Texas Skill Standards System

TEXAS SKILL STANDARDS

The Council is charged by the Texas legislature with administering a voluntary statewide system of industry-defined and industry-recognized skill standards. These standards define the work and worker requirements for major skilled, high-wage, high-demand, sub-baccalaureate (or middle-skill) occupations, many requiring science, technology, engineering, and math skills. Skill standards provide a tool for industry to communicate its occupational requirements to workforce education providers, and thus, help prepare qualified workers for these hard-to-fill jobs. Among the Council's system functions are to: 1) facilitate industry groups to develop new, and validate existing national, standards; 2) recognize standards that meet its validity and reliability criteria; 3) promote the use of standards and credentials; and 4) recognize community and technical colleges that use skill standards in their curricula.
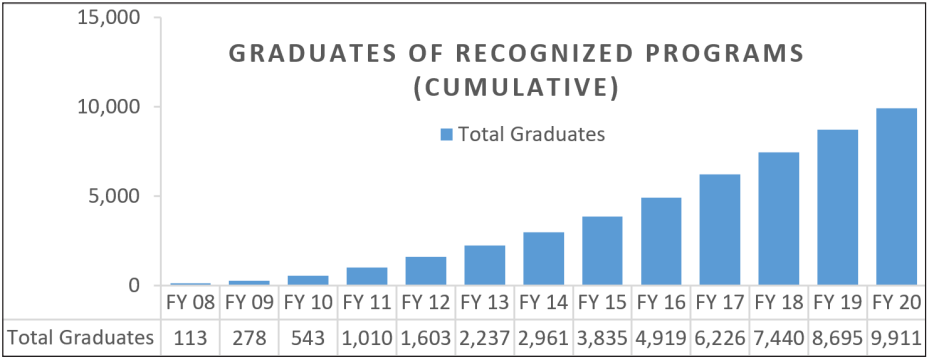
System Progress in FY 2020. The Council recognized eight skill standards in the advanced manufacturing, energy, and healthcare industries. These standards are posted in the Council's online repository, where they are available for community and technical colleges to use in their workforce education programs. Currently, skill standards for 50 occupations are posted in the public domain on the Texas skill standards system website (https://tssb.org).

The Council's program recognition policy resulted in a total of 42 programs at 22 community and technical colleges teaching to and assessing their students on the skills and knowledge required in the standards. Program recognition is valid for three years, at which time, it must be renewed. Initial renewal requires colleges to have assessments in place to measure students' mastery of the skill standards' performance competencies. In FY 2020, 10 colleges, which had previously submitted proof of their assessments at initial renewal, subsequently renewed the recognition for 11 programs.

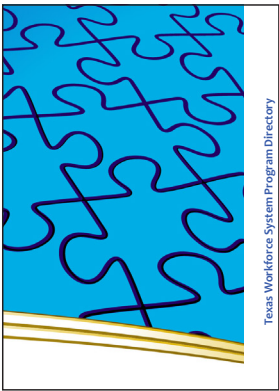| Recognized Standards	
FY 2020	**Total**
8	50
Recognized Programs	
FY 2020	**Total**
11 renewed	42
Graduates	
FY 2020	**Cumulative**
1,216	9,911

The number of students who graduated from recognized programs with the skills and knowledge required by industry in the standards has increased steadily every year. In FY 2020, 1,216 graduates were prepared by community and technical colleges for the middle-skill occupations in the Texas skill standards system. The cumulative total of graduates from recognized programs since FY 2008 is 9,911.

GRADUATES OF RECOGNIZED PROGRAMS (CUMULATIVE)

■ Total Graduates

	FY 08	FY 09	FY 10	FY 11	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16	FY 17	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20
Total Graduates	113	278	543	1,010	1,603	2,237	2,961	3,835	4,919	6,226	7,440	8,695	9,911

Texas Workforce System Partners and Programs

Texas workforce system partners collaborate to better align, leverage, and integrate system services to develop a world-class workforce and ensure a higher quality of life for all Texans through educational, employment, and economic success. Eight state agencies, local workforce development boards, community and technical colleges, local adult education providers, and independent school districts actively contribute to statewide programs and those highlighted in this report.

The table below shows the partners and primary and supporting programs that constitute the Texas workforce system:

FY 2020 Texas Workforce System Partners and Programs

Texas Department of Criminal Justice
- Postsecondary Academic and Technical Education
- Windham School District
  Secondary Academic Education
  Secondary Technical Education

Texas Education Agency
- Secondary Schools
  Academic Education
  Career and Technical Education

Texas Health and Human Services Commission
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training

Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Community and Technical Colleges
  Academic Education
  Technical Education

Texas Juvenile Justice Department
- Secondary Academic Education
- Secondary Technical Education

Texas Veterans Commission
- Veterans Employment and Training

Texas Workforce Commission
- Adult Education and Literacy
- Apprenticeship Training, Chapter 133
- Choices Program for TANF Adults
- Employment Services
- Rehabilitation Services
- Self-Sufficiency Fund
- Senior Community Service Employment Program
- Skills Development Fund
- Trade Adjustment Assistance/NAFTA
- Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act
  Adult
  Dislocated Workers
  Youth

Economic Development and Tourism, Office of the Governor

Texas Workforce System Program Directory (Revised March 2020) This report provides basic information about the many programs constituting the Texas workforce system in one publication. A companion document to the system strategic plan and the annual evaluation report, it details workforce development programs and related academic programs administered by the state's workforce system partner agencies. A concise reference for policy makers and stakeholders, the directory is distributed to system partners and stakeholders and is posted on the Council's website.

For more information on the Texas Workforce Investment Council and its authority, please visit Texas Government Code, Section 2308.

TEXAS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT COUNCIL

Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2020
September 1, 2019–August 31, 2020

About the Council's Role in the Texas Workforce System

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) was created in 1993 by the Governor and the Texas Legislature to promote the development of a well-educated and highly skilled workforce in Texas. The Council assists the Governor and the legislature with strategic planning, research, and evaluation to support continuous improvement of the Texas workforce system. In addition to its responsibilities in state law, the Council functions as the State Workforce Investment Board under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. The Council does not operate programs but works to foster collaboration and a systems perspective among its partners and their programs. Its impact is demonstrated through initiatives that improve outcomes for workforce customers—employers and current and future workers of Texas—every one of whom is critical to Texas' economic success.

The Texas workforce system delivers programs, services, and initiatives administered by eight agencies, local workforce development boards, school districts, community and technical colleges, and local adult education providers. The Council's eight partner agencies are: Economic Development and Tourism within the Office of the Governor, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, the Texas Veterans Commission, and the Texas Workforce Commission.

There are 19 members on the Council. The Governor appoints 14 members representing business, organized labor, education, and community-based organizations. The remaining five members are ex officio representatives of the Council's member state agencies.

The Council produces this annual report, which offers highlights of the Council's work during the past fiscal year (FY). Included in this year's report is information on the fifth year of *The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023,* the update to the strategic plan, and the Council's evaluation of system programs.

The Texas workforce system strategic plan and other Council products referenced in this report are posted on the Council's website at https://gov.texas.gov/organization/twic.

Results for America—Implementation of Evidence-Based Grants in Texas
Supported by the state's participation in a state and local government workforce fellowship under Results for America (RFA), the Council collaborated with the Texas Workforce Commission and Rural Capital Area Workforce Solutions to plan and develop resources to begin implementation of evidence-based grant-making in Texas. Interventions that have been introduced by the workforce system to date have been producing a growing body of data that points toward evidence that can be used to identify and further evaluate effective practices. To continue to facilitate innovative approaches to job training programs and build evidence in order to scale proven methods that lead to long term employment outcomes, Texas is implementing a pilot for two discretionary workforce grant programs. Grant funds will directly support common priority outcomes and create incentives for grant applicants to identify and use program models that have demonstrated a record of effective outcomes. The Council facilitates the Texas Talent Connection grant program on behalf of the Office of the Governor. The grant program will release the first request for proposals using the new evidence framework, performance outcomes, and program procurement process in FY 2021.

Performance-Based Contracts
To complement the work being done through RFA, the Council, in collaboration with its RFA partners, designed program improvements that will advance the **Texas Talent Connection** grant program, funded by Wagner-Peyser 7(b) discretionary funds. Beginning in FY 2021, outcome-based contracts that are aligned with outcomes reporting tools will be embedded in the program to help the state learn about the effectiveness and cost of various grant implementation approaches. This change moves grant-making in Texas from an applicant-driven approach, where the grantee specifies what will be achieved, to a performance-driven approach, where applicants will have common data requirements and performance outcomes. This will enable the grant administrator to analyze performance trends across grantees and across time. The outcomes-based contracts are directly aligned with the evidence-based grant-making framework. Future grant recipients will be required to provide consistent and accurate outcomes data. Outcomes-based contracts establish common metrics, produce evidence of success and performance data, and facilitate external evaluations that will help to demonstrate the efficacy and success of Texas Talent Connection investments. The approach helps the state to more effectively monitor grantees' performance and ensure the grants are producing the intended outcomes.

Apprenticeship Funding Formula Recommendations
Texas Education Code, §133.006, requires the Texas Workforce Commission to adopt formulas for the distribution of available funds to apprenticeship training programs on the recommendation of the Council. In February 2020, The Council's Apprenticeship and Training Advisory Committee considered updates on Chapter 133 apprenticeship training programs, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board programs, and federal apprenticeship initiatives. The committee recommended that the contact hour rate for apprenticeship training programs for FY 2021 be set at a rate not to exceed $4.25 per contact hour and five percent of available funds be used to fund new or established apprenticeship programs that did not receive Chapter 133 funds in FY 2020. The contact-hour rate formula is the method used for the distribution of apprenticeship training funds to public school districts and state postsecondary institutions that act as fiscal agents for registered apprenticeship training programs. The final contact-hour rate is determined each year by dividing the total available funds statewide by the total number of contact hours of apprenticeship training instruction statewide. The Council endorsed the Apprenticeship and Training Advisory Committee's recommendation regarding FY 2021 funding formulas for apprenticeship training programs and transmitted the recommendations to the Texas Workforce Commission for implementation.
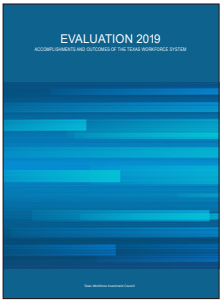
Texas workforce system partners work collaboratively to achieve success in a dynamic global economy. To that end and as required under Texas Government Code, Chapter 2308, the Council reports annually to the Governor and legislature on the degree to which the system is achieving the state and local workforce goals and objectives of the Texas workforce system strategic plan. ***Evaluation 2019: Accomplishments and Outcomes of the Texas Workforce System*** (December 2019) was the Council's fourth annual evaluation report for the eight-year plan period for *The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023*. The state of Texas comprehensively evaluates its workforce system for performance across programs and system partner alignment with the strategic plan. The report presents a system perspective of progress and achievement for partner agencies and other system stakeholders. As required by statute, program-level data are submitted to the Council by six partner agencies on 23 workforce education and training programs, including five secondary and postsecondary education programs. A balanced scorecard illustrates performance across the two primary components of the system plan: four formal measures and four goal areas.

Formal measures are those measures that are essentially consistent across programs in the workforce system. The balanced scorecard presents outcome and 16-year trend data for system performance in the areas of educational achievement, entered employment, employment retention, and customers served. Through the delivery of multiple workforce education and training programs, state and local system partners served more than 4.5 million individuals in the last reporting year. Of those participating in workforce system programs and services, more than 600,000 individuals completed a degree, certificate, or other measure of educational achievement. More than 1.3 million Texans who participated in a workforce program found a job, stayed in a job, and/or enrolled in further education or training. The four goal area scorecards present data as measured by 25 less formal performance measures of system performance. The less formal measures are specific to the agencies' implementation of the partner strategies to achieve six system objectives under the four system goals and demonstrate success over time. The action plans and less formal measures were negotiated with partner agencies during plan development. Agencies last reported on implementation of the action plans in FY 2019.
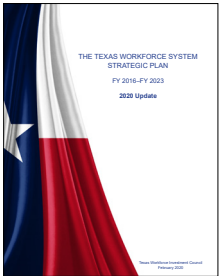
Update to the Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan
Covering the time period of September 1, 2015–August 31, 2023, *The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023* was devised on an eight-year timeframe to align with the federal workforce requirements under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act of 2014. The system plan calls for an update of the plan during its fourth year of implementation. During the development of the system plan, partner agencies recast issues and opportunities as strategies and carefully crafted the agency action plans and less formal performance measures that demonstrate agency partner achievement of the strategies that support the system plan. Each agency's action plan is designed to directly implement partner strategies that result in measurable performance outcomes that support the system goals and objectives. For the update, the Council considered the status of each partner agency toward achieving the system objectives to date and facilitated the development of new four-year partner agency action plans that specify the activities that each agency will complete by the end of the plan period.

The Council supports system planning, implementation of the system strategic plan, and evaluation through a suite of research products and news updates that are distributed to members, system partners, and workforce stakeholders. Available on the Council's website, the Council's primary products include the strategic plan for the workforce system, evaluation reports, resource publications, reports on critical and emerging issues, and recommendations to the Governor.
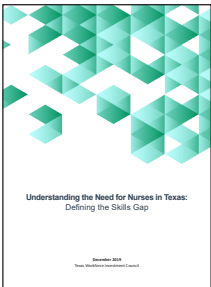
Understanding the Need for Nurses in Texas: Defining the Skills Gap **(December 2019)**
This demographic overview of the nursing labor force presents key data and analysis about nurses in Texas and discusses the current national shortage. The study highlights emerging demographic and socioeconomic changes that present challenges for the nursing labor force. Findings demonstrate that the median age for nurses in Texas is 41. The occupational breakdown reveals that 72 percent of nursing labor force participants who were employed were registered nurses (RNs). Nearly half of all RNs in Texas are 44 years of age or older, and over a third of all RNs are age 55 and older. An aging workforce presents challenges for both the supply and demand sides of existing healthcare models; therefore, understanding the implications of demographic changes for nurses will help workforce system partners respond to the challenges and opportunities for recruiting, training, and retaining a high quality nursing labor force.

Apprenticeship Brochures **(September 2019)**
Providing paid on-the-job training and classroom instruction that prepares students for highly skilled jobs, registered apprenticeship programs support vital industries in the Texas economy. Apprenticeship programs operate within traditional and new industries including cyber security, energy, and logistics. Upon completion, an apprentice receives an industry-recognized certification that is portable from state to state and improves employment opportunities. The Council recognizes the value of expanding apprenticeship training opportunities in Texas and raises awareness of the programs through a series of brochures developed through its Apprenticeship and Training Advisory Committee. The brochures highlight the benefits and outcomes of registered apprenticeship programs for students, employers, and local education and training providers to increase awareness of registered apprenticeship in Texas.

Mature Workers in Texas: A Demographic Study **(September 2019)**
This report provides information about mature labor force participants in Texas, specifically those 55 years and older. The research can be utilized as a primer to understand the significant issues related to mature labor force participants and as a reference for data about this specific segment of the population. Mature labor force participants made up 28.5 percent of the national workforce in recent years. Analysis indicates that the mature labor force participation rate has increased in the past few decades. Some mature workers choose to keep working or delay full-time retirement because of financial and other considerations. The Texas population age 55 and older is projected to account for a greater percent of the workforce in the future. This may have a significant impact on workplaces and organizations. Understanding the implications for worker and skill shortages that could be associated with the impending retirement of mature workers, as well as the benefits of hiring and retaining mature labor force participants, will be critical for the state's employers.