



SITAC Quarterly Report

System Integration Technical Advisory Committee
Texas Workforce Investment Council
December 2010

System Integration Technical Advisory Committee

The System Integration Technical Advisory Committee (SITAC) is constituted as a Technical Advisory Committee to the Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council). Chaired by a member of the Council's Executive Committee, SITAC includes executive-level representatives from the Council's eight partner agencies, as well as representation from the Texas Association of Workforce Boards. SITAC's key responsibility is the implementation of the workforce system strategic plan.

Next Meeting

Thursday, March 3, 2011 – 1:00 p.m.
Teacher Retirement System, Austin

The current plan, *Advancing Texas: Strategic Plan for the Texas Workforce System (FY2010-FY2015)* (*Advancing Texas*) was approved by Governor Rick Perry on October 23, 2009. It outlines 14 long term objectives (LTOs), grouped by the three key performance areas (KPA) that address the critical business issues identified during a yearlong collaborative planning process.

SITAC members meet quarterly, providing status reports on action plans (APs) for which their organization is solely or jointly responsible. The committee is authorized to create and deploy cross-agency teams in order to devise and execute collaborative solutions to issues associated with the system strategic plan's LTOs.

Year 1 Implementation Highlights

Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 was the first year of *Advancing Texas'* six-year plan cycle. Implementation highlights include:

LTO S2 – Career Technical Education (CTE) – Increase Student Completion – The Texas Education Agency (TEA) completed several tasks including:

- ★ adoption of CTE courses that satisfy fourth year math or science graduation requirements;
- ★ adoption of CTE Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, incorporating the College and Career Readiness Standards; and
- ★ design and implementation of related professional development initiatives.

LTO S3 – Dual Credit Transfer – TEA and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) are working 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.

Message from the Chair

With our first year of *Advancing Texas'* implementation complete, I am pleased to report that progress has been made in many areas. This issue of the quarterly report notes a few 'implementation highlights' in addition to our regular reports.

System partners continue to work on identifying ways to increase collaborative efforts – as they help with ongoing projects or define tasks for new initiatives. In the coming year, we will hear about a new report that examines educational credential supply and labor market demand. Project teams are being formed and plans made for pilots addressing critical areas such as career technical education and 'earn while you learn' training, as well as programs designed to meet the needs of English language learners and those with low literacy levels.

In September, agencies responsible for several action plans reported on achievements in the first year of implementation. Members received brief updates on the Council's agency strategic plan review and its *Evaluation 2010* report.

I was pleased to welcome five of my fellow Council members to our meeting in September and hope more can join us in the future. On behalf of the Council, my congratulations and thanks to system partners for the strides made in this first year of *Advancing Texas'*

Paul Mayer

LTO C1 – Blind / Disabled Employment – The Health and Human Services Commission – Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services has been working on innovative models that create and facilitate partnerships between business/industry and rehabilitation providers. To build on and replicate these models, a request for proposals was issued and nine contracts awarded to providers in multiple industries and with various job opportunities.

LTO C2 – Veteran Employment – The Texas Veterans Commission is using state and leveraged federal services to provide veterans with needed programs, products and services. A Business Outreach Coordinator has been hired to work directly with employers to secure jobs and 'vet preference' commitments. Veterans continue to receive support through a network of over 90 field offices, including assistance from locally-based Veterans Employment Representatives.

LTO P2 – Apprenticeship – Under the Council's leadership, LTO P2 requires expansion of the 'earn while you learn' model to address employer demand for skilled workers. The Project Leadership Team has recommended several pilot projects for consideration by the Council's Executive Committee.

Implementation Update: September 2010

Reports for four *Advancing Texas'* action plans (AP) were presented at the September 9 SITAC meeting. Summaries are provided for each AP, grouped by the plan's three key performance areas (KPA's).

KPA: Systems, Operations, Competencies and Integration

Career technical education (CTE) programs provide valuable skills training, and often assist with the transition to further education or the workforce. Texas needs enhanced and more effective integration of academic and CTE options at the secondary and postsecondary levels in order to increase graduation rates and lessen the risk of students dropping out. **LTO S4** focuses on improving the perception of CTE as a desirable career option.

The Council is responsible for this AP, with the Executive Committee providing oversight. The intent is to increase awareness and educate high school counselors by creating a secondary school culture where all students and parents understand the wide range of available education and career choices. This is increasingly important as over the next 20 years, many high skill, high wage jobs critical to Texas' economy will require some postsecondary education, but less than a four-year degree.

CTE Demo – Improve Knowledge / Value Perception [S4] – By 2013, design and implement a demonstration program targeted to improve perception of career options that career technical education (CTE) programs enable.
Owner / Participant: Council

Since June, a research study to identify models of best and promising practices for Texas' high schools has been completed. Council staff worked with TEA and the Career and Technology Association of Texas to identify excellent and best practices in the provision of information about careers and future options. Program staff were interviewed to collect information to supplement that available in TEA's online best practices clearinghouse¹. The study:

- ★ identified promising practices and activities in Texas high schools that improve the perception of career options and pathways offered by CTE programs;
- ★ identified and qualitatively compared components of the activities to determine common effective elements;
- ★ verified the components of state activities using national best practice activities to validate findings and determine additional gaps; and
- ★ recommended elements to be included in a future demonstration project(s).

This fall, a team will be convened to design an outreach model that incorporates elements identified by the study prior to release of a Request for Applications to fund one or more demonstration projects that incorporate the identified elements.

KPA: Customer Outcomes

To meet the shifting demands of Texas' employers, everyone must be part of the critical pool of potential employees. *Advancing Texas* specifies four target populations, including *English language learners* (ELL), who constitute a rapidly growing

¹ Accessible at <http://www.teabpc.org/>.

population requiring additional skills for workforce-related success. This population is comprised of individuals who have a high school diploma or additional education but are typically under-/unemployed due to lack of proficiency in English and certification of occupational skills.

LTO C3 requires TEA and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to develop new and enhance existing methods, programs and processes for programs targeted at the ELL population. As part of the Council's mandate to monitor and facilitate adult

education work, the Council published *A Primer on Adult Education in Texas* (January 2010). Several companion papers are planned, with two published to date.²

English Language Learner (ELL) Employment [C3]

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

Owner: SITAC

Participants: TEA, TWC

The agencies are conducting a gap analysis to determine occupations with the potential for high impact employment outcomes.

This fall, a work group will design and develop a model that can be executed through community and technical colleges (CTCs) and local workforce boards. With an initial meeting

set for September, the group will include representatives from TEA, TWC, THECB, CTCs, local boards, adult education providers and Council staff.

KPA: Programs, Products and Services

Middle-skill jobs currently account for nearly half the jobs in the U.S. and in Texas. These are jobs that require education and/or training beyond high school, but less than a four-year college degree. Training may range from apprenticeships, certificate programs, and open-ended on-the-job-training, to two-year associate academic or technical degrees. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects about 45 percent of all job openings over the next decade will require some postsecondary education or occupational training. Texas is facing an increasing need for workers with appropriate middle skills, created by job growth and future workforce retirements. Projected need crosses a range of industries and occupations.

Apprenticeship [P2] – 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.

Owner / Participant: Council

Under the Council's leadership, **LTO P2** requires expansion of the 'earn while you learn' model to address employer demand for skilled workers. Since the last *SITAC Quarterly Report*:

- ★ *June 4, 2010* – Project Leadership Team recommendations were presented to the Council's Executive Committee. Formal consideration and approval was deferred pending U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) approval of a new apprenticeable occupation.
- ★ *August 9, 2010* – At its third meeting, the team heard presentations from two additional programs. A recommendation to approve four projects was to be made to the Council's Executive Committee at its September 10, 2010 meeting.

The Council will work with DOL and project staff to develop action plans and identify additional resource needs for all approved projects.

★ ★ ★

As the system's front line partners, local boards must understand and meet the needs of their local communities by providing relevant workforce programs and services. **LTO P4** addresses the statutory requirement that local workforce board plans align with the system strategic plan

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

² Council publications are accessible at <http://governor.state.tx.us/twic/work/>.

Texas Government Code 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 these statewide goals and objectives.

In previous years, TWC issued local board planning guidelines that included an appendix requesting quantitative and qualitative information needed for the Council's review. The Council typically analyzes the local board plans for:

- ★ data to demonstrate performance in specified areas;
- ★ explicit strategies that address critical business issues and success factors noted in *Advancing Texas*; and
- ★ other information as requested related to broad system priorities and/or initiatives.

Local Board Plan Alignment [P4] – 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.

Owner / Participant: Local boards

After determining that local plans meet the statutory requirements, the Council approves the plans and recommends them to the Governor for approval. Following the Governor's approval, local boards are able to enter into contracts for the purpose of operating the one-stop centers that deliver programs and services.

During the current economic recession, boards and their providers have experienced heavy demand for programs and services. In addition, the influx of federal stimulus funding required them to expand existing services for economically disadvantaged adults and dislocated workers and to implement new programs such as summer youth programs. In recognition of this increased demand, TWC determined that boards would not be required to submit new plans or modifications for FY 2011.

TWC extended the existing, approved board plans through September 30, 2011; therefore, the Council was not required to endorse or recommend board plans to the Governor in 2010. Where applicable, TWC assisted with gathering of information from boards related to the implementation of *Advancing Texas*.

DOI's Employment and Training Administration will likely require states to submit new WIA state plans in 2011. Also in 2011, TWC will determine the timeline and process for development of new or modified local board plans.

SITAC Members

Chair

Paul Mayer, Executive Committee Member, Texas Workforce Investment Council

Economic Development and Tourism Division

Keith Graf, Director, Aerospace and Aviation

Texas Association of Workforce Boards

Appointment pending

Texas Department of Criminal Justice

Debbie Roberts, Superintendent, Windham School District

Texas Education Agency

Vangie Stice-Israel, State Director for Career Technical Education

Texas Health and Human Services Commission

Debra Wanser, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Dr. MacGregor Stephenson, Assistant Commissioner for Academic Affairs and Research

Texas Veterans Commission

Bill Wilson, Director, Veterans Employment Services

Texas Workforce Commission

Gene Crump, Deputy Executive Director

Texas Youth Commission

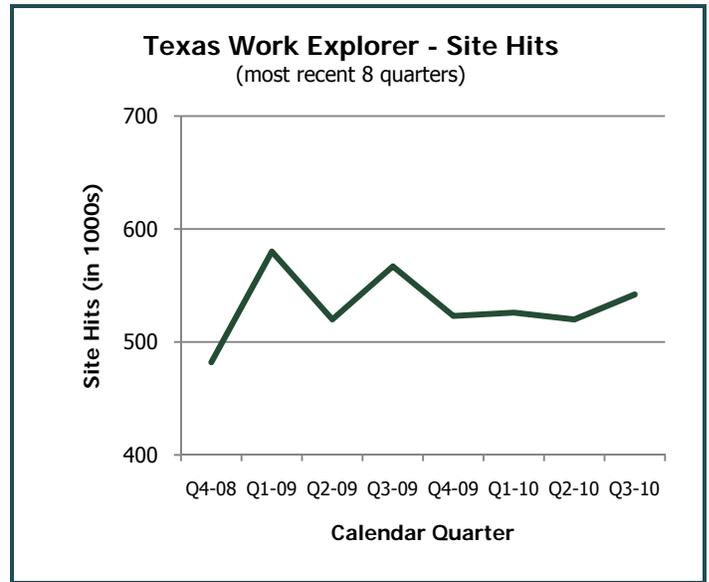
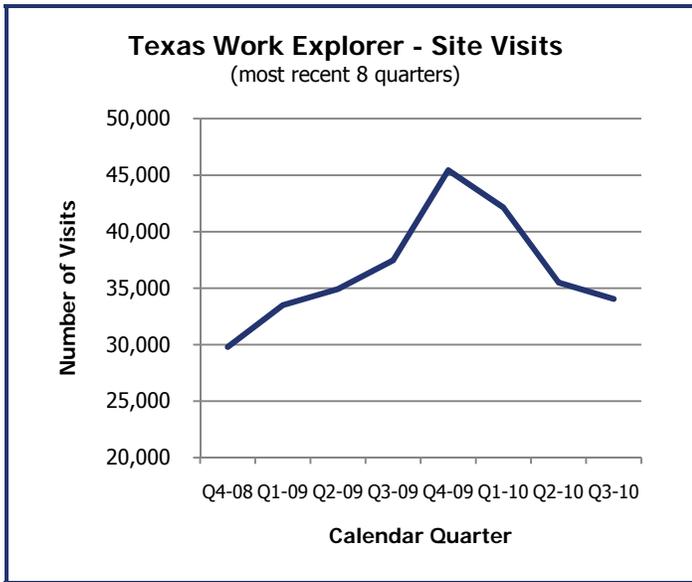
Dr. Clint Carpenter, Superintendent of Education

Texas Work Explorer Portal

Available at www.texasworkexplorer.com, the Texas Work Explorer Portal is on texas.gov, Texas' official website. Full site reviews are conducted annually; however, partners are encouraged to submit corrections, additions or featured link suggestions at any time.

Current *WebTrends* 'visit' and 'hit' data is presented below, with FY 2010 average and high data provided at right. High figures for both statistics were posted in October 2009.

Texas Work Explorer Portal – September 2009 – August 2010		
	Average	High
Hits	176,873	192,733
Visits	13,373	16,860



Visit – A series of actions that begins when a visitor views the first page from the server and ends when the visitor leaves the site or remains idle beyond the idle-time limit (30 minutes).
- WebTrends®

Hit – Each file requested by a visitor registers a hit. There can be several hits on each page. While the volume of hits reflects the amount of server traffic, it is not an accurate reflection of the number of pages viewed.
- WebTrends®

