as five academic education programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels.<sup>39</sup> Information and data from these five programs assist in understanding the scope and effort of program delivery through high schools and community and technical colleges, and these entities' efforts to prepare students to transition to further education or enter the workforce.

As required by statute, the annual evaluation report presents data by program rather than by agency. It includes information on performance levels that vary significantly (+/-5%) from the prior year. Conversely, the longitudinal trend lines present a summary-level view of system performance based on data from up to 24 programs and services focused on education, workforce education, and workforce training for three participant groups: adults, adults with barriers, and youth. The 24 programs included in the report card series, along with the short titles used in the Council's annual evaluation report, are:

Programs in the Report Card Series	Short Title
Adult Education Workforce Investment Act II <sup>40</sup>	Adult Education
Adults Workforce Investment Act	Adults WIA I
Apprenticeship Chapter 133	Apprenticeship
Blind Services	Blind Services
Community and Technical College Academic	CTC Academic
Community and Technical College Technical	CTC Technical
Dislocated Workers Workforce Investment Act	Dislocated WIA I
Employment Services - Wagner Peysner	Employment Services
Perkins Secondary Career Technical Education	Secondary CTE
Postsecondary Community and Technical College Corrections <sup>41</sup>	Postsecondary CTC Corrections
Rehabilitation Services	Rehabilitation Services
Senior Community Service Employment Program	SCSEP
Secondary Education	Secondary
Secondary Academic Youth Corrections	Secondary Academic Corrections
Secondary Technical Youth Corrections	Secondary Technical Corrections
Secondary Academic Windham	Secondary Academic Windham
Secondary Technical Windham	Secondary Technical Windham
Self-Sufficiency Fund	Self-Sufficiency
Skills Development Fund	Skills Development
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training	SNAP E&T
Trade Adjustment Assistance	Trade Adjustment
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Choices	TANF Choices
Veterans Employment and Training	Veterans E&T
Youth Workforce Investment Act	Youth WIA I

<sup>39</sup> Project Re-Integration of Offenders was not funded for the fiscal year (FY) 2012–13 or 2014–15 biennia. The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) submitted available data for applicable measures through 2012. Data for this program are not included in trend information presented in the **Overview**.

<sup>40</sup> As required by Senate Bill (SB) 307 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature), administrative responsibility transferred from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to the TWC, effective September 1, 2013.

<sup>41</sup> As required by SB 1 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature), administrative responsibility transferred from the Windham School District to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's (TDCJ) Rehabilitation Programs Division, effective September 1, 2013.

This appendix provides additional general observations about the trend data 2004–2015 chart presented in the **Overview**, focusing on key changes (and year first reported) occurring over the 12-year period. It is based on information and data reported by partner agencies for the Council’s annual evaluation reports in the referenced years.

Typically defined and treated as a lag measure, Customers Served may be used as a lead measure for system strategic planning given its tie to program infrastructure usage and capacity. This measure indicates the total number of individuals served by all system programs and services and fluctuates based on factors such as the state of the economy and available funding for each program. Educational achievement, entered employment, and employment retention are rate, or outcome, measures and the percentages reported for these measures are the weighted aggregate of multiple workforce programs. At the program level, these measures generally remain fairly consistent over time and are comparable within a reporting year and across reporting years.

### **Formal Measure: Customers Served**

*Number of employers and individuals who received system services, including program participation.*

The number served ranged from 4,581,652 (2005) to 5,383,850 (2010). Following economic recovery, Customers Served (as defined in the right sidebar) declined to 4,884,802 in 2014 before rising 1.58% to 4,962,054 this year. This measure is not affected by the reporting delays inherent in post-program measures, such as Entered Employment and Employment Retention. Therefore, the effects of the economic downturn that began prior to 2009 were most evident in the data reported in 2010. The beginning effects of the recession were evidenced by several programs in *Evaluation 2009*, with that trend continuing in 2010 and to a lesser degree in 2011.

In many cases, significant decreases in service levels reported in 2011 were due to the expiration of supplemental funding such as that provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment (ARRA) of 2009 (Public Law 111-5). While some decreases are attributable to reduced federal or state funding levels, in large part the results since then reflected the improved economy. Notably, many reported decreases were for programs that typically have higher enrollment during adverse economic conditions (e.g., Dislocated WIA I, Trade Adjustment).

Examples of significant changes reported by agencies over the period include:

- ▶ *Adult Education*: The U.S. Department of Education implemented new assessment standards, reducing the number served (2009). FY 2013 and FY 2014 were transitional years for the programs as administrative responsibility transferred from the TEA to the TWC. For FY 2015, the TWC issued a request for proposals for service delivery and negotiated aggressive increases in the number of customers to be served. Performance rose 1.88% in 2015.
- ▶ *Adults WIA I and Dislocated WIA I*: The ARRA provided significant federal funds, leading to higher service levels. In mid-2009, the local boards received ARRA funds totaling nearly \$30 (Adults) and \$32 (Dislocated) million for the WIA I programs. The U.S. Department of Labor’s (DOL) intent was that the majority of the ARRA funds be spent in the first year of availability. In 2013, uncertainty regarding the potential impact of federal sequestration led to reduced Adults WIA I enrollment and a focus on existing participants in most areas; however, increased enrollments by Gulf Coast provided a balancing effect.

The number served by Dislocated WIA I is closely tied to economic fluctuations; as the number of unemployment insurance (UI) claims drops, the number of program customers enrolled drops as well. After serving almost 20,000 individuals in 2010, the number served through Dislocated WIA I fell annually through 2014. The 2015 increase was attributed to implementation of a service delivery strategy, since modified, in a large workforce area.

- ▶ *Apprenticeship*: Increases were attributed to program rule changes that allowed counting all enrolled apprentices (effective FY 2006), acceptance of apprentices for longer periods (2008), and higher participation in new training programs (2014).
- ▶ *Blind Services*: Population growth contributed to rising participation (2014). The 2015 increase was attributed to a division goal to increase the number of eligible individuals served and the success of strategies employed in field offices to accomplish this goal.
- ▶ *Employment Services*: After posting recessionary highs in 2009 and 2010, the number has fallen annually. In general, the number served through this program rises when economic conditions are very positive or negative, and falls during periods of improvement.
- ▶ *Postsecondary CTC Corrections*: Service levels declined due to funding decreases. State funds were reduced from FY 2005 to FY 2006. A state-mandated 2.5% budget reduction applied for FY 2011, and state funding was further reduced for FY 2012. The TDCJ attributed the 2014 enrollment increase to the addition of a new vocational course and an additional location for academic courses.
- ▶ *Rehabilitation Services*: Decreases were attributed to efforts, recommended by the federal partner—the Rehabilitation Services Administration—to reduce caseload size for vocational rehabilitation counselors (2005).
- ▶ *SCSEP*: A new DOL goal emphasized increasing the number served by transitioning participants from subsidized to unsubsidized employment, then filling the subsidized slots with new participants. For FY 2010, the TWC received SCSEP funding under ARRA and DOL bonus funding made available through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010.
- ▶ *Secondary Academic Corrections and Secondary Technical Corrections*: SB 103 (80th Legislature) required changes by the former Texas Youth Commission, including facility closings and lowering of maximum age from 21 to 19, that led to lower enrollments.
- ▶ *Self-Sufficiency*: A TWC policy change limited grants to those willing to exhaust the TANF Choices applicant pool (2009).
- ▶ *Secondary CTE*: The TEA indicated the higher number served may be due to increased student enrollment in CTE courses in order to meet the requirements for CTE endorsement options under the Foundation High School Program (2015).
- ▶ *Skills Development*: SB 1 (79th Legislature) appropriated \$20.5 million from funds generated by House Bill (HB) 2421 (79th Legislature). The legislature again increased appropriations for the FY 2010–11 biennium.
- ▶ *SNAP E&T (formerly Food Stamp E&T)*: In several years, the TWC reported the receipt of additional federal funds, which allowed local workforce boards to serve more participants.
- ▶ *TANF Choices*: HB 2292 (78th Legislature) mandated merger of human service agencies under the Health and Human Services Commission and implemented a pay-for-performance model that had a significant impact on reducing the number of TANF recipients. However, TANF reauthorization (Public Law 109-171, 2006) required services to additional individuals. The Choices program assists applicants, recipients, nonrecipient parents, and former recipients of TANF cash assistance to transition from welfare to work through participation in work-related activities, including job search, job readiness classes, basic skills training, education, vocational training, and support services. As expected, service levels declined as the economy improved post-recession.

- ▶ *Trade Adjustment:* The Trade Adjustment Act Amendments of 2009 that significantly expanded the types of layoffs eligible for trade certification expired February 14, 2011, contributing to lower enrollments. The number served is based on the number of qualifying layoffs affecting workers.
- ▶ *Veterans:* HB 1452 (81st Legislature) required priority of service and several positions were eliminated due to a lack of funding. New DOL Priority of Service guidelines (June 2010) shifted the Texas Veterans Commission's focus to those most difficult to serve, further contributing to lower service counts. Guidelines were further revised (April 2014), restricting the roles of disabled veterans' outreach program specialists and local veterans' employment representatives staff.
- ▶ *Youth WIA I:* Due to a change in DOL's vision, stand-alone summer youth programs were eliminated (2007). However, ARRA provided additional money for a summer youth program (2009).

### **Formal Measure: Educational Achievement**

*Number and percent of all program participants who obtain a degree or other credential of completion, or complete the level enrolled in either a training or educational program.*

The Educational Achievement rate was fairly stable over the 12-year period, with a high of 81.50% (2014). After posting the lowest rate of 74.41% in 2009, the rate rose annually through 2014, before declining slightly in 2015 to 81.33%. The absolute number of individuals achieving an education outcome (numerator) rose most years, with a high level of 504,073 in 2015. Significant numeric gains were posted in 2011 and 2012—partly due to more individuals seeking to upgrade training or acquire new skills during the recession.

In general, reasons noted for Customers Served changes are applicable for Educational Achievement (e.g., federal and state legislative changes, funding increases/decreases). Additional examples include:

- ▶ *Adult Education:* Key reasons for fluctuations over the period included: decreased federal funding (2006) led to fewer served despite a higher rate; increased number of participants at lower education levels, who tend to exit before achieving a reportable outcome (2011); and upcoming changes to the GED test series (2013) led to a higher rate. The conversion to the more rigorous 2014 GED was cited as a reason for declining performance (2015).
- ▶ *CTE Technical:* The increased demand for technical awards due to the economic recovery and the increased number of stackable certificate/awards due to the use of career pathways contributed to rising performance (2015).
- ▶ *Postsecondary CTC Corrections:* Due to budget uncertainties, enrollments were limited to students who could complete programs by August 31, 2011 (2011). In addition, state funding for college programming was reduced 42% (2012).
- ▶ *Secondary Academic Corrections:* The maximum age for new commitments changed from 21 to 19; however, corresponding program changes and increased focus on GED (2010) led to improved performance in subsequent years. The reduction in the overall population contributed to a decline at the end of the 12-year period.
- ▶ *Secondary Technical Corrections:* With some students working toward industry certifications, class sizes were reduced (2014). Challenges with staff recruitment and retention also contributed to declining performance over the period.
- ▶ *Secondary CTE:* A better understanding and implementation of Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills testing (2010) led to improved performance.

- ▶ *Youth WIA I*: Major changes were attributed to the federal vision to focus on out-of-school youth who are less likely to achieve an educational outcome (2006 decrease); state policy clarification to allow local boards to place participants in programs with employer-recognized, rather than only nationally recognized, certificates (2008 increase); and improvement in local boards' understanding of the credentials recognized and the data entry required for educational achievement (2014 increase).

**Formal Measure: Entered Employment**

*Number and percent of all program participants who secure employment after exiting a program.*

The highest Entered Employment rate was posted in 2008 at 79.93%. After declining to the recession low of 67.74% (2011), the rate rose to 76.26% in 2015. The absolute number of individuals entering employment exceeded one million annually. For most programs, data reported in 2010 reflected participants exiting during the recession. Performance declines were expected to continue in 2011 and possibly 2012 given the delay in UI wage reporting. However, gains reported by many programs over the last four years reflected continued economic improvement.

In general, reasons noted for Customer Served changes are applicable for Entered Employment (e.g., federal and state legislative changes, funding increases/decreases), Rehabilitation Services' caseload decrease). In addition, the Youth WIA I program was aligned with the federal vision to focus on out-of-school youth who are more likely to seek employment (2007). However, as noted above, the ARRA Summer Employment initiative increased the number of youth served who did not intend to remain employed. Several programs (e.g., Skills Development, Self-Sufficiency, SCSEP) fluctuate year-to-year due in large part to their funding structure and the cyclical nature of grant- or slot-based program operations.

**Formal Measure: Employment Retention**

*Number and percent of all program participants who retain employment at a specified point after exiting a program.*

The lowest Employment Retention rate was posted in 2010 at 79.21%. In all other years, the rate exceeded 80%, with a pre-recession high of 84.31% (2008). That level was almost reached in 2015 when the rate rose to 84.02%.

There is a significant delay in receiving and analyzing UI wage records for measuring retention. The programs have different reporting cycles, with some reported measures reflecting the effects of the economic recession later than others. Despite expectations of the recession being a more significant factor in 2011 and possibly in 2012, improved outcomes were reported for a majority of the programs, a trend that continued through 2015.

In general, reasons noted for Customers Served and Entered Employment changes are applicable for Employment Retention (e.g., federal and state legislative changes, funding increases/decreases, Rehabilitation Services' caseload decrease). In addition, the 2012 increase for Youth WIA I was attributed to a more traditional service mix, rather than prior year focus on summer employment.

# Texas Workforce Investment Council

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Texas Department of Criminal Justice  
Texas Education Agency  
Texas Health and Human Services Commission

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
Texas Juvenile Justice Department  
Texas Veterans Commission  
Texas Workforce Commission

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