



# EVALUATION 2016

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OUTCOMES OF THE TEXAS WORKFORCE SYSTEM

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

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



January 2017

Dear Fellow Texan:

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) is pleased to present the *Evaluation 2016* report on the Texas workforce system. Guided by *The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023*, the report was approved unanimously at the Council's December 9, 2016, meeting.

*Evaluation 2016* is the initial report for the system strategic plan period, providing a system perspective of the progress and achievement of partner agencies and other system stakeholders. State statutes require that the Council evaluate the workforce system and report annually to the Governor and the legislature. Statutory requirements addressed in the report include:

- ▶ system strategic plan implementation
- ▶ formal and less formal performance measures
- ▶ welfare to work initiatives
- ▶ adult education and literacy
- ▶ skill standards system

The focal point of this report is a balanced scorecard that presents outcome and 13-year trend data for system performance. Through the delivery of over 18 workforce education and training programs, state and local system partners served over 4.6 million individuals in the last reporting year. Of those participating in workforce system programs and services, almost 500,000 individuals completed a degree, certificate, or other measure of educational achievement. Over 1.5 million Texans who participated in a workforce program found a job, stayed in a job, and/or enrolled in further education or training.

With the first year of implementation complete, I am pleased to report that progress was made toward achieving the system goals and objectives contained in the eight-year plan. In the year ahead, the Council and its system partners will continue efforts to address cross-agency, high-priority issues related to employers, partner engagement, system alignment, and program improvement and integration. In addition, work will continue on a major system initiative to identify and track third-party, industry-based certifications in Texas.

I commend this report to you.

Sincerely,

Wes Jurey, Council Chair

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# Evaluation 2016

Accomplishments and Outcomes of the Texas Workforce System

Texas Workforce Investment Council  
December 2016



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## Introduction

Guided by *The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023*, system partners work collaboratively to ensure Texas has a workforce that achieves success in the dynamic global economy. The *Evaluation 2016* report to the Governor and legislature—the initial report for the strategic plan period—provides a system perspective of the progress and achievement of partner agencies and other system stakeholders. The focal point of the report is a balanced scorecard that presents outcome and trend data for system performance.

### 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 to promote the development of a highly skilled and well-educated workforce for Texas, and to assist 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, community-based organizations, and member agencies.

The Texas workforce system is composed of 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 23 programs and services focused on education, workforce education, and workforce training for adults, adults with barriers, and youth.

The Council collects and disseminates performance data and descriptive information on 18 workforce programs, as well as five academic education programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Information and data from these five programs assist stakeholders to understand the state’s efforts to prepare students to transition to further education or enter the workforce.

Approved by Governor Greg Abbott, *The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023* was developed by the Council and its system partners to align Texas workforce programs, services and initiatives. The plan elevates the system-level approach established under the previous two strategic plans and guides system partners in implementing workforce strategies that are designed to achieve specific system objectives. These outcomes are based on key issues identified throughout Texas, which

## The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016–FY 2023

### Vision

An innovative, world-class Texas workforce system ensures success in the dynamic global economy.

### Mission

The mission of the Texas workforce system is to position Texas as a global economic leader by growing and sustaining a competitive workforce, aligning programs with employer needs, integrating system services, and leveraging partnerships.

### System Partners

- ★ Governor’s Office of Economic Development and Tourism
- ★ Texas Association of Workforce Boards
- ★ Texas Department of Criminal Justice and its Windham School District
- ★ Texas Education Agency
- ★ Texas Health and Human Services Commission
- ★ Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- ★ Texas Juvenile Justice Department
- ★ Texas Veterans Commission
- ★ Texas Workforce Commission

The system strategic plan and other Council products are posted on the Council’s website at:

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

shape the goals, system objectives, action plans, and key performance indicators of the plan.

### 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 workforce goals and objectives. This is the initial evaluation report for the eight-year strategic plan period. Statutory requirements addressed in the report include:

- ▶ system strategic plan implementation
- ▶ formal and less formal performance measures
- ▶ welfare to work initiatives
- ▶ adult education and literacy
- ▶ skill standards system

Workforce system goals and objectives are the focus of this annual evaluation. Developed collaboratively by the Council and its system partners, many objectives require multi-partner collaboration or alignment of programs, initiatives, and outcomes. Four goal areas address cross-agency, high-priority issues related to employers, partner engagement, system alignment, and program improvement and integration.

By design, this report presents a system perspective of progress and achievement for partner agencies and other system stakeholders, and meets statutory requirements for reporting to the Governor and legislature. A balanced scorecard aligns with the plan's structure and supports reporting and performance assessment.

### Balanced Scorecard

Performance accountability remains a key element under the new system plan and the balanced scorecard supports Council and system partner efforts to continuously improve the workforce system's efficiency and effectiveness. The five components—illustrated in the graphic at right—present system and goal-specific performance outcomes attributable to the efforts and actions of partner agencies and their delivery agents.

Workforce System Performance Outcomes (formal measures): The first scorecard presents system performance outcomes for the four formal measures, which are essentially consistent across programs and were first approved in 2003. Thirteen-year performance trend data are presented, as well as system and partner agency aggregate data for the most recent 12-month program reporting period.

Implementation of System Goals (Goals 1–4, less formal measures): The plan's four goal areas include action plans that outline partner agencies' strategies, activities, and timelines to achieve the less formal measures associated with each system objective. Each goal area scorecard includes data for the relevant less formal measures—the key performance indicators that provide data on agencies' actions to accomplish the strategies outlined in the plan. Agency implementation highlights and additional data elements that help illustrate accomplishments are also presented.



## Key Performance Indicators

Two types of measures were included in the system strategic plan: formal and less formal. The measures meet the statutory requirement for the Council to conduct performance measurement by developing and maintaining a comprehensive system of data gathering and reporting. The formal and less formal measures are presented in the table below.

Formal and Less Formal Measures	
<b>Formal – Workforce System Performance Outcomes</b>	
Educational attainment	
Entered employment	
Employment retention	
Customers served	
<b>Less Formal – Goal Area 1: Focus on Employers</b>	
Rate of employer satisfaction	
Percentage of revised career and technical education programs of study reviewed by business and industry	
Type and number of third-party, industry-based certifications successfully completed by program participants	
Certification success rate: total successfully completed certification assessments divided by total attempted certification assessments	
<b>Less Formal – Goal Area 2: Engage in Partnerships</b>	
Percentage of consumers participating in integrated work-based learning activities	
Percentage of individuals co-enrolled in vocational rehabilitation and workforce programs	
Percentage of individuals co-enrolled in adult education and workforce programs	
Educational attainment rate of students successfully completing Accelerate Texas programs at community and technical colleges	
Entered employment rate of students successfully completing Accelerate Texas programs at community and technical colleges	
Rate of employer satisfaction	
<b>Less Formal – Goal Area 3: Align System Elements</b>	
Percentage of grade twelve secondary students who receive career and technical education dual credit, enroll in a two-year institution, and receive credit at the institution	
Career and technical education time to degree	
Percentage of students and youth with disabilities who participated in transition services and subsequently enrolled in postsecondary education and training	
Percentage of students and youth with disabilities who participated in transition services and subsequently entered competitive integrated employment	
Percentage of community and technical college students who receive program-of-study-based course credit who transfer to another two-year institution and have that credit recognized	
Percentage of career and technical education programs approved for dual credit	
Percentage of students successfully completing dual credit career and technical education courses	
<b>Less Formal – Goal Area 4: Improve and Integrate Programs</b>	
Percentage of students using technology for course content delivery	
Utilization of labor market information products	
Utilization of self-service options	
Utilization of online professional development courses	
Percentage of consumers served who have identified as veterans with disabilities	
Percentage of consumers served with intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, autism, and deaf-blindness who subsequently enter competitive integrated employment	
Percentage of child care providers who are certified as Texas Rising Star providers	
Entered employment rate of parents receiving child care	
Employment retention rate of parents receiving child care	

Formal Measures: Four measures approved in 2003 and 2009 were incorporated in the FY 2016–FY 2023 strategic plan: educational achievement, entered employment, employment retention, and customers served. These system

measures, which cross workforce programs and are outcome-oriented, establish responsibility for end outcomes or outputs that are central to the system's success.

Formal measures are included in agency legislative appropriation requests, and may or may not be specified as key measures<sup>1</sup>. A formal measure is required to be reported to the Council if it is determined to be a significant intended outcome for a workforce program. As required by statute, program-level data are submitted to the Council by six partner agencies for 23 programs focused on education, workforce, and workforce training services.

Less Formal Measures: This type of measure provides information and feedback that is essential in both the development and the implementation of the system strategic plan. Less formal measures may apply to some or all agency partners. Usually aligned with actions considered critical in determining implementation of a plan strategy, these measures demonstrate success of the plan over time.

Less formal measures are specified in the plan, with measures related to the adult education referral system to be developed at a later date. For some measures, data will become available in future years for different reasons, e.g.: (1) partner agencies need to build or modify data collection and reporting mechanisms, (2) measure definition and methodology will be beta-tested during a pilot period, or (3) measure(s) will be developed later in the plan period.

### **Data Treatment and Limitations**

Agency Negotiation: Data definitions and methodologies were first negotiated with agencies in 2004. To achieve a higher degree of consistency when aggregating data across programs, the Council requested that federal common definitions be adopted for the formal measures where relevant, and that similar program periods also be used. After renegotiation in 2009, definitions and program periods continued to differ slightly from those used during the previous strategic plan period.

In 2016, Council staff worked with partner agencies to review and update the formal measure definitions and methodologies, and to further align them with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirements. Both entered employment and employment retention are essentially consistent across partner agencies and, where required, the program periods for reporting were adjusted based on federal guidance. Also of note, during the 84<sup>th</sup> legislative session the Windham School District was granted the authority to award high school diplomas. Definitions and methodologies for all less formal measures were also negotiated with partner agencies.

Technical Document: Additional information is available by request, including a list of the 23 programs included in formal measures reporting; program-level data by formal measure, by agency; and less formal measures data by goal area, by agency.

Program-Level Data: Formal measures data are reported by program by each partner agency as required by statute. For the purpose of this evaluation report, these data are aggregated and reported as system-level data. Measures are presented as both an absolute number and as a percentage, and are from the most recent 12-month reporting period available. As noted above, program-level data are included in the technical document that is available by request.

Unduplicated Data: In most cases, data are unduplicated and conform to reporting definitions and methodologies agreed to by partner agencies. Where known, totals are adjusted to provide an unduplicated count. For example, educational achievement data may include duplicate data where a participant has outcomes for both education and training programs.

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<sup>1</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. [Legislative Budget Board, *Performance Reporting for New Key Measures* (December 2015)]

Data Revisions: Effective January 26, 2016, the GED Testing Service announced a change in the minimum passing score for high school equivalency from 150 to 145 on all subject area tests. As a result, individuals who earned scores of 145–149 on the computer-based test launched in January of 2014 became eligible for their Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency. The Texas Education Agency provided related information and data for the period January 1, 2014, through January 31, 2015. Since a common pass date of December 31, 2015, was used, data cannot be disaggregated for the Council’s 2014, 2015, and 2016 evaluation cycles. Therefore, the educational achievement trend data do not reflect the increase over those years. These revisions are included in the technical document that accompanies this report.

Rounding Convention: A rounding convention has been applied to the formal and less formal measures data displayed as a percentage: .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 wage records for measuring employment performance. For example, employment retention is based on participants’ status a full year following program completion. Several factors must be considered, including the time allowed for employers to submit data to the Texas Workforce Commission and the time necessary for agencies to process and report the data to the Council. This means that the performance data reported each year reflects the outcomes of people who exited services one or two years prior.
- ▶ *Coverage* – An unknown number of program exiters obtain jobs that are not covered by the Texas unemployment insurance system. For example, those who are self-employed or in other contract work, those who relocate and become employed in another state, and those who live in Texas but are employed across state lines are not reported. This lack of coverage results in lower levels of documented employment, reflected in lower outcomes when education and training programs are evaluated. More complete data sets may be available where the agency can use other databases—such as the Wage Record Interchange System or the Federal Employment Data Exchange System—to identify employment with employers who do not file unemployment insurance wages in Texas.

#### **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. By 2025, the Texas population is projected to exceed 30.7 million people, with almost 12 million workers being 25 to 54 years of age. The demographic composition is expected to continue to change, with Hispanic growing to the largest percentage of the population (43.55 percent) and the number of females slightly exceeding that of males.<sup>2</sup>

Growth in middle-skills jobs—those that require more than a high school degree but less than a four-year degree—continues to increase the demand by employers for workers with industry-based certifications. The Texas workforce employed in middle-skill occupations in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) fields is projected to increase by 24 percent to nearly 1.5 million workers in the next decade. This growth will include significant increases in healthcare, construction, and manufacturing fields.<sup>3</sup> In Texas, future workers will also be

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<sup>2</sup> Texas State Data Center, based on the 0.5 migration scenario (<http://demographics.texas.gov/>, September 2016).

<sup>3</sup> Texas Workforce Investment Council, *Defining Middle-Skill STEM Occupations in Texas* (December 2015).

needed in growth industries of computer systems design and related services, as well as service-related industries.<sup>4</sup>

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 eight-year plan period, issues directly related to the scope as outlined above are included in the annual evaluation report.

The Council also identifies and works to address issues related to the state's workforce system through other strategies and methods, including:

- ▶ *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 or to provide demographic profiles for population segments such as mature workers, people with disabilities, and veterans.
- ▶ *Stakeholder Roundtables or Surveys* – Conducted periodically to obtain feedback regarding system stakeholder needs and to assess workforce system usage and satisfaction levels.

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<sup>4</sup> Texas Workforce Commission LMCI Tracer, *Texas Fastest Growing Industries* ([www.tracer2.com/](http://www.tracer2.com/), September 2016).

## Balanced Scorecard

The balanced scorecard framework complements the system strategic plan's structure and supports reporting and performance assessment. By design, a balanced scorecard provides a framework for developing, implementing, and managing strategy by linking objectives, measures, and initiatives to the strategy. The structure of the FY 2016–FY 2023 system plan readily aligns with a balanced scorecard framework—based on four goal areas that address cross-agency, high-priority issues determined critical to achieving the plan's vision and mission.

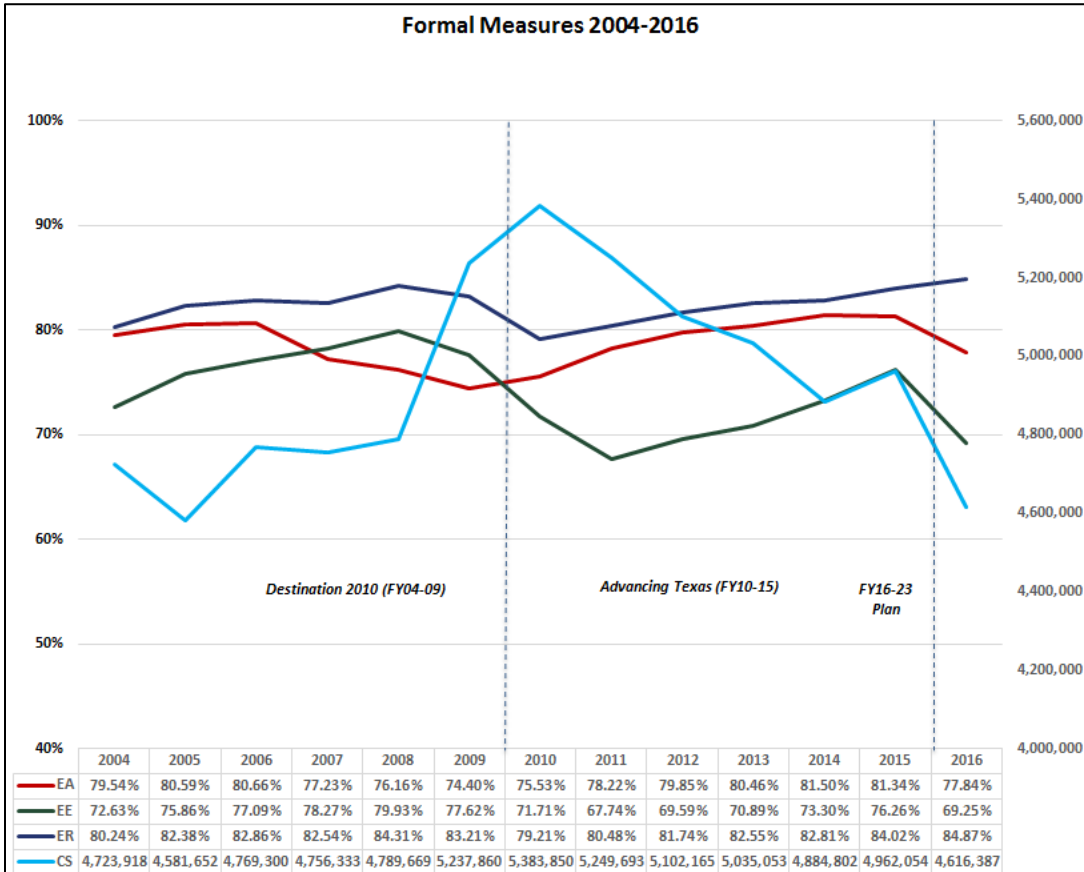
The Council believes the balanced scorecard supports both Council and system partner efforts to continuously improve the workforce system's efficiency and effectiveness. The components incorporate narrative and graphics to illustrate achievements by both the system and partner agencies, as reported that fiscal year (FY). This evaluation design also supports communication between the Council and its partner agencies and provides an assessment of progress and outcomes to internal and external customers, including the Governor, legislature, and other system stakeholders.

The balanced scorecard presents formal and less formal measures data reported to the Council by six partner agencies:

- ▶ Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) and its Windham School District
- ▶ Texas Education Agency (TEA)
- ▶ Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)
- ▶ Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD)
- ▶ Texas Veterans Commission (TVC)
- ▶ Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)

## Workforce System Performance Outcomes

Formal Measures 2004-2016



### Fiscal Year 2016 Outcomes

**497,090 (77.84 percent)** individuals completed a degree, certificate, or other measure of educational achievement

**871,910 (69.25 percent)** individuals entered employment and/or were enrolled in education or training after program exit

**645,905 (84.87 percent)** individuals retained employment and/or were enrolled in education or training after program exit

**4,616,387** individuals received services through the Texas workforce system

2016	System Partner	Educational Achievement (EA)	Entered Employment (EE)	Employment Retention (ER)	Customers Served (CS)
	Criminal Justice	1,398	n/a	n/a	3,437
	Education	455,979	103,423	n/a	2,847,491
	Higher Education	31,184	102,845	85,082	642,819
	Juvenile Justice	557	n/a	n/a	3,241
	Veterans	n/a	17,064	17,620	22,545
	Workforce	9,370	648,578	543,203	1,100,291
	<b>Total</b>	<b>497,090</b>	<b>871,910</b>	<b>645,905</b>	<b>4,616,387</b>
	<b>Percent</b>	<b>77.84%</b>	<b>69.25%</b>	<b>84.87%</b>	<b>n/a</b>



## Workforce System Performance Outcomes

To further align formal measures with Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act requirements, this year Council staff worked with partner agencies to review and update the formal measure definitions and methodologies. Both entered employment and employment retention are essentially consistent across partner agencies and, where required, the program periods for reporting were adjusted based on federal guidance. The new federal regulations significantly affected the reported outcomes of certain programs such as Adult Education – WIOA, Title II. Despite these changes, system trends remain consistent when considering funding levels and economic factors.

The recession and ensuing recovery were contributing factors to changes in the longitudinal trend lines over the 13-year period displayed for formal measures. 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 later for the employment-related measures due to delay in receiving and analyzing unemployment insurance wage records for measuring performance.

Minor changes occur across programs and over time. However, key changes that affect the trend lines include federal or state legislation and policy changes, and significant increases or decreases in federal or state funding levels—including funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (Public Law 111–5). Customers served, which is the most volatile trend line, clearly shows customer growth during the recession and a decline thereafter. During the recession, more Texans needed workforce programs and services, just as more students accessed higher education. Combined with the influx of federal recovery funding available through Texas' workforce system, a significant increase in demand for services is evident during the period 2009 to 2011.

The longitudinal trend lines for educational achievement, entered employment, and employment retention demonstrate comparatively 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 during this period. In 2012 and 2013, these data trends had not yet returned to their pre-recession highs. While there is no definitive causal information to which this movement can be attributed, it is likely that higher unemployment, business contraction, and significantly reduced hiring by employers during that period were contributing factors. Notably, employment retention posted a 13-year high of 84.87 percent this year, although entered employment declined to 69.25 percent.

While these employment measures were trending lower during the recession, educational achievement was trending higher before declining this year. 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.

### Data Notes

Most programs are designed to serve participants that meet specific eligibility criteria and have unique needs. Program objectives and desired outcomes vary, and approved definitions and methodologies are program-specific. Additionally, integrated service delivery strategies may result in duplication of customer counts across programs. Data subsets (duplicates) include Postsecondary Community and Technical College Corrections – Academic and Technical, which has been adjusted to provide unduplicated counts for educational achievement and customers served.

In October, TWC notified the Council that Apprenticeship Chapter 133 educational achievement data were not available and that prior year data (2004–2015) were invalid. The agency determined that the current dataset did not allow differentiation between participants completing a year in the program versus completing the program. TWC is making data collection improvements in order to report consistently with the approved definition and methodology. Program data have been removed from the educational achievement trend line.

## Focus on Employers

By accessing critical education and labor data sets, employers can better find and plan for skilled workers to meet their needs in both the immediate timeframe and the future. Through greater engagement with employers, education and training providers can better design career and technical education content and delivery options that are more aligned with industry needs. Providers can make adjustments in program content to benefit employers and students, as well as address both state and regional economic needs.

<i>What are the objectives?</i>	<i>How are system partners addressing them?</i>	<i>What was accomplished this year?</i>
Increase business and industry involvement.	<p>TVC is expanding outreach programs to employers to assist veterans in finding quality employment.</p> <p>TEA is involving business and industry in Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills review and programs of study.</p>	<p><b>81.97 percent</b> employer satisfaction rate</p> <p>In applicable years, TEA will report the number of revised career and technical education programs of study reviewed by business and industry.</p>
Expand licensure and industry certification.	<p>Five system partners are using third-party, industry-based certifications where relevant as an education or training outcome to connect graduate competencies to job skill requirements: TEA, THECB, TVC, TWC, and Windham.</p>	<p><b>105,558</b> third-party, industry-based certifications successfully completed by program participants:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ 58,760 (TEA)</li> <li>★ 20,760 (THECB)</li> <li>★ 7,506 (TWC), including 555 awarded to veterans</li> <li>★ 18,532 (Windham)</li> </ul> <p>Certification success rate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ <b>82.72 percent</b> (TEA)</li> <li>★ Windham is modifying data collection and reporting systems and will report this new measure in the future.</li> </ul>

## Focus on Employers: Implementation Highlights and Additional Data

Five partner agencies are increasing emphasis on licensure and third-party, industry-based certifications to meet the growing occupational demand of Texas employers and are actively engaging business and industry in the development and refinement of training programs. During the plan period, agencies will build or modify data collection and reporting mechanisms to support this critical effort. Examples of industry-based certifications reported this year by TEA, THECB, and Windham are presented in the table at right.

Certification Type (top two by agency)	Agency	Earned
Microsoft Office Specialist: PowerPoint	TEA	7,748
Microsoft Office Specialist: Word	TEA	7,383
Registered Nursing/Registered Nurse	THECB	4,558
EMT Paramedic	THECB	2,399
OSHA 500: Construction Safety Training	Windham	6,106
OSHA 501: Industry Safety Training	Windham	2,785

**TVC** works with state regulatory agencies to use the Texas Department of Licensing and Regulations primer to develop military service credit for occupational licensing, and to establish a process for service members and veterans to submit license or apprenticeship applications and obtain credit for verified military experience, training, or education. Veterans employer liaisons collaborate with veteran career advisors to match veterans' skill sets with employer needs. TVC utilizes a semi-annual employer satisfaction survey, employer panel discussions, and on-site outreach visits to assess employer satisfaction and to anticipate change needs.

**TWC** and the local workforce boards are expanding training strategies to increase completions of industry-based certifications that meet employer-defined needs, in part by streamlining new employment hiring and orientation. This effort will be informed by TWC's Industry-Recognized Skills Certification Initiative, a \$2.8 million initiative currently in progress. Local workforce boards and employers are identifying the top certifications needed for high-demand jobs in their local area. Boards may also contract with other entities to support new or expanded skills certifications centers.

Securing industry-recognized certifications is an essential strategy for helping job seekers find and keep meaningful employment post-release from correctional facilities. The **Windham School District** works closely with industry partners and has been recognized by the National Center for Construction Education and Research for its efforts in developing opportunities to build a well-trained workforce for industrial and heavy construction industries. Program expansion efforts include adding training in technical fields, such as fiber optic cabling and energy management system programming, and piloting self-paced training programs that utilize study guides and materials for selected certifications.

**TEA** and **THECB** are working on multiple initiatives related to career and technical education and programs of study. A program of study is a sequence of academic and career and technical education coursework designed to help students attain a postsecondary degree or industry-recognized credential. These efforts are critical to development of technical core curricula that prepare graduates for middle-skill careers and, where possible, lead to industry-based certifications that meet employer needs.

Secondary programs of study for career and technical education are based on the national model of 16 career clusters. All 16 clusters are fully implemented, reflecting all 79 career pathways and an additional 43 career pathways approved by **TEA**. At the postsecondary level, **THECB** is creating advisory committees based on the 16-cluster model and work is in progress for the Architecture and Construction and Health Science clusters.

In 2015, the State Board of Education completed review and revision of the career and technical education Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills, incorporating input from business and industry representatives. **TEA** collects industry-based certification information from school districts and open-enrollment charter schools, and is working with business and industry to identify the current certifications that are most meaningful.

## Engage in Partnerships

Through collaborative and transparent processes, workforce system partners focus on outcomes that improve the employability of all program participants—from across a wide spectrum of capabilities and experiences—to meet employer needs. The leveraging of partnerships to enhance system alignment and outcomes depends on trust, a culture of collaboration both within and external to the workforce system, deep working relationships, and technical capacity to communicate to share needs, data, and information. Partnerships can provide for common planning, intake, and reporting on outcomes, as well as ensure a “no wrong door” approach to the provision of workforce programs and services.

<i>What is the objective?</i>	<i>How are system partners addressing it?</i>	<i>What was accomplished this year?</i>
Expand partnerships with system partners and stakeholders to promote collaboration, joint planning, and enhanced participant outcomes.	TWC is working to improve rehabilitation employment outcomes by establishing additional partnerships with secondary and postsecondary entities, and with employers.	<b>0.99 percent</b> of vocational rehabilitation consumers participated in integrated, work-based learning activities
	TWC is creating greater access and effective services by promoting collaboration and regional planning.	<b>17.45 percent</b> of individuals in vocational rehabilitation programs were co-enrolled in workforce programs
	THECB and TWC are increasing access to, referral between, and outcomes of adult education programs and services.	<p><b>8.05 percent</b> of individuals in adult education programs were co-enrolled in workforce programs (TWC)</p> <p>Of students successfully completing a community and technical college Accelerate Texas program that integrated basic skills with career and technical pathways: (THECB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ <b>10.01 percent</b> received a Level 1 or Level 2 certificate or an associate’s degree</li> <li>★ <b>81.19 percent</b> entered employment and/or were enrolled in education or training</li> </ul>
	Windham is establishing and leveraging regional employer partnerships to benefit students pre- and post-release.	<b>94.44 percent</b> employer satisfaction rate

## Engage in Partnerships: Implementation Highlights and Additional Data

With the transfer of rehabilitation services to the agency<sup>5</sup>, **TWC** has administrative responsibility for all Workforce and Innovation Opportunity Act core programs and is working with local workforce boards, their contracted service providers, and community partners to fully integrate these programs. To improve rehabilitation employment outcomes for participants, TWC is developing and expanding partnerships with community partners. For example, ongoing partnerships between employers, vocational rehabilitation, and independent school districts expanded the Project SEARCH internship program. Five additional programs were scheduled to begin at the start of the 2016–2017 school year, with further expansions anticipated in the future.

**TWC** also collaborates with local workforce boards to develop and implement a coordinated, team-based approach to serving employers. This strategy includes other state and federal partners, such as the U.S. Department of Labor’s Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs and the Veterans Administration, who conduct ongoing outreach with federal contractors to increase awareness, recruitment, hiring, and retention of qualified individuals with disabilities, including veterans.

Adult education and literacy programs support partnerships that increase adult learners’ opportunities to transition to postsecondary credentials, including registered apprenticeship certification, industry-based certifications, and licenses. **THECB**’s Accelerate Texas program integrates basic skills education with career and technical training to help adults acquire skills and certificates in high-demand occupations. Since 2010, 28 community and technical colleges have been funded to design and implement programs and, to date, approximately 70 percent (6,000) of participants received a credential, including industry-based certifications, marketable skills achievement awards, and Level 1 certificates.<sup>6</sup>

**TWC** partnered with **THECB** to fund career pathway programs at selected Texas colleges to increase employment prospects for individuals that need both basic and technical skills to enter or advance in the workforce. Other TWC initiatives include integrating services to better align adult education with other core workforce programs, and capacity building and deployment of successful career pathway programs.

The adult education program maintains a searchable database of literacy providers. College advisors can access this online resource to determine if there is an adult education program available to help lower-skilled students successfully transition into college. During the eight-year system strategic plan period, **THECB** and **TWC** will develop and implement a student referral system between federally funded adult education and literacy providers and community and technical colleges to assist individuals in finding an adult education program responsive to their needs.

**TWC** is also building partnerships with employers to implement the use of technology and innovation to overcome barriers in meeting workforce needs. Steps are taken to ensure that public school, vocational service program, and community-based organization staff are trained and supported to assist all individuals with disabilities in achieving competitive integrated employment. The availability and accessibility of individualized training that is designed to prepare individuals with disabilities for their preferred employment is a key strategy in TWC’s efforts to address the needs of Texans with disabilities. To this end, individuals with disabilities are given the opportunity to understand and explore options for education and training, including postsecondary, graduate and postgraduate education, vocational or technical training, or other training, as pathways to employment.

The **Windham School District** works with employers to share information about career and technical programs and to obtain input on current tools, equipment, and curriculum content. Data collected through employer satisfaction surveys and at on-site job fairs also support program planning and management.

Accelerate Texas 2016	
Level 1 certificate	90
Level 2 certificate	9
Associate’s degree	13
TOTAL (10.01%)	112
Employed	500
Education/training	30
Employed and education/training	113
TOTAL (81.19%)	643

<sup>5</sup> Effective September 1, 2016, as required by Senate Bill 208 (84<sup>th</sup> Legislature).

<sup>6</sup> THECB, *Adult Learners and Non-Traditional Students* (June 21, 2016).

## Align System Elements

By improving transitions, aligning programs, and ensuring portability and transferability, Texas improves access and the ability of all participants to complete programs of study, earn credentials, transition to further education, and gain critical employability skills. Texas employers are better positioned to find and hire the employees they need through an enhanced education and training pipeline.

<i>What are the objectives?</i>	<i>How are system partners addressing them?</i>	<i>What was accomplished this year?</i>
Improve and enhance services, programs, and policies to facilitate effective and efficient transitions.	TEA and THECB are developing and implementing programs of study in community and technical colleges and aligning them with secondary programs of study.	<p><b>21 percent</b> of grade 12 secondary students who received career and technical education dual credit enrolled in and received credit at a two-year institution (TEA)</p> <p><b>Excess semester credit hours</b> for career and technical education time to degree (THECB)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ <b>26 hours</b> – Certificate Level 1</li> <li>★ <b>42 hours</b> – Certificate Level 2</li> <li>★ <b>32 hours</b> – Associate’s degree</li> </ul>
	TWC is enhancing transition services for students and youth with disabilities to competitive integrated employment or to postsecondary education and training followed by competitive integrated employment.	<p>Of students and youth with disabilities who participated in transition services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ <b>20.72 percent</b> subsequently enrolled in postsecondary education and training</li> <li>★ <b>61.23 percent</b> subsequently entered competitive integrated employment</li> </ul>
Develop and implement policies and processes to ensure portable and transferrable credit and credentials.	THECB is working to ensure consistent credit transfer based on programs of study and common technical core curriculum.	<b>67.56 percent</b> of community and technical college students who received program-of-study-based course credit transferred to another two-year institution and had that credit recognized
	TJJD is expanding career and technical education courses to provide additional opportunities for dual credit.	<p>Data collection for two measures began this year:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Percentage of career and technical education programs approved for dual credit</li> <li>★ Percentage of students successfully completing dual credit career and technical education courses</li> </ul>

## Align System Elements: Implementation Highlights and Additional Data

Rigorous and relevant career and technical education equips youth and adults for a wide range of high-wage, high-demand careers by preparing them to be college- and career-ready. Beginning as early as the ninth grade, programs of study lead to progressively higher levels of education and higher-skilled positions in specific industries or occupations.

**TEA** and **THECB**, in collaboration with **TWC**, are developing and implementing programs of study initiatives in community and technical colleges and aligning them with secondary programs of study. Representatives from business and industry, as well as secondary and postsecondary educators, provide input in the design of coherent sequences of academic, career, and technical courses and training. This sequencing is intended to smooth out the transfer between community and technical colleges and ultimately result in higher graduation or completion rates in areas where workers are needed in the current job market. **THECB**'s intent is to develop programs of study once and implement as needed without redesigning. This will accelerate the program development process at community and technical colleges, leading to more efficient and effective delivery of services.

**TEA** and **THECB** efforts not only support expansion of industry-based certification options, but also create linkages between secondary and postsecondary career pathways and dual credit. Dual credit enrollment at all Texas higher education institutions has risen significantly since record keeping began in 1999, reaching a high of 133,342 in 2015 (fall enrollment). However, students enrolled in technical semester credit-hour courses at Texas community and technical colleges typically represent less than 20 percent of total dual credit students.<sup>7</sup>

*Dual credit enrollment at all Texas higher education institutions reached a high of 133,342 in 2015 (fall enrollment).*

Texas' strategic plan for higher education, titled **60x30TX**, emphasizes all forms of postsecondary education, from undergraduate certificates to professional education.<sup>8</sup> Developed by **THECB**, this plan is focused on achieving the overarching goal that 60 percent of 25-34 year olds will have a postsecondary credential or degree by 2030, thereby contributing to a skilled workforce for Texas employers and enhancing the economic well-being of current and future workers. As a strategy of this plan, programs of study will help students better understand career pathways and education and employment options, and, in many cases, shorten their time to completion.

Under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, the transition from secondary education and/or postsecondary education to competitive integrated employment is the primary goal for youth with disabilities. These youth have a greater likelihood of exiting school with integrated jobs at competitive wages when their transition program ensures that work experiences are based on their interests and are in community-based, integrated employment settings with workplace supports provided as needed.<sup>9</sup> **TWC** is developing and expanding partnerships that improve rehabilitation employment outcomes for vocational rehabilitation youth participants—focusing on those that increase work-based learning opportunities such as work experience, internships, on-the-job training, apprenticeship, and job shadowing.

In partnership with Blinn College and Navarro College, **TJJD** is piloting dual credit welding programs at three facilities and assessing options for expanding to a fourth. Successful completers of the open-entry/-exit program earn both high school and college credit and an industry-based certification. The agency is evaluating the impact of modified facility and school schedules, in part to assess if youth have sufficient time to start and complete the program prior to release.

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<sup>7</sup> 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.

<sup>8</sup> THECB, *60x30TX – The Texas Higher Education Strategic Plan: 2015–2030*.

<sup>9</sup> Advisory Committee on Increasing Competitive Integrated Employment for Individuals with Disabilities, *Interim Report* (September 15, 2015). Competitive integrated employment: full- or part-time work with wages, interaction with other individuals, and opportunities for advancement comparable to those provided by the employer to other individuals without disabilities who are in similar positions.

## Improve and Integrate Programs

Accelerate employment and improve efficiencies through shared resources that can be leveraged to create new, relevant, and innovative opportunities that serve the needs of all stakeholders. By addressing high-priority programmatic needs through an integrated strategy, decision-making at the system, partner, and participant levels is improved and system service delivery is enhanced. The changing economic and educational landscapes provide opportunities to share relevant data through appropriate “push” mechanisms in an organized manner to key stakeholders who rely on information generated by system partners.

<i>What is the objective?</i>	<i>How are system partners addressing it?</i>	<i>What was accomplished this year?</i>
	TJJD and TWC are identifying and implementing new, relevant technology and service delivery options to expand program and service outcomes.	<p>When data are available, TJJD will report the percentage of students that used technology for course content delivery.</p> <p><b>1,231,830</b> utilized labor market information products (TWC)</p> <p><b>1,210,797</b> utilized the WorkInTexas self-service resource (TWC)</p> <p><b>2,466</b> adult education providers utilized online professional development courses (TWC)</p>
Employ enhanced or alternative program and service delivery methods.	<p>TWC is increasing competitive integrated employment outcomes by increasing awareness of vocational rehabilitation services and better serving underserved populations.</p> <p>TWC is enhancing the quality of and increasing access to quality child care to support parents in obtaining and retaining employment.</p>	<p><b>3.80 percent</b> of consumers served identified as veterans with disabilities</p> <p><b>55.46 percent</b> of consumers served with intellectual and developmental disabilities, mental health conditions, autism, and deaf-blindness subsequently entered competitive integrated employment</p> <p><b>11.91 percent</b> of child care providers were certified as Texas Rising Star providers</p> <p>Of parents receiving child care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ <b>69.06 percent</b> entered employment and/or were enrolled in education or training</li> <li>★ <b>84.67 percent</b> retained employment and/or were enrolled in education or training</li> </ul>



## Improve and Integrate Programs: Implementation Highlights and Additional Data

**TJJD** is expanding activities that provide youth with ways to positively focus their energies. Based on good behavior, juveniles currently use electronic tablets for activities that support education, including learning games and books. The agency plans to pilot the use of network-enabled laptops for instructional purposes, taking into consideration the use of a secure network in a correctional environment. The pilot program will be assessed for potential expansion to other TJJD facilities based on staff and funding availability.

**TWC** provides online services for workforce partners, employers, and customers including the statewide job matching resource, WorkInTexas, and professional development for child care and adult education providers. The agency's Labor Market and Career Information department offers web-based tools designed to help students, counselors, teachers, workforce planners, and economic development professionals to access and use information for education and career decision-making and strategic labor market planning. In September, TWC launched Texas Career Check, replacing Texas CARES Online. The new interactive site allows users to compare schools and access information on occupations, wages, and future job projections. FY 2017 enhancements will include an interest profiler and information on high school endorsements—which are the result of the successful completion of a series of related courses that provides in-depth knowledge of a subject area and are noted on graduates' transcript or academic achievement record.

TWC Labor Market Information Tool Usage (top three)	No. of Sessions
Reality Check Budget Calculator	596,980
Texas CARES Online (education and career exploration)	428,620
TRACER 2 (Texas labor market statistics)	92,949

Pending approval of the agency's Legislative Appropriations Request for FYs 2018 and 2019, TWC plans to update TRACER 2, a labor market statistics website, to improve navigation and to replace WorkInTexas. After evaluating WorkInTexas and other similar products, an employer task group recommended purchasing a vendor solution that could be customized for the unique needs of Texas job seekers, employers, state agencies, and staff. This option would maintain the value of the existing brand and improve job matching to better meet the hiring and job search needs of employers and job seekers. Job seekers would have the ability to use a resume builder, retain multiple versions, and upload resumes.

**TWC** is partnering with the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities, local workforce boards, and service providers on the Texas HireAbility campaign to raise awareness about the benefits of hiring people with disabilities. TWC will promote events to help employers learn more about recruiting, hiring and retaining employees with disabilities. Job and hiring fairs are planned to connect Texas employers with job seekers with disabilities, and to provide opportunities for employers to receive resumes and applications and conduct onsite or post-event interviews.

TWC Rehabilitation Services Customers	Number Employed	Rate
Intellectual and development disabilities	3,913	59.73%
Mental health conditions	3,409	50.92%
Autism	446	61.86%
Deaf-blindness	48	38.10%
TOTAL	7,816	55.46%

**TWC** also provides priority services to veterans who are transitioning to civilian life and work. Since 2011, the College Credit for Heroes initiative has helped eligible individuals to translate military service skills into college credit and credentials. Other ongoing activities include the annual Red, White and You! statewide hiring fairs and peer support through the Texas Veterans Leadership Program for veterans of Iraq and Afghanistan.

Families receiving child care assistance are more likely to be employed and to have more stable employment. Eligible parents must be employed, attending school or participating in job training to receive this **TWC** support service. TWC works to increase the number of providers certified as Texas Rising Star for exceeding the state's minimum child care licensing standards in areas such as staff qualifications. In partnership with **TEA**, TWC supports free online training for certified providers through CLI Engage—developed by the Children's Learning Institute at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston—and will report data when available.

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## Strategic Pillars

To achieve the vision of an innovative, world-class Texas workforce system, the Council identified three core competencies, or imperatives, that must be strengthened across the system: customer service and satisfaction, data-driven program improvement, and continuous improvement and innovation. These three imperatives serve as the foundational pillars upon which the system's capacity to identify and respond to changing market conditions and the needs of all system customers are enhanced. Examples of related system and partner agency initiatives are outlined below.

### Industry-Based Certifications System Initiative

Following extensive research on middle-skill occupations and industry-based STEM certifications, in February 2016, the Council endorsed a project management approach for strategic system initiatives. It is structured around six phases in the life cycle of an initiative, including research, initiate and launch, proof of concept, plan, execute and monitor, and institutionalize the innovation and learning developed through the process. This approach provides the Council with direct oversight in the planning and management of each phase of any system initiative and the flexibility to introduce new initiatives or adapt, merge, and scale promising practices into system initiatives over the strategic plan period.

The Council later approved the project scope and primary objectives for a system initiative to identify and track third-party, industry-based certifications in Texas and charged a task group to lead the development and execution of the project work plan. With two distinct project cycles, the initiative addresses all three strategic pillars. It is directly aligned to the employer-related strategy to use industry-based certification as an education or training outcome to connect graduate competencies to job skill requirements in order to expand licensure and industry certification in the state.

The initiative focuses on two issues: the changing demand for middle-skill workers and the increasing demand for workers with industry-based certifications. Council research has shown that workers with STEM skills at all levels of educational attainment experience stronger employment outcomes and higher lifetime earnings.<sup>10</sup> The work is further supported by Council research reports that define third-party, industry-based certifications; define and identify middle-skill STEM occupations; and link those occupations with associated certifications.<sup>11</sup> An initial list of industry-based certifications for middle-skill STEM occupations in Texas has been compiled, based on the definition in the research.

The task group includes representatives from employers, external stakeholders, and partner agencies. For the first cycle of the project, the task group is designing a replicable process to analyze and reduce the list of approximately 1,500 industry-based certifications that support middle-skill STEM occupations in Texas. Task group members conducted an internal assessment of each represented agency and organization to document activity related to industry-based certification. Findings confirmed that the majority of the work underway is associated but not directly aligned with certification, with the exception of TJJD and the Windham School District. These agencies align programs with industry-based certifications and collect data on student progress.

The resulting list of certifications will serve as a resource for system partners in the development, review, and enhancement of education and training programs that align with regional and state occupational demand. In cycle two, a second task group will focus on developing a system to capture the types and numbers of third-party, industry-based certifications and licenses across state workforce education and training programs. In time, the workforce system will ideally be able to provide data on third-party, industry-based certifications that support

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<sup>10</sup> Texas Workforce Investment Council, "STEM as a Workforce Advantage," *Research to Support Strategic Planning* (June 2014).

<sup>11</sup> Texas Workforce Investment Council, *Tracking Industry-Based Certifications* (June 2015), *Defining Middle-Skill STEM Occupations in Texas* (December 2015), and *Identifying Industry-Based Certifications for Middle-Skill STEM Occupations in Texas* (February 2016).

employment and increased wages, and potentially link individuals with certifications to the state labor exchange and labor market information systems.

### **Innovative Agency Work**

Partner agencies are working independently and in collaboration to build organizational competence in each of the three strategic pillars.

TVC: To increase employer outreach and partnerships, TVC staff conduct on-site visits and participate in employer organizations such as local chambers of commerce and other professional business organizations. Best practices are shared with state, regional, and local staff, as well as state and federal agencies and veteran employment service providers nationwide.

The agency utilizes TWC's labor market information and tools, and also receives regular performance reports from TWC. Employer input and surveys complement labor market and program data and are used to assess satisfaction, evaluate trends, forecast staffing needs, and identify opportunities to improve services for veterans and employers.

TWC: At any entry point, workforce system customers should be able to access a variety of programs and services. TWC's "no closed door" culture helps ensure timely and appropriate referrals and successful outcomes for all customers, including those with disabilities that may be a barrier to employment. Vocational rehabilitation programs for individuals with visual impairments or other disabilities transferred from the Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services to TWC. Staff from both agencies collaborated to plan and execute a smooth transition so program participants did not experience a disruption in services. Pilot programs are underway to help determine the best way to physically integrate local offices and coordinate services.

TWC supports TVC's performance reporting and also assisted with the Council's efforts to further align formal measures across all workforce programs. Agency staff review performance reports and communicate with system partners to provide technical assistance and obtain information on best practices to share with other partners. TWC seeks to identify factors influencing performance in order to determine whether the results achieved were reasonable, to predict future performance levels, and to identify actions needed to more effectively serve specific customer populations. Such efforts support continuous improvement and set the foundation for developing an effective means to measure return on investment.

Windham: Windham staff engage industry employers to demonstrate the value of training programs and build partnerships by touring job sites and also inviting employers to visit career and technical education classes. Employers are able to see the trade skills taught, meet with teachers and students, and offer suggestions for training improvements. These activities often result in agreements to work with the Windham School District and TDCJ to hire released offenders.

Employer survey data are used to assess satisfaction with the job knowledge and skills of program participants. Survey data and data collected from local workforce board and industry representatives help in evaluating training programs for alignment with current employer demand and suitability for ex-offenders. Data may be used to determine needed program modifications and to plan program and management initiatives.

## Texas Skill Standards System

Preparing workers with the skills and knowledge required for jobs in today's economy is a major goal of the Texas workforce system. In particular, employers have been struggling to fill middle-skill occupations, especially those requiring STEM skills. Closing the skills gap and hiring qualified employees is one of the key contributors to the success of any organization. But before workers can be prepared with targeted education and training for any job, both the work content and the skills and knowledge needed to perform the work must be identified. Such job specifications and worker characteristics are sometimes called competency profiles or skill standards. Facilitating industry to develop skill standards is one of the main functions of the Texas skill standards system, which is legislatively required to encompass middle-skill occupations. Skill standards are a tool for industry to communicate its occupational requirements to education and training providers.

### History

In 1995, the 74<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature established the Texas Skill Standards Board (TSSB) to develop a statewide system of industry-defined and industry-recognized skill standards. TSSB's role was to facilitate industry to: define the content of major, skilled, high-demand, high-wage sub-baccalaureate (or middle-skill) occupations; and identify the knowledge, skills and proficiency levels required by workers to perform the jobs. TSSB was also charged to:

- ▶ recognize standards that meet TSSB-established validity and reliability criteria,
- ▶ promote the voluntary system to employers,
- ▶ assist education and training providers to use the standards in their workforce programs, and
- ▶ facilitate the portability of skills by recognizing standards and credentials from other states and nations.

Over the next 21 years, TSSB recognized skill standards that met its validity and reliability criteria, whether those standards were developed within the state or endorsed by a national or state industry group or government body. Currently, skill standards for 44 occupations are posted in the public domain on the Texas skill standards website. A labor market information model was developed to identify those occupations that met the legislative criteria for the skill standards system but also did not conflict with existing industry-based certifications. The model identified occupations for standards development, mostly for STEM-related technician occupations, many of them emerging and evolving, including: fuel cell system technician, nanotechnology technician, biomanufacturing, digital forensics technician, geographic information systems technician, photonics technician, web development and administration, and manufacturing production and logistics technicians.

In collaboration with its workforce system partner, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, which provided incentive grant funding, TSSB developed an initiative to recognize community and technical college programs that incorporated skill standards into their curriculum. This initiative also requires colleges to teach and assess students on the standards.

### Transfer under Sunset Legislation

In 2015, during the 84<sup>th</sup> Texas legislative session, the Council underwent Sunset review in accordance with Texas Government Code, Chapter 325 (Texas Sunset Act). The Sunset Advisory Commission noted the following in its final report. TSSB had accomplished most of its key tasks. TSSB's remaining duties could easily and more efficiently be assumed by the Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council), encompassed within its broader directive to promote the development of a well-educated and highly skilled workforce. The commission concluded that this consolidation would effectively streamline the administration of related workforce development functions under a single entity. Thus, it recommended that TSSB be abolished and its functions be fully integrated into the Council by the end of FY 2015.

## FY 2016 Progress

On September 1, 2015, House Bill 1606 (84<sup>th</sup> Legislature) transferred the statutory functions of TSSB to the Council, and charged it with developing and maintaining the skill standards system. To facilitate the transfer of TSSB's duties and functions, the Council took several actions in FY 2016. First, a set of policy documents to govern the Texas skill standards system, adopted by TSSB to meet its statutory charges, were revised. The first policy document, *Guidelines for the Development, Recognition, and Usage of Skill Standards*, provides guidance and requirements for industry groups interested in developing skill standards for recognition. The second policy document, *Guidelines for Texas Skill Standards Based Program Recognition*, provides guidance and requirements for community and technical colleges that want to use skill standards in their workforce education programs. The Council approved both sets of guidelines and also recognized all the skill standards previously recognized by TSSB.

The Council's guidelines for program recognition specify the policy to recognize community and technical college workforce education programs that have skill standards competencies integrated into the curriculum. The intent of program recognition is to indicate to employers that a technical program is teaching the competencies, skills, and knowledge as defined by industry in the skill standards. All community and technical colleges requesting program recognition must meet specific criteria to be considered for approval. Recognition for all approved programs must be renewed every three years.

To renew its program recognition, a college must have developed and be using assessments to measure students' mastery of all the skill standards' competencies and must submit sample assessments from three different courses. At the end of the second and subsequent three-year periods, a college may be eligible to submit an abbreviated renewal application. That application consists of a statement of assurances attesting that the college's assessments evaluate student mastery of the skill standards and that the courses integrated with key activities have not changed since the last renewal. In FY 2016, four colleges initially renewed the recognition for six programs, and six colleges subsequently renewed the recognition for eight programs. As of the end of FY 2016, there were 54 recognized programs at 29 community and technical colleges in Texas.

Another skill standards system mandate is to recognize standards that meet the Council's validity and reliability criteria. In April 2016, Leo Reddy, Chairman and CEO of the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC) requested that the Council recognize updated skill standards for Manufacturing Production and Manufacturing Logistics. The standards were previously recognized by TSSB in 2011 and 2012, respectively. The standards are the basis for MSSC's industry-recognized, nationally portable Certified Logistics Technician and Certified Production Technician credentials, and its related system of training and assessments. The credentials are also part of the Skills Certification System endorsed by the National Association of Manufacturers, which includes many Texas companies.

According to the Council's guidelines for development, among the groups that may submit standards for Council recognition is a "national industry group that is recognized by its constituent industry/business base." MSSC is an industry-led training, assessment, and certification entity that focuses on the core skills and knowledge needed by the nation's front-line production and material handling workers. As such, MSSC falls within the eligible category.

In addition, the guidelines specify that skill standards submitted by an industry or stakeholder group must provide evidence of a rigorous development and validation process. When originally published in 2001, the MSSC skill standards underwent a national development process that included the collaboration of 234 leading corporations and trade associations, 378 career and technical education schools, and the leading industrial unions. The standards were then validated nationwide by an additional 500 companies and 4,000 front-line workers. Subsequently, MSSC has facilitated an annual review of the standards to ensure that they are updated to current industry practices and new technology. In 2015, the standards were reviewed by national expert panels for logistics and manufacturing production, which included subject matter experts representing all members of the logistics industry and all sectors of manufacturing, educators, and a broad cross-section of national and international companies.

The Council recognized the 2015 Manufacturing Logistics and Manufacturing Production skill standards, which met the recognition criteria and documentation requirements as established in the guidelines for development, and they are posted on the Texas skill standards website in the public domain. This availability enables education and training providers to teach the standards in their programs, thereby preparing graduates with the skills and knowledge required to earn the MSSC-based technician certifications.

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## Welfare to Work Data

Previous iterations of the evaluation report for workforce system performance included welfare to work data reported by program. Programs in the Adults with Barriers category met 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 addressed the Council's mandate to report on work development programs that focus on welfare to work initiatives.

For the current system strategic plan, relevant program data are incorporated in the aggregated Formal performance measures of entered employment, employment retention, and customers served. Additional agency program data are provided below:

### Texas Health and Human Services Commission:

1. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and State Program cases and recipients for fiscal year 2016 (listed separately by month).

TANF CASES				TANF RECIPIENTS			
Benefit Month	Basic	State Program	Total	Benefit Month	Basic	State Program	Total
Sep-15	26,865	719	27,584	Sep-15	64,712	2,582	67,294
Oct-15	27,047	717	27,764	Oct-15	65,451	2,615	68,066
Nov-15	26,964	769	27,733	Nov-15	65,223	2,815	68,038
Dec-15	25,929	729	26,658	Dec-15	62,648	2,638	65,286
Jan-16	25,451	706	26,157	Jan-16	61,267	2,550	63,817
Feb-16	24,960	687	25,647	Feb-16	59,868	2,449	62,317
Mar-16	23,800	630	24,430	Mar-16	56,916	2,242	59,158
Apr-16	23,333	605	23,938	Apr-16	55,820	2,140	57,961
May-16	23,657	636	24,293	May-16	56,799	2,270	59,069
Jun-16	23,311	654	23,966	Jun-16	56,185	2,374	58,559
Jul-16	24,104	655	24,758	Jul-16	58,391	2,366	60,757
Aug-16	24,980	738	25,718	Aug-16	61,200	2,670	63,870
Average	25,033	687	25,720	Average	60,373	2,476	62,849

2. For August 2016, or the latest 12 months for which data are available, total number of TANF and State Program cases (listed separately by month) new to TANF.

New TANF Cases by Program Type							
Month <sup>1</sup>	Basic	State Program	Total	Month <sup>1</sup>	Basic	State Program	Total
Sep-15	2,955	121	3,076	Mar-16	1,803	75	1,878
Oct-15	3,116	150	3,266	Apr-16	2,092	103	2,195
Nov-15	2,543	125	2,668	May-16	2,168	113	2,281
Dec-15	2,397	112	2,509	Jun-16	2,244	115	2,359

<sup>1</sup> These are cases that were not actively receiving TANF as of August 2015. The month is the indication of the first month they appeared on the TANF rolls.

New TANF Cases by Program Type							
Month <sup>1</sup>	Basic	State Program	Total	Month <sup>1</sup>	Basic	State Program	Total
Jan-16	2,261	106	2,367	Jul-16	2,692	118	2,810
Feb-16	1,917	79	1,996	Aug-16	2,778	164	2,942
				Total	28,966	1,381	30,347

3. Adult TANF Recidivism Rate – For August 2015 to July 2016.

This data consists of the monthly average of TANF clients who had more than one spell on TANF in the previous five years. "More than one spell" is defined as a break in assistance of more than one month.

Clients on TANF	FY 2016	Monthly Avg.
in FY 2016	#	%
No breaks	5,780	68.99%
More than one spell	2,598	31.01%
Totals	8,377	100.00%

	Aug-15	Sep-15	Oct-15	Nov-15	Dec-15	Jan-16
No breaks	6,163	6,156	6,329	6,348	6,095	5,973
More than one spell	2,793	2,808	2,846	2,894	2,722	2,596
Totals	8,956	8,964	9,175	9,242	8,817	8,569

No breaks	68.81%	68.67%	68.98%	68.69%	69.13%	69.70%
More than one spell	31.19%	31.33%	31.02%	31.31%	30.87%	30.30%
Totals	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

	Feb-16	Mar-16	Apr-16	May-16	Jun-16	Jul-16
No breaks	5,697	5,206	5,018	5,303	5,340	5,728
More than one spell	2,474	2,329	2,321	2,395	2,432	2,563
Totals	8,171	7,535	7,339	7,698	7,772	8,291

No breaks	69.72%	69.09%	68.37%	68.89%	68.71%	69.09%
More than one spell	30.28%	30.91%	31.63%	31.11%	31.29%	30.91%
Totals	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

4. Number of TANF and State Program Applications: Processed and Approved for FY 2016.

TANF APPLICATIONS APPROVED				TANF APPLICATIONS PROCESSED			
Benefit Month	Basic	State Program	Total	Benefit Month	Basic	State Program	Total
Sep-15	3,985	169	4,154	Sep-15	30,977	2,185	33,162
Oct-15	3,882	181	4,063	Oct-15	28,338	2,012	30,350
Nov-15	4,121	204	4,325	Nov-15	30,346	2,148	32,494
Dec-15	3,655	169	3,824	Dec-15	27,042	1,872	28,914

TANF APPLICATIONS APPROVED				TANF APPLICATIONS PROCESSED			
Benefit Month	Basic	State Program	Total	Benefit Month	Basic	State Program	Total
Jan-16	2,785	116	2,901	Jan-16	22,190	1,519	23,709
Feb-16	2,940	135	3,075	Feb-16	26,247	1,984	28,231
Mar-16	2,585	107	2,692	Mar-16	23,972	1,597	25,569
Apr-16	2,554	115	2,669	Apr-16	22,057	1,591	23,648
May-16	3,410	155	3,565	May-16	28,777	2,071	30,848
Jun-16	2,855	135	2,990	Jun-16	24,967	1,783	26,750
Jul-16	2,996	123	3,119	Jul-16	25,346	1,823	27,169
Aug-16	4,534	226	4,760	Aug-16	36,635	2,588	39,223
Average	3,359	153	3,511	Average	27,241	1,931	29,172

### Texas Workforce Commission:

1. TANF Choices Population Data – State average hourly wage for all participants entering employment for fiscal year (FY) 2016. \$9.78
2. Adult education for TANF recipients – funding for FY 2016, including: Federal Section 231 funds, state general revenue (GR) funds, TANF funds, and state GR (TANF Maintenance of Effort) funds. \$5.8 million
3. Adult education for TANF recipients – for FY 2016, the number of customers served. 9,090
4. Adult education for TANF recipients – for FY 2016, the total number of contact hours. 773,837.53
5. Adult education for TANF recipients – for FY 2016, the number of customers served who took a progress assessment and completed at least one level. 4,756
6. Adult education for TANF recipients – for FY 2016, the number of customers served who completed at least one level and continued to a higher level. 4,508
7. Adult education for TANF recipients – for FY 2016, the credential achievement rate for earning a high school equivalency certificate. Time period reported: July 2014-June 2015 193/422 = 45.73%
8. Self-Sufficiency Fund – the number of participating employers in FY 2016. Time period reported: September 1, 2015-August 31, 2016 54

For TWC data, unless otherwise noted, time period reported is State FY 2016: July 2015-June 2016.

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# Texas Workforce Investment Council

## **System Partners**

Economic Development and Tourism  
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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Labor  
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Education  
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Education  
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Texas Education Agency  
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
Texas Health and Human Services Commission  
Texas Workforce Commission  
Office of the Governor, Economic Development  
and Tourism

