



# SITAC Quarterly Report

System Integration Technical Advisory Committee  
Texas Workforce Investment Council  
Quarter Ending December 2014

## System Integration Technical Advisory Committee

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

### Next SITAC Meeting

Thursday, June 4, 2015 – 1:00 p.m.  
Texas Workforce Investment Council  
1100 San Jacinto, Room 1.109

The current plan, *Advancing Texas: Strategic Plan for the Texas Workforce System (FY2010-FY2015)* (*Advancing Texas*) was first approved by the Governor on October 23, 2009. It

outlines 14 long term objectives, grouped by the three key performance areas that address the critical business issues identified during a yearlong collaborative planning process. An update to the plan, incorporating input from all partner agencies, was approved by the Council in March 2012, and by the Governor on May 24, 2012.

SITAC members typically meet quarterly to provide status reports on action plans for which their organization is solely or jointly responsible. The committee is authorized to create and deploy cross-agency teams in order to devise and execute collaborative solutions to issues associated with the system strategic plan's objectives. Now in the final year of *Advancing Texas*' implementation, SITAC's focus has changed. The committee is assisting the Council with development of the next workforce system strategic plan.

## Year 5 Implementation Highlights

*Advancing Texas*' action plans outline the steps to be taken to accomplish the long term objectives. They are implemented by system partners as directed and monitored by SITAC. Fiscal year (FY) 2014 highlights included:

**English Language Learner (ELL) Employment** – One plan objective required the implementation of adult education pilot projects designed to increase employment for ELLs. Since 2010, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) have partnered with 21 colleges to establish and support the Accelerate TEXAS (Accelerate TX, previously ABE-Innovation Grant) initiative, designed to engage community and technical colleges to implement integrated pathways for advancing lower-skilled adult learners into high-demand occupations.

In Accelerate TX programs, participants take career and technical training courses concurrently with adult education courses that support the workforce training content. Successful students earn both a GED and a work training certificate that is of value in their regional labor market and that leads to further credentials along a specified career path or program of study.

Eight colleges participated in the ELL pilot that ran through August 2013. The Alamo Colleges, Amarillo Community College, and South Texas College built sustainable Accelerate TX models on their college campuses and within their districts. In FY 2013, they were identified as mentor colleges and will continue to support newly funded colleges in the design and implementation of integrated programs through FY 2015.

The 2015–2017 Accelerate TX request for applications reflects the intent of the employment-focused action plan and pilot model, requiring that colleges offering an integrated pathway make 75 percent of their workforce training certificates available as level 1 certificates or Marketable Skills Achievement awards. Of the credentials, 25 percent can be local, portable certificates that require passing an industry, state, or national examination to work in that field.

**Dual Credit** – House Bill 5 (83<sup>rd</sup> Legislature) required changes to public school accountability, including assessment and graduation requirements, that directly

### Message from the Chair

SITAC members continue to be actively engaged in the Council's work to develop Texas' new workforce system strategic plan. Although we will not hold a committee meeting in March, members have been invited by Council Chair Wes Jurey to participate in the Council's next strategic planning session, scheduled for March 6. As the Council committee that oversees implementation of the system strategic plan, SITAC members offer a valuable operational perspective that must be considered during development of the strategic plan.

On behalf of the Council, my thanks go to our system partners for their assistance in providing information for the Council's *Evaluation 2014* report. 2015 will be a busy and exciting year as we finalize implementation of *Advancing Texas*. New committee members will be welcomed as we continue to work together to plan for the future and launch the new system strategic plan.

**Mark Dunn**

*Advancing Texas* and implementation updates available at:  
[http://gov.texas.gov/twic/workforce\\_system](http://gov.texas.gov/twic/workforce_system)

affect several action plans. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the THECB are working on an objective that focuses on improving the processes for transferring dual credit from high schools to postsecondary institutions. Actions of note:

- ★ The TEA continues to deploy Early College High Schools. As of August 2014 there were 110, including seven Texas Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math academies.
- ★ The THECB works with postsecondary faculty to ensure learning outcomes are consistent across academic courses taught statewide. This goal has been accomplished for 77 percent of the hours taken by students in undergraduate and two-year academic disciplines.

**Local Board Plan Alignment** – Both state and federal law require the Council to review local plans and modifications and make recommendations to the Governor for approval. New local plans were approved in 2013, and the boards were not required to submit plans or modifications in 2014.

In FY 2014, in preparation to develop a new workforce system strategic plan, the Council focused on better understanding issues related to partners' programs and services. Information was gathered at TWC-sponsored regional strategic meetings where each board presented local challenges and opportunities, including ideas for moving the system forward over the next five years. The boards also held panel discussions on industry priorities and a key issue each board is working on locally (e.g., independent school district and career technical education linkages, adult education).

Following a request from the local board SITAC representative, the boards provided the Council with information on critical issues they had identified. A consolidated list of strategic issues/opportunities was developed from information obtained through this process and/or presented at the regional meetings. The Council director attended a TAWB meeting to provide an update on the Council's planning activities and to finalize input on issues for consideration in the new system strategic plan.

**Employer Needs/Satisfaction and Use of Employment Data for Program Improvement** – Three agencies continued to collect employer satisfaction data, based on work that began under the previous system strategic plan and continued under *Advancing Texas*. In 2014, the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) completed two employer surveys as part of the ongoing efforts to increase employer outreach and partnerships. Performance data provided to the TVC monthly by the TWC support trend analyses that are used to evaluate service delivery models and to adjust them as appropriate. Data review and analysis were used to (1) forecast staffing needs; (2) prepare the federal Jobs for Veterans State Grant application; (3) prepare for career fairs and hiring events; and (4) facilitate communication of best practices to state, regional, and local staff, and to stakeholders such as the Department of Labor.

### System Strategic Plan Development

The Council is required by statute to include long-range strategies developed by the Council and its partner agencies to facilitate the efficient and integrated delivery of workforce programs and services in the state workforce system strategic plan (Texas Government Code, Section 2308.104). The current system strategic plan, *Advancing Texas*, is in the final year of a six-year implementation period.

In September 2014, the Council formally launched the development process for the next workforce system strategic plan. The new plan will be considered by the Council in September 2015, and subsequently submitted to Governor Greg Abbott for approval. It will include actions to guide the accomplishment of the strategies and objectives developed by the Council in collaboration with its system partners.

As the Council committee that oversees implementation of the system strategic plan, SITAC has been an active planning participant, with multiple opportunities to provide information and feedback in support of the Council's plan-development process. At 2014 SITAC planning sessions, strategic priorities identified by system partners were presented by committee members. Through facilitated discussions, SITAC explored potential strategies for addressing each priority, possible constraints, and opportunities for collaboration. Members then reviewed the priorities from a system-level perspective and prepared a rank-ordered list for consideration during development of the plan.

SITAC has also been invited to participate in joint planning sessions with the Council. In September 2014, members assisted the Council with the development of proposed mission and vision statements, and later had the opportunity to comment after those plan elements were revised by the Executive Committee.

For the March 2015 joint planning session, agency partners have been asked to present their agency's proposed actions for accomplishing strategies that support the system objectives that have been identified for the new workforce system strategic plan. Information requested by Council Chair Wes Jurey includes (1) the most significant three to five action steps to be implemented, (2) completion dates, and (3) a performance measure that would accurately measure the outcome of achieving the strategy's contribution to the system objective.

<i>SITAC Members</i>
<i>Chair</i> – Mark Dunn, Executive Committee Member, Texas Workforce Investment Council
<i>Economic Development and Tourism Division</i> – Keith Graf, Director, Office of Aerospace, Aviation, and Defense
<i>Texas Association of Workforce Boards</i> – David K. Setzer, Executive Director, Workforce Solutions for North Central Texas
<i>Texas Department of Criminal Justice/Windham School District</i> – Dr. Clint Carpenter, Superintendent
<i>Texas Education Agency</i> – Appointment pending
<i>Texas Health and Human Services Commission</i> – Appointment pending
<i>Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board</i> – Dr. Garry Tomerlin, Deputy Assistant Commissioner for Workforce
<i>Texas Juvenile Justice Department</i> – Amy Lopez, Senior Director of Education Services
<i>Texas Veterans Commission</i> – Stan Kurtz, Operations Manager, Veterans Employment Services
<i>Texas Workforce Commission</i> – Reagan Miller, Director, Workforce Development Division