



Texas Workforce Investment Council Policy News Highlights

Issue 4, Quarter 4, December 2008

Texas Workforce Investment Council – Policy News Highlights is a quarterly review of selected reports relevant to the policy and research functions of the Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC). Federal and state agency websites, in addition to numerous public policy and educational databases are scanned monthly for relevant and emerging issues. Reports are catalogued and stored electronically in TWIC's Information Repository (IR). Topic areas include: adult basic education (ABE); economic development; K-12 education; higher education; and skills, training and employment.

Policy News Highlights is organized into three sections, beginning with selected articles that focus on workforce trends and issues that have received heightened attention over the previous months. The second section contains abbreviated summaries of recent articles of interest to the Council and the final section consists of a comprehensive list of all articles added to the IR this last quarter.

This Quarter's Selected Articles

Two themes emerged within the IR's workforce-related research topics during the past three months: the importance of "21st century skills" needed for workers in the constantly changing global economy; and the role of career technical education (CTE) in maintaining economic competitiveness for the nation as well as for Texas. Two articles, *Measuring Skills for the 21st Century* along with *21st Century Skills, Education and Competitiveness*, discuss what these new skills are and why they are so important to policymakers. Next, a very recent article from the Institute for a Competitive Workforce (ICW) called *The Skills Imperative, How Career and Technical Education Can Solve the U.S. Talent Shortage* shows how CTE can address the current scarcity of skilled workers in the workforce pipeline so critical to sustaining the nation's economy. Last, *Career Technology Education: Many Paths, Equal Rigor and One Destination for Texas High Schools and Dual Enrollment Policies and Practices, Earning College Credit in California High Schools*, offer examples of how CTE is perceived at the state level.

Both *Measuring Skills for the 21st Century* and *21st Century Skills, Education and Competitiveness* were published in November of this year, by Education Sector and Partnership for 21st Century Skills, respectively. Education Sector is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization committed to improving current reform initiatives in national education and crafting new approaches to challenges facing America's educational system. Partnership for 21st Century is an advocacy organization that brings together business and education leaders, along with policymakers to infuse 21st century skills into education. Both groups recognize that the global economy is now driven by innovation and knowledge, and no longer the manufacturing and production-based economy of the Industrial Revolution.

To remain competitive in the global economy, today U.S. workers need new “21st century skills,” in addition to those basic skills of being able to read and recall facts from reading a passage, or perform math problems. What are these new skills? They are the ability to think creatively and to generate original ideas from multiple sources of information. 21st century skills also include the ability to analyze information, evaluate its utility, and/or create new knowledge from it. According to *Measuring Skills for the 21st Century*, the emphasis in the 21st century is on “what students can do with knowledge, rather than what units of knowledge they have.” Businesses want people who are independent thinkers, who are problem-solvers and decision-makers—people who can analyze, evaluate and create. Given these fundamental ideas of what the current workforce needs, new approaches to education and testing must also be developed. A central point in *Measuring Skills* is that the field of cognitive and education science now recognizes the idea that so-called basic skills do not need to be learned before more advanced skills. In fact, basic skills are *best* learned when taught in combination with complex thinking skills. With math, for example, students learn math rules and procedures better if they learn them at the same time they are learning how to think and solve problems. Students do not need to learn facts and procedures *before* they reach problem-solving and critical thinking—they can learn the advanced skills *at the same time* they learn the basic skills.

21st Century Skills, Education and Competitiveness focuses more the issue of the nation’s need to incorporate these skills into public education to maintain U.S. economic competitiveness. “We need to recognize that a 21st century education is the bedrock of competitiveness—the engine, not simply an input—of the economy,” state the authors. They urge immediate action because of the fact that the American economy is already a service economy, driven by knowledge and innovation. It is interesting to note that U.S. spending on information technology surpassed its spending on production technology for the first time in 1991. Furthermore, between 1995 and 2005, the U.S. lost 3 million jobs in manufacturing, but added 17 million in service-sector jobs. Many of the fastest growing service sector jobs are now in the “high-end” occupations of medicine, engineering, sales and marketing. From this set of facts flows the notion that economic success is increasingly dependent upon the use of such intangible assets as knowledge, skills and innovation. Information and communications technologies are increasingly at the center of the country’s business while repetitive tasks are more often automated. Therefore, more emphasis resides in the ability to solve problems, communicate, improve production processes, and manage teams. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) focused on the basic skills of math, reading and science. *21st Century Skills, Education and Competitiveness*, calls for a “NCLB-Plus” agenda that would inject 21 century skills into core academic subjects, and like *Measuring Skills*, this second article states emphatically that children can learn these skills *while* they learn the basics. The authors point out that this is not an “either or agenda” because these 21st century skills will be critical for all Americans to master for all aspects of their lives.

<u>21st Century Skills</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thinking critically and making judgment about information received• Solving complex, multidisciplinary, open-ended problems• Creativity and entrepreneurial thinking• Communicating and collaborating• Making innovative use of knowledge and opportunities to create new services and processes• Taking charge of financial, health and civic responsibilities

In terms of specific recommendations, Partnership for 21st century skills suggests that at the national level, a senior advisor to the president be explicitly responsible for 21st century skills and workforce development and that an Office of 21st Century Skills be established at the Department of Education. On a state level, recommendations include aligning 21st century skills measures and

outcomes with workforce and economic development initiatives. On the local level, 21st century skills can be incorporated into regional economic development strategies. For school districts, recommendations include appointing assistant superintendents for 21st century learning to oversee 21st century skills strategies in school districts. Nine Leadership States have already joined the partnership in its commitment to teaching and promoting these skills: Iowa, Kansas, Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey, North Carolina, South Dakota, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Against this discussion of the “New Economy” driven by technology and innovation and the 21st century skills necessary to maintain competitiveness, CTE is enjoying increased interest and support among educators, business leaders and policy makers. Economists project that most jobs in the coming decades will require middle- to high- level skills and education, such as an industry recognized credential, a certification, or postsecondary education resulting in a two-year or four-year credential. With U.S. high school graduation rates widely quoted at only 70 percent, the nation is challenged not merely to see students through high school, but to genuinely engage them during high school. In its article, *The Skills Imperative—How Career and Technical Education can solve the U.S. Talent Shortage*, the ICW argues America’s education goal should be not merely to deliver academics to students, but rather to deliver over-all career readiness. Rewards will go to individuals who know what to do with information, technology, and knowledge and thus, learning environments that integrate real-world and project-based learning will most effectively prepare students for success in both career and college.

Well designed CTE programs need to address five areas:

- **postsecondary education and career readiness** - CTE must be about college and career, not one or the other
- **rigor** - academic and technical courses must meet standards and requirements of both state and federal law
- **relevance** - content and curriculum must be related to real careers, occupations and opportunities
- **project-based** - this type of learning enhances students’ abilities to problem-solve and collaborate
- **effective** - CTE students often have test scores that are 30 to 40 percent higher than their peers not enrolled and the drop out rate among CTE students is 50 percent lower

CTE combines technical and academic courses to prepare people for a range of careers. Integrated academic and technical coursework will provide students with multiple pathways to explore education after high school or to enter the workforce with a wide range of in-demand skills already under their belts.

The ICW suggests “next steps” including improved methods and systems for collecting longitudinal data for CTE participants, state academic standards that not only align to those of other states but also better reflect postsecondary educational realities and workplace expectations, greater effort into integrating CTE with academics for students everywhere, and finally, intensive teacher training. Educators, chambers of commerce, associations and employers who support CTE can work together to produce a climate where the CTE principles of rigor, relevance, and relationships are maximized

for successful teaching and learning. The ICW and its partners strongly believe that CTE can serve as the change agent to reshape the American workforce.

Going from looking at CTE at a national level, ***Career and Technology Education: Many Paths, Equal Rigor and One Destination for Texas High Schools***, discusses how Texas is facing the difficult challenge of increasing the high school graduation rate and ensuring that high school graduates are properly equipped for postsecondary success. The Texas Institute for Education Reform produced this white paper and views CTE reform as the “lever” for improving students’ high school performance in Texas. There are two models of CTE reform, the first of which integrates college-preparatory academics and expands occupational and technical choices within CTE. The second uses CTE as a framework for redesigning high schools through reorganizing instruction into career clusters and career pathways. This paper takes a detailed look at both models and gives examples from various states across the nation. It recommends the adoption of the first model, strengthening CTE, and makes recommendations for reforming CTE in Texas such as revising the CTE course curriculum so that it is relevant to current occupations and includes college and workforce readiness standards.

CTE is being discussed in other states. For example, ***Dual Enrollment Policies and Practices, Earning College Credit in California High Schools***, focuses on California’s “Concurrent Courses Initiative.” This is a program funded by the James Irvine Foundation through 2010 that examines the feasibility of using dual enrollment programs to strengthen college and career pathways, with a strong emphasis on career and technical education. The target population for this initiative is low-income youth who are either struggling academically, or are part of ethnic groups that are historically underrepresented in higher education. The paper contains definitions of dual enrollment, dual credit, articulated credit and concurrent enrollment and describes various programs in California that allow students to obtain college credit while attending high school. The paper makes the case for broadening policies behind dual enrollment in high school from targeting high performing academic students to attracting a wide array of students using career and technical education, comprehensive student support services, and work-based learning to prepare all high school students for college and career.

These articles provide another illustration of the rapid pace of change in today’s global economy and the critical need for U.S. workers to have the skills necessary to keep up with changing demand. Below are electronic links to the full reports:

Measuring Skills for the 21st Century

http://www.educationsector.org/usr_doc/MeasuringSkills.pdf

21st Century Skills, Education & Competitiveness, a Resource and Policy Guide

http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/documents/21st_century_skills_education_and_competitiveness_guide.pdf

The Skills Imperative: How Career and Technical Education Can Solve the U.S. Talent Shortage

<http://www.uschamber.com/NR/rdonlyres/eciaj45n6o5jxdngkikp6zgpwhwy4ggbkt3vyv7q4eu5xlcpsms7escmdu5koxwfyvrgdpukqgamx35lclqfydbuob2g/CTEpaperFINAL.pdf>

Of Interest - Abbreviated Summaries

Adult Basic Education

Strategies for Transitioning Adult Education Students to Postsecondary Opportunities, Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), October 2008.

This paper gathers information collected from OVAE’s “Listerv discussion,” between July 21 and August 1, 2008 between 24 states evenly dispersed across the nation. A number of questions related to the issue of adult education policies and the transition process to postsecondary education were circulated among participants. Clear trends are emerging about adult basic education (ABE): it is no longer limited to acquiring a basic skill such as learning to read or to earning a General Educational Development credential. ABE goals now go as far as transitioning and participating in postsecondary education. According to *Strategies*, information collected for shows a framework emerging among states that functions to promote and expand postsecondary transition opportunities for ABE students. Some other trends in the building of statewide systems for adult education include using data collected on adult learner performance to help build the system, and advocating for representation on behalf of adult education on state and local education boards.

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ovae/pi/AdultEd/strtg4trnstng-ae-stdnts2postsec-opprtnts.pdf>

Flexible Learning Options for Adult Students, FutureWorks and Jobs for the Future for the Employment and Training Administration, Department of Labor, April 2008

Adult learners require flexibility in course design and delivery options due to work and family obligations. One of the most significant barriers to adults successfully completing postsecondary credentials is the inflexible nature of traditional education programs. This paper looks at emerging trends in postsecondary education such as flexibility in course scheduling and location (weekend colleges or evening courses), in course design (open entry-open exit courses), program design (modularized programs or accelerated programs), and distance learning. Last it presents possible solutions to barriers impeding flexible approaches to delivering credential programs. For example, where faculties hesitate to teach non-traditional programs, state governments could reimburse colleges for more enrollments in these particular courses.

http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP%202008-09%20-%20Flexible%20Learning%20Options%20for%20Adult%20Students.pdf

Economic Development

The Power of Place, Association of University Research Parks, October 2008.

Adding to the growing sense of urgency in the economic development sector regarding American competitiveness in the global economy, this paper focuses on maximizing innovation in the nation’s research and science parks, technology incubators, venture accelerators and research universities. The authors state that America is losing competitive ground because it does not provide the “place” for the “Creative Class” to thrive. Local governments and communities simply do not have the resources to develop such infrastructures. *The Power of Place* details a number of suggested

federal initiatives, reforms and investments designed to leverage the power of innovation in U.S. The paper's recommendations range from establishing American Innovation Zones and enacting a Federal Innovation Zone Partnership Program, to reforming federal tax provisions for those facilities that are funded by tax-exempt financing.

http://www.aarp.net/meet/The_Power_of_Place.pdf

The Catalyst Project—Igniting Texas' New Energy Economy, I&O Communications, November 2008.

This paper is produced by a coalition of business, advocacy and policy groups with the goal of casting Texas' position in the new energy economy as a priority for Texas state legislators. Texas has played a central role in the last 100 years in virtually every technology advancement that has driven the U.S. economy: oil and gas; the transistor market; the space race; semiconductors; telecommunications; and Internet. The writers of this paper are anxious that Texas be lead player in the next big technology, that is, "new" or "green" or "clean" energy and according to them "thousands of future jobs, billions in future profits, and the economic relevance of our state are all at stake." *Igniting Texas' New Energy Economy* is a collection of interviews of experts from both the U.S. and Texas, including investors, policymakers, and entrepreneurs. They are all asked the same question, "what can the state of Texas do to seize the new energy economic opportunity before us?" Some recommendations include naming a point-person to be in charge of articulating the state's new energy strategy, and using the Emerging Technology Fund and the Texas Enterprise Fund more strategically to bring new energy investment to Texas.

<http://www.texascatalystproject.org/catalystproject.pdf>

U. S. Metro Economies – Current and Potential Green Jobs in the U.S. Economy, Global Insight for the United States Conference of Mayors, October 2008.

The global economy is irrevocably impacted by dwindling natural resources, growing demand for energy. This paper discusses the economic benefits of the "Green Economy," and defines the term as "economic activity which is devoted to the reduction of fossil fuels, the increase of energy efficiency, and the curtailment of greenhouse gas emissions." It suggests that policy makers view the greening of the economy as the next step in global economic growth that itself began with the industrial revolution, but is currently poised in the high-tech revolution. Global Insights estimates that there are currently about 750,000 green jobs in the U.S., meaning jobs that are in an activity generating electricity by renewable resources, dealers and wholesalers who specialize in renewable energy or energy efficient products, agricultural jobs that supply corn or soy for transportation fuel, etc. The paper contains an appendix of existing and projected green jobs in metropolitan areas, with New York City, Washington D.C., and Houston being the top three.

<http://www.usmayors.org/pressreleases/uploads/GreenJobsReport.pdf>

Best-Performing Cities 2008 – Where America's Jobs are Created and Sustained, Milken Institute, September 2008.

Intended to measure which American cities are best at job creation and retention, *Best-Performing Cities* also looks at the quality of jobs being created and overall economic performance. The report pinpoints exactly where jobs are both created and maintained, where wages are increasing, and where economies are expanding and prospering. The index is aimed at businesses, economic development entities, investors, educators, government and policymakers. The authors point out

that it is a tool to understanding consumer and business expansion opportunities, and that in this time of economic slowdown, it may be useful in pinpointing which markets have lower risk factors. Texas fared very well in the 2008 report, with six cities listed in the top 25 large cities.

<http://www.milkeninstitute.org/pdf/bpc2008.pdf>

The 2008 State New Economy Index: Benchmarking Economic Transformation in the States, Information and Technology Information Foundation (ITIF), November 2008.

ITIF defines the New Economy as a “set of qualitative and quantitative changes that, in the last two decades, have transformed the structure, functioning and rules of the U.S. economy,” and not simply a “fad” of the late 1990s. It is a “global, entrepreneurial, and knowledge-based economy in which the keys to success lie in the extent to which knowledge, technology, and innovation are embedded in products and services.” The current economic slowdown, caused essentially by rising energy prices and excesses in the housing market, is a good time for states to assess and position themselves for robust growth and innovation over the next ten years. The *Index* uses 29 indicators in five categories to measure the degree to which the structure of state economies matches the ideal structure for the New Economy. For example, Texas ranks highest in exporting its manufactured goods: Texas manufacturers export over three times the national average, due to its healthy oil and petroleum industries and its trade with Mexico. Washington State ranks second, because Microsoft (exporting of services) and Boeing (aerospace manufacturing) are located there. Innovation and technology-based economic development will be what sustain and drive states in the decades to come.

http://www.itif.org/files/2008_State_New_Economy_Index.pdf

Engage. A Practitioner’s Guide for Effective Engagement of Business Leaders in Regional Development, the Council on Competitiveness (U.S.), October 2008.

This report from the Council on Competitiveness focuses on the opportunities and challenges facing business leaders in regional economic development. Remaining competitive in today’s global economy requires innovation and innovation requires the interaction of individuals and institutions. Regions, and not states or localities, are the optimum economic unit to efficiently promote and sustain “innovation ecosystems.” The authors emphasize that America’s competitiveness depends on whether regions successfully support innovation. Those regions which have been successful have done so by connecting three key elements: workforce skills and lifelong learning strategies; investment and entrepreneurship; and regional infrastructure and economic development strategies.

http://www.compete.org/images/uploads/File/PDF%20Files/Engage_102008_Final.pdf

Accelerating Latino Success at Texas Border Institutions: Possibilities and Challenges, Excelencia in Education, October 2008.

This policy paper states that neither the United States nor Texas can reach their human capital needs without accelerating Hispanic educational attainment. Nationally, the number of Hispanics enrolling and completing college degrees is still too low to meet the growing workforce needs of our country. Public higher education institutions along the international border in Texas rank among the top institutions enrolling and graduating Hispanics in higher education. *Accelerating Latino Success* summarizes data to report progress under the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s *Closing the Gaps* initiative, and recommends several practices to help the state meet its

education goals. Examples include increasing financial support to border institutions in Texas, creating a statewide plan targeting Latino participation and success, and engaging all regions in the state to boost Latino enrollment.

<http://www.edexcelencia.org/research/alass.asp>

Measuring Up 2008: the National Report Card on Higher Education, the National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education, December 2008.

Fifth in a series that compiles national and state "report cards," this report evaluates the progress made by states in providing Americans with education and training after high school and through college. Indicators (key areas) are: preparation for college; participation; affordability; completion; benefits; and learning. The purpose of the report card approach is to help states measure their own higher education outcomes against best performances both nationally and internationally. The authors of this study have provided comparative data between states on these various indicators and have emphasized areas in which data is lacking. For example, with regard to participation, data is available on college enrollment rates by race and income on the national level, while at the state level these rates are known by race but not by income. And at the state level very little is known about family income for students who do not apply for financial aid. The study aims to provide state leaders and the public with information that will allow both assessment and improvement of higher education.

<http://measuringup2008.highereducation.org/print/NCPHEMUNationalRpt.pdf>

K-12 Education

Counting on Graduation, an Agenda for State Leadership, Education Trust, October 2008.

This short policy paper describes the critical problem the United States currently faces regarding high school graduation rates: America is the only industrialized country in the world whose youth is less likely to graduate high school than its previous generation. It references the 2005 policy initiative taken by the National Governors Association to push states for more accuracy and consistency in reporting graduation rates. It lays out policy goals for governors, state boards of education, state departments of education and school district leaders.

<http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/6CA84103-BB12-4754-8675-17B18A8582AC/0/CountingonGraduation1008.pdf>

Dropout Prevention – Practice Guide, Institute of Education Sciences, United States Department of Education, September 2008.

More than half a million youth drop out of high school each year in the United States and even though education spending has increased, dropout rates have remained fairly constant over the last 30 years. This paper contains six recommendations for educators, administrators and policy makers to reduce dropout rates. The recommendations fall into three categories: diagnostic processes to identify dropout problems; targeted interventions to address the problems; and school-wide reforms to engage students and deter dropping out. The authors suggest that states districts and schools should gather and analyze longitudinal data regarding student absences, grade retention, and low academic achievement. Students should be assigned an "adult advocate" to work with those at high risk of dropping out. Schools should provide academic support and

enrichment, such as tutoring, to bolster academic performance. Programs aimed at improving classroom behavior and social skills should be implemented, such as problem-solving or anger-management seminars. A school-wide policy to personalize instruction and the learning environment will instill a sense of belonging for at-risk students. Last, rigorous and relevant instruction will serve not only to engage students in high school, but also provide them with skills needed for graduation and beyond. The panel acknowledges the importance of preschool and elementary school interventions, but emphasizes that middle-school years are critical for high school completion. The authors also strongly emphasize that successful dropout interventions typically involve application of several or multiple strategies.

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/dp_pg_090308.pdf

Changing the Game: the Federal Role in Supporting 21st Century Educational Innovation, Brookings Institute, October 2008.

To assure that America's workforce remains globally competitive and to address broad disparities in educational achievement, the Brookings Institute argues that the federal government must fundamentally "change the game" in public education. The authors of the paper do not offer specific approaches or a very particular vision regarding public education in the future. Rather, they are calling for a more aggressive and systematic federal role in promoting innovation throughout the culture and structure of public education. They propose a federal Office of Educational Entrepreneurship and Innovation within the U.S. Department of Education to harness those forces and boost education through innovation and entrepreneurship.

http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2008/1016_education_mead_rotherham.aspx

Harnessing Innovation to Support Student Success: Using Technology to Personalize Education, U.S. Department of Education, October 2008.

Beginning with examples of how technology has altered the way we communicate (three out of four teens between 15 and 17 years of age own cell phones, and nearly eight out of 10 teens have helped adults with online problems the adults have not been able to solve) the Department of Education advocates harnessing technology to transform the way education is delivered. In the business world, success is frequently based on enterprise adapting personalized responses to individual consumer needs. Education should use this same approach in order to maximize the potential of each student in this country.

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/os/technology/reports/harnessing-innovation.pdf>

Skills, Training and Employment

Career and Technical Education's Role in Career Guidance, ACTE Issue Brief, December, 2008.

Since the first "Bureau of Vocational Guidance" was established in 1908, vocational education, now called career technical education (CTE) has played an important role in career guidance for young people. CTE's "programs of study" and "career pathways" give students a clear vision of their futures and their careers and engages them in personalized and applied learning.

http://www.acteonline.org/uploadedFiles/Publications_and_Online_Media/files/Guidance_issuebrief.pdf

Targeting Industries, Training Workers and Improving Opportunities—the Final Report from the Sectoral Employment Initiative, Public/Private Ventures, November 2008.

A sectoral approach to workforce development involves examining labor market trends and developing an in-depth understanding of specific industries. Strategies that combine employment and training services for individual job seekers with efforts to influence employers, educators, or state policies can be much more far-reaching than traditional workforce development programs. The sectoral approach focuses on both developing workers' skills to match particular sector employer needs and on addressing practices for hiring, promoting and training workers. This approach can help low-income workers acquire the skills they need to fill available positions and eventually lead them toward upward mobility.

http://www.ppv.org/ppv/publications/assets/263_publication.pdf

Disability Employment Information for Parents, Youth and Employers - Fact Sheets, U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP), December 2008.

Tips for Parents with Children with Disabilities, What Young People with Disabilities Need to Know, Including Talents of Young People with Disabilities, are three new fact sheets available on the ODEP website. These fact sheets are simply written and contain practical information about creating paths to employment and cultivating skills (both soft and hard) through education and learning experiences, needed to secure work in the 21st century. Useful to parents, job seekers and employers, these briefs indicate numerous resources that everyone, not only individuals with disabilities, will find helpful.

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/index.htm>

Employer Best Practices in Employing People with Disabilities, Cornell University ILR School, November 2008.

On November 12, 2008, Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations hosted a webinar with updated information about the status of the employment gap for people with disabilities today. Even though the Americans with Disabilities Act was passed nearly twenty years ago, people with disabilities are still under-employed when compared to their non-disabled peers. The discussion examined workplace factors that may contribute to ongoing barriers to the successful hiring and retention of employees with disabilities and to their career advancement. The webinar power point presentation is available to see ideas from Cornell University researchers about workplace policies that contribute to successful accommodation for people with disabilities. Some of these policies include: co-worker acceptance, supervisor relations, responsiveness to accommodation requests, corporate and community resources used in making accommodations, presence of affinity groups, and overall climate of workplace fairness.

<http://www.ilru.org/html/training/webcasts/archive/index.html>

Still Working Hard, Still Falling Short, Working Poor Families Project, October 2008.

This eight-page report reveals just how pervasive the struggle to make ends meet remains in the United States. One in four working families is defined as low-income, that is as earning too little to meet basic needs. Based on data from the 2006 American Community Survey taken by the United States Census Bureau in 2006, *Still Working Hard, Still Falling Short* shows data from the fifty states pertaining to low-income families regarding wages, educational level, race and family size, housing

costs, and insurance coverage. Low-income refers to earnings of 200 percent below poverty level, as defined by the Census Bureau, \$41,228 for a family of four in 2006. For this report, a family is defined as either a married-couple or single-parents with at least one child younger than 18. Several commonly-held myths are debunked: fifty-two percent of low-income families are headed by married couples and not single parents; 89 percent of low-income families have a parent between 25 and 54 years of age and not extremely young parents; and 43 percent of low-income families are white, non-Hispanic and therefore, are not overwhelmingly minority.
<http://www.workingpoorfamilies.org/pdfs/NatReport08.pdf>

Articles Placed in the Information Repository in the Last Quarter

21st Century Skills, Education & Competitiveness, a Resource and Policy Guide, Partnership for 21st Century Skills.

http://www.21stcenturyskills.org/documents/21st_century_skills_education_and_competitiveness_guide.pdf

The 2008 State New Economy Index: Benchmarking Economic Transformation in the States, Information and Technology Information Foundation.

http://www.itif.org/files/2008_State_New_Economy_Index.pdf

Accelerating Latino Success at Texas Border Institutions: Possibilities and Challenges, Excelencia in Education.

<http://www.edexcelencia.org/research/alass.asp>

Best-Performing Cities 2008 – Where America’s Jobs are Created and Sustained, Milken Institute.

<http://www.milkeninstitute.org/pdf/bpc2008.pdf>

Career and Technical Education’s Role in Career Guidance, ACTE Issue Brief.

http://www.acteonline.org/uploadedFiles/Publications_and_Online_Media/files/Guidance_issuebrief.pdf

The Catalyst Project—Igniting Texas’ New Energy Economy, I&O Communications.

<http://www.texascatalystproject.org/catalystproject.pdf>

Changing the Game: the Federal Role in Supporting 21st Century Educational Innovation, Brookings Institute.

http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2008/1016_education_mead_rotherham.aspx

Corporations, Chambers, and Charters: How Businesses Can Support High-Quality Public Charter Schools, Institute for a Competitive Workforce.

<http://www.uschamber.com/NR/rdonlyres/egeyaaicerkeoogijzlvnnvq6lvfygvyjpm5hyelz674jyv2fpuxthodr4plekyk2v2p346ag3ufgve6wgcgthg4qcd/081020charterschools.pdf>

Counting on Graduation, an Agenda for State Leadership, Education Trust.

<http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/6CA84103-BB12-4754-8675-17B18A8582AC/0/CountingonGraduation1008.pdf>

Disability Employment Information for Parents, Youth and Employers - Fact Sheets, U.S.

Department of Labor, Office of Disability Employment Policy.

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/index.htm>

Dropout Prevention – Practice Guide, Institute of Education Sciences, United States Department of Education.

http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/practiceguides/dp_pg_090308.pdf

Employer Best Practices in Employing People with Disabilities, Cornell University ILR School.

<http://www.ilru.org/html/training/webcasts/archive/index.html>

Energy Efficiency, Innovation and Job Creation in California, Next 10.

http://www.next10.org/pdf/report_eiic/UCB_Energy_Innovation_and_Job_Creation_10-20-08.pdf

Engage. A Practitioner’s Guide for Effective Engagement of Business Leaders in Regional Development, the Council on Competitiveness, (U.S).

http://www.compete.org/images/uploads/File/PDF%20Files/Engage_102008_Final.pdf

Enhancing Prosperity for Texas and Texans: the Impact of Graduates from Career Colleges and Schools on Business Activity in Texas, Perryman Group.

<http://www.ccst.org/categories/Publications/Studies>

Factbook: The Condition of Latinos in Education in 2008, Excelencia in Education.

http://www.edexcelencia.org/pdf/publications/2008_Factbook.pdf

Flexible Learning Options for Adult Students, FutureWorks and Jobs for the Future for the Employment and Training Administration, Department of Labor.

http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/FullText_Documents/ETAOP%202008-09%20-%20Flexible%20Learning%20Options%20for%20Adult%20Students.pdf

Harnessing Innovation to Support Student Success: Using Technology to Personalize Education, U.S. Department of Education.

<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/os/technology/reports/harnessing-innovation.pdf>

Measuring Skills for the 21st Century, Education Sector.

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