

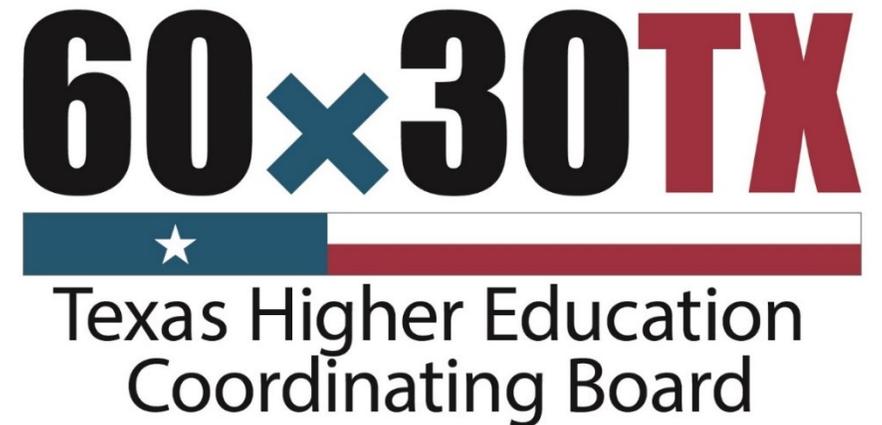
# Hurricane Harvey and Texas Higher Education

**Raymund Paredes, Ph.D.**

Commissioner of Higher Education

House Committee on Higher Education

September 19, 2018



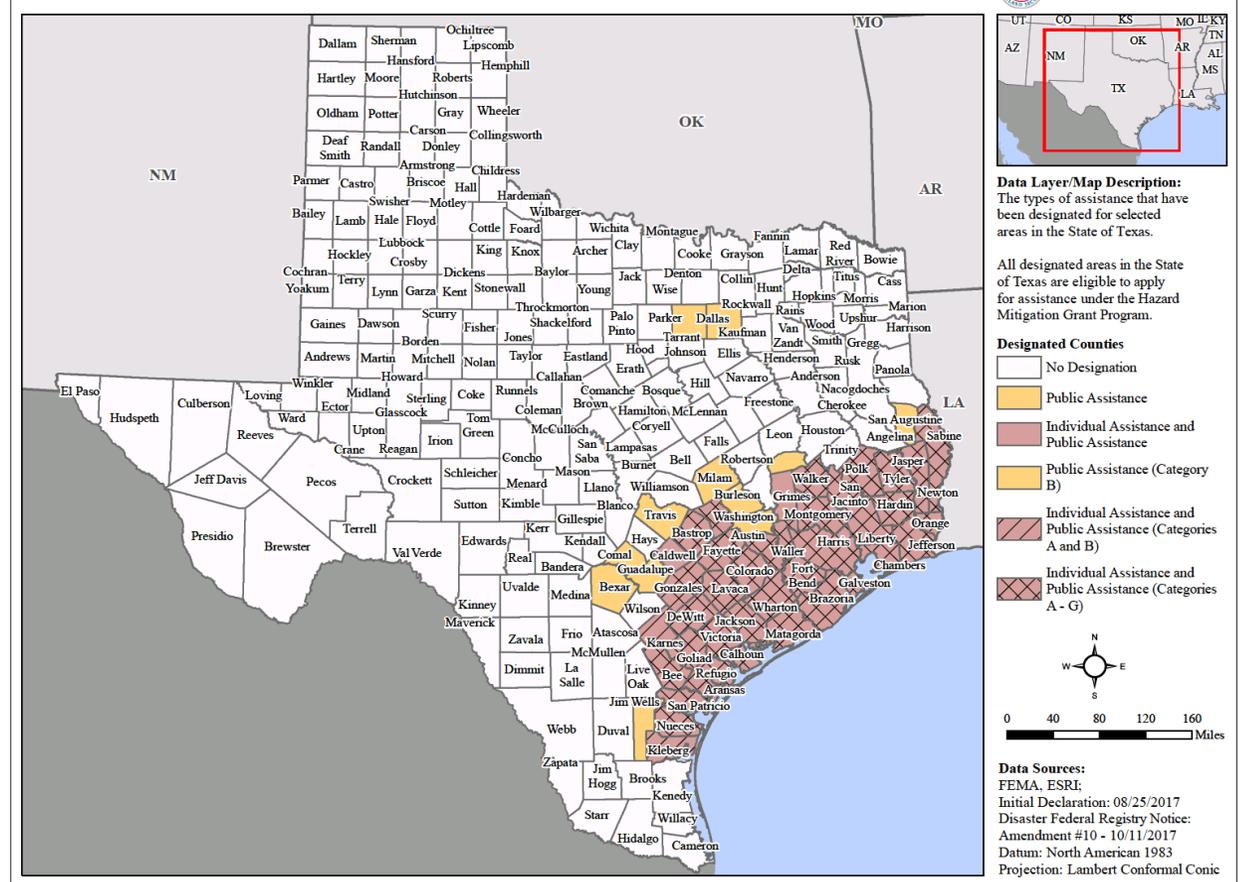
# Impact on Texas Higher Education

Dozens of Texas public and private institutions of higher education were located in the disaster area or had major facilities in the disaster area.

Nearly 500,000 students resided in the disaster area or attended institution impacted by the storm – approximately 1/3 of all higher education enrollments.

As of 8/5/18, public institutions of higher education have reported to the LBB hurricane-related expenditures totaling over \$77 million.

FEMA-4332-DR, Texas Disaster Declaration as of 10/11/2017



MapID ead96c4eeef01171451hqprod

# Institutions Reporting the Highest Levels of Hurricane-related Expenditures in FY17 and FY18\*

## **Lone Star College: \$17,488,376**

Costs were primarily for contracted services for remediation due to floodwater damage of 6 buildings. Additional costs due to three campuses utilized as shelters during the storm.

## **University of Houston: \$12,442,461**

Costs associated with damage to 135 buildings due to wind and water. Additional costs for teams that assisted with damage mitigation and debris removal.

## **UT MD Anderson Cancer Center: \$9,981,785**

Costs included overtime and stipends for personnel who remained on-site to care for patients and families. Facility costs include physical damage, clean-up, and remediation.

## **University of Houston – Downtown: \$9,053,885**

Costs were primarily due to damage to 6 buildings due to wind and water. Additional costs for teams that assisted with damage mitigation and debris removal.

*\* All Funds expenditures as reported to the Legislative Budget Board through the end of July 2018*

# Projected Additional Major Expenditures in FY18\*

## **The University of Texas at Austin: \$42,719,238**

The Marine Science Institute, Winedale Historical Complex, and Stengl Lost Pines Biological Field Station in Bastrop sustained major damage.

## **University of Houston: \$25,462,581**

Costs associated with damage to 135 buildings due to wind and water. Additional costs for teams that assisted with damage mitigation and debris removal.

## **Lonestar College: \$17,393,503**

Costs are primarily capital expenditures due to contaminated floodwater damage of 6 of the 9 buildings at the Kingwood campus.

*\* Projected All Funds expenditures as reported to the Legislative Budget Board through the end of July 2018*

# Coordinating Board Actions to Support Institutions and Students Impacted by Hurricane Harvey

## **Flexibility on Census Date Reporting and Length-of-Semester Requirements**

- Institutions that delayed their semester start date or had their fall semester interrupted due to the storm were allowed to extend their Census Date for up to two weeks.
- Institutions negatively affected by Hurricane Harvey were not required to adjust their fall semester end date, if they were able to resume normal operations by September 6, 2017.

## **Student Aid and Tuition Refunds**

- The Coordinating Board eased requirements that institutions disburse student financial aid to students within three days, to allow the institution to disburse aid as quickly as operations would allow.
- Under Texas College Work-Study, the Coordinating Board waived work requirements for students unable to work due to their circumstances or those of their employer.
- The agency strongly encouraged all institutions to adopt generous tuition refund policies for students forced to withdraw due to Hurricane Harvey.
- The Coordinating Board granted an automatic three-month forbearance to any student loan borrowers in the impacted area.

# Recommendation: Expand Emergency Aid Programs

- Many students are ill-prepared for any financial disruption, and are at high-risk of dropping out when faced with unexpected expenses such as those occasioned by a disaster.
- Emergency Aid Programs provide one-time grants, loans and scholarships (often less than \$1,500) for students facing an unexpected financial crisis, as well as support services such as food pantries, housing assistance and transportation assistance.
- The Coordinating Board has convened the Texas Emergency Aid Network (EA Net), including leaders from 10 Texas higher education institutions who have existing emergency aid programs on their campuses. EA Net is working to identify compelling strategies and best practices for effective programs.
- At a September convening, institutions shared best practices in administration, communication and sustainability of emergency aid programs, and discussed how to successfully collaborate with community partners for “wrap-around services” to support emergency aid recipients.

# Recommendation: Flexible Workforce Programs

- Developing short-term, accelerated models for workforce training at 2-year institutions can quickly prepare disaster affected individuals for clean-up and rebuilding employment opportunities.
- Many institutions in the impact area quickly developed and offered compressed courses and programs in building trades to address the post-Harvey workforce needs.
- Limitations identified by institutions to expanding such program include space and instructor availability, training materials, and identifying and communicating with prospective students.
- Short-term, accelerated training should lead to stackable credentials and a career pathway that will encourage students to return to their education after the initial workforce needs for recovery have died down. This will help workers develop advanced skill and training that will increase their value in the marketplace and support high-skill, high-wage jobs.