



STATEWIDE DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION PLAN

**A Report to the Texas Legislature
Senate Bill 162, 82nd Texas Legislature**

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Division of P-16 Initiatives



Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

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Mission of the Coordinating Board

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's mission is to work with the Legislature, Governor, governing boards, higher education institutions and other entities to help Texas meet the goals of the state's higher education plan, Closing theGaps by 2015, and thereby provide the people of Texas the widest access to higher education of the highest quality in the most efficient manner.

Philosophy of the Coordinating Board

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board will promote access to quality higher education across the state with the conviction that access without quality is mediocrity and that quality without access is unacceptable. The Board will be open, ethical, responsive, and committed to public service. The Board will approach its work with a sense of purpose and responsibility to the people of Texas and is committed to the best use of public monies. The Coordinating Board will engage in actions that add value to Texas and to higher education. The agency will avoid efforts that do not add value or that are duplicated by other entities.

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, gender, religion, age or disability in employment or the provision of services.

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Executive Summary

Senate Bill 162 (82nd Texas Legislature, Regular Session) directed the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (hereinafter referred to as the "Coordinating Board") to develop a statewide developmental education plan "to serve students who require developmental education in an effective and cost-effective manner." The 2012-2017 Developmental Education Plan created in response to this legislation is presented in this report and builds on the six goals of the previous Statewide Developmental Education Plan, adopted by the Coordinating Board in 2009. The new plan articulates a vision and enhanced framework for addressing the population of underprepared students in Texas higher education, which accounts for more than 40 percent of all new enrollments at Texas public institutions of higher education in general, with more than 80 percent of those students enrolling in Texas public two-year colleges. If Texas is to meet the goals of its *Closing the Gaps of 2015* higher education plan, priority must be given to improving the academic success of this group of students.

Since the creation and implementation of the 2009 Developmental Education Plan (hereinafter referred to as "2009 DE Plan"), the Coordinating Board has funded various developmental education initiatives, including research and evaluation efforts, to help Texas public institutions of higher education provide more effective programs and services to underprepared students. Specifically, the Developmental Education Demonstration Projects included five community college districts and four universities – the Alamo Colleges, El Paso Community College, the Lone Star College System, the San Jacinto College District, the Tarrant County College District, Texas A&M University-Commerce, Texas State University-San Marcos, The University of Texas at Austin, and The University of Texas-Pan American – that were awarded two-year grants to fund large-scale, systemic reforms of their developmental education programs based on components of the 2009 DE Plan. Evaluation of the various initiatives coupled with institutional data show that institutions have made progress in improving student advising, diversifying instructional strategies and opportunities for students, and accelerating student progress through the curriculum by targeting student needs within intensive programs.

The vision, goals, and performance measures set forth in the 2012-2017 Developmental Education Plan call for significantly improving, by 2017, the success of underprepared students in Texas higher education by meeting their individualized needs through non-traditional developmental education methods. Non-traditional interventions include modular, mainstreaming, non-course competency-based¹, and integrated models (see Glossary of Terms for definition of interventions).

Based on evaluation results from the various initiatives funded by the Coordinating Board, especially the Developmental Education Demonstration Projects, a number of promising practices have been identified and will be scaled and further evaluated in developmental education projects funded in Fiscal Year 2013. While more specific details are provided in the Rider 52 report, "Developmental Education Best Practices," Rider 34 report, "Non-Course Competency-Based Developmental Education: Challenges, Interventions, and Recommendations," and H.B. 3468 report, "Texas College-Readiness Assessment and Placement: Improvements and Recommendations," the following provides a summary of promising practices identified in these initiatives and important to improving developmental education:

¹ Also known as non-course-based or non-semester-length options and interventions

- Assessment and Placement
 - By fall 2013, implementation of the new, single Texas Success Initiative (TSI) Assessment with a singular set of college-readiness and adult basic education standards, including a diagnostic profile for addressing differentiated placement
 - Requirement for institutions to assess students holistically using multiple factors such as prior academic coursework, non-cognitive elements such as motivation and self-efficacy, and family-life issues
- Advising
 - Use of a holistic advising protocol in addressing individualized needs (e.g., considerations for prior academic coursework, non-cognitive factors such as motivation, and family-life issues)
 - Requirement for institutions to mandate pre-assessment activities for new students to ensure students understand the importance of the TSI Assessment
 - Use of technology to communicate with students using Early Warning/Alert systems for students at-risk of failure or dropping out of college
- Accelerated Instructional Strategies
 - Integrated reading/writing
 - Non-course competency-based options (also known as non-course based or non-semester length options and interventions)
 - Mainstreaming (also known as “blended,” “co-requisite,” and “concurrent” enrollment models)
 - Intensive bridge/college readiness programs
- Faculty Development
 - Comprehensive, year-long professional development program for faculty and staff supporting integrated reading/writing
 - Program-specific faculty and advisor training and professional development
- Use of Technology
 - Online tutoring and supplement learning programs (e.g., My Math Lab)
 - Modular delivery of instruction
 - Early Warning/Early Alert Systems
- Alignment with Adult Education
 - Intensive workforce training with integrated basic reading, writing, and math skills

Even though significant work has been done in reforming developmental education practices in some Texas institutions, challenges remain for statewide implementation of promising practices that support the college readiness and success of underprepared students. The proposed 2012-2017 Statewide Developmental Education Plan encompasses lessons learned from previously funded projects and establishes program and institutional objectives to bring components of best practices to scale and to build an iterative process of continuous improvement.

This Plan is based on what we have learned through extensive and robust evaluation of the programs and initiatives funded thus far. Findings from these efforts now inform what will be further scaled in the state, in order to make optimal use of limited resources while supporting what are the most promising results.

The Coordinating Board will continue to research, evaluate, and provide information to policymakers on the outcomes of scaling lessons learned from current initiatives. Texas higher education institutions, with already-limited resources, will be called on to implement new reforms for the most vulnerable students. The Coordinating Board will also work with the Developmental Education Advisory Committee and other stakeholders to help determine how to most efficiently and effectively operationalize the goals and objectives of this Plan.

Based on the goals and objectives outlined in the 2012-2017 Developmental Education Plan, five recommendations are offered to the Texas Legislature to ensure that the Plan's vision is realized and that Texas public colleges and universities receive the support necessary to make substantive changes in the delivery of developmental education.

Recommendation 1: Continue to promote scaling of acceleration models that are non-course competency-based, integrated, take advantage of new technologies, and enable successful outcomes leading to the award of more certificates, transfers, and degrees, along with other workforce and personal enrichment goals.

Recommendation 2: Continue to promote and fund the professional development necessary to support quality and effectiveness in teaching and learning, advising, and support services for underprepared students, including the study of the impact of a statewide developmental educator credential.

Recommendation 3: Provide the necessary time and opportunity for institutions to select, scale, and implement the numerous research-based recommendations and best practices learned thus far to allow for meaningful and purposeful change that is lasting, sustainable, and effective.

Recommendation 4: Require the building or strengthening of partnerships among Texas public two-year college's developmental education programs, adult basic education programs, workforce training programs, and family and social service agencies to better support lower-skilled adults and youth transitioning to college.

Recommendation 5: Require incorporation of all adult basic education and adult education data into the statewide data systems already in place for public education, higher education, and the workforce to ensure consistency and accuracy in tracking all students into the workforce.

Introduction

Improving the academic preparedness of students enrolling in Texas public institutions of higher education is one of the greatest challenges facing higher education in Texas since the launch of *Closing the Gaps by 2015* in 2000, according to the Commissioner of Higher Education Raymund Paredes. The academic success of underprepared students has been a significant challenge for colleges and universities in Texas – and institutions throughout the nation – for many years. There continues to be a significant gap between the persistence and degree attainment of students who begin their higher education with pre-college skills in reading, writing, and mathematics and those who place directly into college-level courses.

As a result, the 81st Texas Legislature (2009), in its General Appropriations Act, House Bill 1, Section 50 (hereinafter referred to as “Rider 50”) directed the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (hereinafter referred to as the “Coordinating Board”) to develop a Statewide Developmental Education Plan. The Coordinating Board adopted the state’s first Developmental Education Plan in 2009 (hereinafter referred to as “2009 DE Plan”). The 2009 DE Plan identified goals, based on research-based best practices, to improve the success of academically vulnerable students within and beyond developmental education.

In 2011, Senate Bill 162 of the 82nd Texas Legislature provided additional support for a statewide plan. That legislation directed the Coordinating Board to report on the development and implementation of a statewide plan “to serve students who require developmental education in an effective and cost-effective manner.” In addition, SB 162 required that the plan assign primary responsibility for developmental education to Texas public two-year colleges and include technology as a means of delivering developmental education to students. Finally, the legislation directed the Coordinating Board to report on the plan and to include “any recommendations for redesign or reassignment among institutions of higher education of existing programs or implementation of new programs and, if appropriate, recommendations for legislation.”

In addition to the 2012-2017 Statewide Developmental Education Plan (hereinafter referred to as the “2012-2017 DE Plan”), this report includes an overview of the 2009 DE Plan which forms the basis for the 2012-2017 DE Plan. Based on lessons learned from the five Developmental Education Demonstration project institutions and the ABE innovation programs that followed implementation of the 2009 DE plan, the section outlining the plan provides objectives that support and expand the goals of the 2009 DE Plan. These objectives can be used as guidelines for institutions to develop effective and efficient developmental education programs and to support ongoing institutional and state evaluation of best practices. Appendix C and Appendix D provide specific information on various initiatives in which the Coordinating Board has invested state funds to address the developmental and adult education challenges in Texas.

Background

Rider 50 authorized by the 81st Texas Legislature (2009) charged the Coordinating Board with creating pilot programs for underprepared students needing developmental education at Texas public two-year colleges. The pilot programs:

“would use technology and diagnostic assessments to determine students’ needs and college readiness and use educational methods, including non-course based, that would improve developmental education outcomes.”

To underscore the importance of this issue and ensure that underprepared students are provided appropriate instruction and support to develop needed academic skills, the Legislature in Rider 50 further directed the Coordinating Board to:

“study the issue of developmental education focusing on researching best practices to implement statewide and submit a report to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House, the Chair of the Senate Finance Committee, the Chair of House Appropriations, Senate Committee on Higher Education and House Committee on Higher Education before January 1, 2011.”

The Coordinating Board responded to the two parts of Rider 50 so that they complement and support each other. In particular, the Board’s staff reviewed research on developmental education since the early 1990s and analyzed the results of the 2009 Developmental Education Program Survey (DEPS), which was an in-depth study of developmental education in Texas. Data from those sources were used to create two separate Requests for Applications (RFA) to fund pilot demonstration programs in developmental education reform. Because of the need to use two separate funding sources, one RFA targeted Texas public two-year colleges and the other targeted Texas public universities. Five community college districts and four universities – the Alamo Colleges, El Paso Community College, the Lone Star College System, the San Jacinto College District, the Tarrant County College District, Texas A&M University-Commerce, Texas State University-San Marcos, The University of Texas at Austin, and The University of Texas-Pan American – were awarded two-year grants to fund large-scale, systemic reforms of their developmental education programs based on components of the 2009 DE Plan.

Overview of the 2009 Statewide Developmental Education Plan

The goals of the 2009 DE Plan were established to ensure, at both the state and institutional level, that policies and programs would be focused on improving the college readiness and success of developmental education students. The 2009 DE Plan was grounded in research and guided by the requirements of the Texas Success Initiative (TSI), established in Texas Education Code §51.3062, and various riders to the Texas Legislature’s General Appropriations Act beginning with the 2009-2010 biennium. The 2009 DE Plan consisted of six goals:

Goal 1: Identify and fund innovative projects to improve the access, acceleration, and success of students who need developmental education to achieve college readiness, with a specific emphasis on non-course competency- based remediation efforts.

Goal 2: Improve the availability and quality of academic advising and counseling services for developmental education students.

Goal 3: Increase the preparedness of developmental educators.

Goal 4: Improve the quality and effectiveness of developmental education programs in the state of Texas.

Goal 5: Improve the assessment and placement of first-time-in-college (FTIC) students into developmental education.

Goal 6: Improve alignment of adult basic education with community colleges and career technical education.

Since the creation and implementation of the 2009 DE Plan, the Coordinating Board has provided nearly \$10 million of state funds from Appropriations Year 2007 through Appropriations Year 2011 to fund various developmental education initiatives, including research and evaluation, to support Texas public institutions of higher education efforts to achieve these goals. Among the types of initiatives funded:

- Developmental Education Demonstration Project
- Developmental education bridging programs
- Accelerated developmental education projects
- Center for Mathematics Readiness
- Community College Developmental Education Initiative
- FOCUS Program
- Developmental education research
- Test Alignment Study to determine whether the current TSI assessments and exemptions appropriately measure the expectations and cognitive demand of the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards

Evaluation of the various initiatives coupled with institutional data show that institutions have improved student advising significantly, diversifying instructional strategies and opportunities for students and accelerating student progress through the curriculum by targeting student needs within intensive programs. However, there remain significant challenges for statewide implementation of promising practices. As a result, the 2012-2017 DE Plan builds on the 2009 DE Plan, using lessons learned from the those prior projects. This plan offers program and institutional objectives to bring components of best practices to scale and to build an iterative process of continuous improvement for ongoing evaluation.

The 2012-2017 Statewide Developmental Education Plan

The development of the 2012-2017 DE Plan has been a collaborative process with contributions from many stakeholders. To engage institutional faculty and staff and seek their input on the development of this plan, the Coordinating Board established the Developmental Education Advisory Committee (hereinafter referred to as the “Advisory Committee”).

The Advisory Committee advises Coordinating Board staff on implementation of the legislation,² including evaluating developmental education programs statewide, providing feedback on related Coordinating Board rules revisions, and working closely with national assessment experts in developing the new TSI assessment. Further, the Advisory Committee will continue to work collaboratively with the Texas Developmental Education Initiative (DEI) in addressing guidelines for data collection and dissemination that inform scalability and sustainability concerns. The DEI is a collaboration of six states committed to building on demonstrated results in developmental education innovation from across the country. Also, through a partnership with the Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC) and the Charles A. Dana Center at The University of Texas at Austin and through the Complete College America FOCUS project at Texas State University – San Marcos, the state has a unique opportunity to redesign developmental mathematics with all

² Legislation includes Senate Bill 162, House Bill 1244, House Bill 3468, as well as Rider 34 and Rider 52.

50 Texas public community college districts. Finally, the tri-agency work between the Coordinating Board, Texas Education Agency (TEA), and Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) will enable the state to develop alternate pathways for adult students entering institutions of higher education in Texas.

Based on the direction provided in SB 162, the six goals established in the 2009 DE Plan, and input from the Advisory Committee, the DEI, and others, a vision statement, goals, and objectives form the 2012-2017 DE Plan. The rationale for each goal includes research and the evaluation results of recent developmental education initiatives in Texas, when appropriate.

VISION STATEMENT: By fall 2017, Texas will significantly improve the success of underprepared students by addressing their individualized needs through reliable diagnostic assessment, comprehensive support services, and non-traditional interventions, to include modular, mainstreaming, non-course competency- based, technologically-based, and integrated instructional models.

This vision can be realized as Texas public institutions of higher education apply their resources and talents toward reaching common developmental education goals, with student success and completion at the core of every decision affecting underprepared students.

The Coordinating Board plays a key role by articulating a comprehensive five-year Developmental Education Plan that provides the framework for addressing the necessary professional development and data-support needs of institutions to enhance their understanding of how their policies and practices promote or impede progress towards this vision. Progress towards this vision is measured through key data points aligned to the performance measures of the Legislative Budget Board. In particular, annual analysis of these performance measures help provide the information necessary to institutions and other stakeholders in determining how resources are most efficiently and effectively allocated.

Significant improvement in the success of underprepared students as articulated in the vision statement will be achieved if by 2017 there is a 10 percent increase in each of the following indicators:

- Percentage of students who have met TSI state standards in reading, writing, and math;³ and
- Percentage of underprepared math, reading, and writing students who successfully complete the related college-level course.⁴

With input from stakeholders, Coordinating Board staff will develop annual benchmarks for each of these performance measures to ensure statewide and institutional progress toward the goal of significantly improving the success of underprepared students.

The following goals and objectives provide the framework for achieving the vision of the 2012-2017 Developmental Education Plan.

Goal 1: Study the assignment of primary responsibility for developmental education to Texas public two-year colleges.

³ See Coordinating Board Accountability System, Developmental Education Measures data

⁴ See Coordinating Board Outcome Measure 06, 07, and 08, Strategy 01-01-01, Participation and Success

Rationale for Goal 1

A 2012 report by Education Commission of the States (ECS) examined the impact of placing limits on the delivery of remedial education at four-year institutions (Smith, 2012). The report acknowledged the need to stretch postsecondary dollars, but encouraged states to evaluate whether this attempt to reduce cost and maintain mission differentiation is detrimental to student success before instituting policies that restrict the role of four-year institutions in developmental education. The report provided six state and system assumptions guiding the policies limiting four-year institutions from delivering remedial education, but stated that little research indicates that these assumptions are true. Finally, the report identified areas that could be compromised by placing limits on which institutions can deliver developmental education: assessment and placement, remedial education instruction, transfer and articulation, and student support services.

Another factor to consider in establishing a policy that places limits on the delivery of developmental education at Texas public four-year institutions is the impact such a policy might have on university admission. Students admitted to Texas public universities may not achieve college readiness in one or more areas assessed (i.e., reading, writing, or mathematics), but may meet the requirements for guaranteed admission under the Uniform Admission Policy (Texas Education Code, §51.801ff). Under that policy, students who graduate from Texas public or private high schools are eligible for automatic admission if they complete the curriculum requirements for the Recommended High School Program (RHSP), or that portion available in their school, and are ranked within the top 10 percent of their graduating class. Students might graduate under the RHSP and be automatically eligible for admission under the top 10 percent rule, but may not be college-ready in one or more area and therefore require some form of developmental education course work or intervention.

And finally, under the new STAAR End-of-Course (EOC) assessments, students graduating from Texas public schools will be required to achieve higher benchmarks to graduate from high school. In addition, the STAAR EOC assessments for English III and Algebra II will include a rigorous college-readiness measure established by the Commissioner of Education and Commissioner of Higher Education and adopted by the Coordinating Board to be used by Texas public institutions of higher education in determining college readiness. This, coupled with the more rigorous expectations of the new TSI Assessment (see Goal 7, Objective 7.1) effective fall 2013, may increase the need for developmental education in the short term because students will not have had the benefit of instruction based on the revised Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Prior to 2009, the TEKS did not include the incorporation of the more rigorous expectations of the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards that the State Board of Education has adopted in its TEKS revision process since that time.

The Coordinating Board is dedicated to serving students who require developmental education in an effective and cost-effective manner and strives to ensure that a new policy assigning primary responsibility for developmental education to Texas public two-year colleges ensures college access and success while keeping developmental education cost low for the student and the state.

Objective 1.1: Through analysis of data collected from the new TSI Assessment and STAAR End-of-Course assessments, and other relevant data, the Coordinating Board will research the impact of assigning primary responsibility of developmental education to Texas public two-year colleges, including the fiscal impact and potential effect on assessment and

placement, remedial education instruction, transfer and articulation, and student support services.

Objective 1.2: By December 2014, the Coordinating Board will provide recommendations to the Legislature on the goal of assigning primary responsibility for developmental education to Texas public two-year colleges.

Goal 2: Require institutions with developmental education programs to use technology, to the greatest extent practicable consistent with best practices, to provide developmental education to students effectively and efficiently.

Rationale for Goal 2

While computer-based instruction, including distance learning, is becoming increasingly prevalent in higher education, questions remain regarding the effectiveness of such instruction, especially when some studies report higher drop-out rates for those enrolled in developmental education courses (Zavarella & Ignash, 2009). In a recent survey, the Sloan Consortium reported that 32 percent of chief academic officers at U.S. institutions of higher education question the quality of online education (*Going the Distance, Online Education in the U.S.*, 2012). Additionally, providing mathematics instruction using technology-based supplement support continues to be a popular option for institutions, yet “critical challenges remain in maximizing the promise inherent in these innovations” (Epper & Baker, 2009).

Ninety-six percent of Texas public institutions report the use of technology as a supplement for instruction in developmental education courses or interventions (DEPS, 2012). The majority of these institutions report using technology to provide online tutoring (70 percent) and to implement early alert systems (80 percent). The Developmental Education Demonstration Project institutions showed promising success with the following technologically-enhanced practices:

- Early alert/warning systems that trigger communications with students demonstrating at-risk behaviors;
- Online supplemental software programs (e.g., My Math Lab) that provide practice and instant feedback targeted to student needs and challenges;
- Learning Management Systems (e.g., Blackboard) that provide course materials, promote collaborative learning, and project-based learning;
- Modular programs offer pre-assessment activities that prepare students for the TSI Assessment; and
- Emporium-style models that offer flexibility to faculty and support staff to promote appropriately placed students based on demonstrated mastery of competencies as opposed to documentation of seat time.

Nearly 79 percent of Texas public colleges and 10 percent of Texas public universities deliver developmental education course work and/or interventions through distance education.⁵ However, the Coordinating Board has not evaluated the effectiveness of online and hybrid delivery of developmental education in Texas institutions of higher education.

⁵ Coordinating Board Accountability System defines distance education as a course in which at least 85 percent of the planned instruction occurs where students and instructors are not in the same place.

To establish a starting point for this evaluation, the Coordinating Board contracted with Sam Houston State University's (SHSU) developmental education doctoral program to research the general use of technology and specifically online courses in Texas developmental education programs. Recommendations based on SHSU's literature review of distance learning and corresponding study of 68 Texas public institutions of higher education include the following:

- Distance learning must be supported by the institution's administration, both in fiscal and professional development terms;
- Higher attrition rates indicate online courses are not advantageous for many students; and
- Best practices policies must include a mandatory online assessment to measure the extent to which students exhibit skills and motivation to succeed in the online environment.

Objective 2.1: The Coordinating Board will continue to evaluate the effectiveness of online and hybrid delivery of developmental education course work and/or interventions.

Objective 2.2: Institutions will evaluate and report annually to the Coordinating Board the fiscal and instructional impact on the use of technology, as defined in Coordinating Board rules §4.53, as "the use of instructional aids, methods and/or other computer-based tools that enhance student learning."

Goal 3: Scale promising practices and/or programs that improve access, acceleration, and success of underprepared students.

Rationale for Goal 3

A literature review of national best practices in developmental education was provided when the Rider 50 report was released in 2011. However, Zachry and Schneider (2010) reported an absence of rigorous research to determine the long-term effectiveness of reform efforts. The majority of the best practices recommendations relied on case studies of exemplary programs that were locally driven. It was difficult to identify programs implementing the same programmatic design and following the same fidelity of implementation. To ensure wide-scale developmental education reform, positive outcomes from specific reform efforts must be scaled and adapted to different contexts in ways that generate significant long-term impacts. To scale effectively, institutions need guidance on program planning, implementation, and evaluation from peer institutions actively engaged in the transformation of developmental education on their campuses.

Public Policy Research Institute findings noted that all the Developmental Education Demonstration Project (DEDP) institutions reported administrative and faculty support for scaling promising practices that institutions perceived to be most effective such as use of early alert systems and accelerated instructional models. However, institutions also reported challenges for scaling those practices including issues related to funding, professional development, and initiative fatigue among faculty and staff.

Objective 3.1: Institutions will implement promising practices in developmental education programs based on the evaluation outcomes of state-funded initiatives, especially the DEDP, and provided to institutions by the Coordinating Board.

Objective 3.2: In fiscal year 2013, the Coordinating Board will fund and conduct ongoing research and evaluation of developmental education reform and improvement efforts in Texas public institutions of higher education that bring promising practices to scale and inform the continuous cycle of assessment and data-based decision making.

Objective 3.3: In fiscal year 2013, the Coordinating Board will fund peer mentor institutions from among the Developmental Education Demonstration Project institutions and Adult Education Innovation Grant Programs to provide guidance on program planning, implementation, and evaluation of promising practices.

Objective 3.4: The Coordinating Board will modify the Developmental Education Program Survey beginning fall 2012 to obtain information on successful programs from institutions.

Objective 3.5: The Coordinating Board will study the current practice of student success courses and/or programs to inform future recommendations in improving their impact on persistence and completion.

Goal 4: Improve the availability and quality of academic and career advising and counseling services for underprepared students.

Rationale for Goal 4

Providing qualified academic and career advisors and counselors for first-time-in-college (FTIC) underprepared students continues to challenge Texas public institutions of higher education. However, institutions acknowledge the importance of providing these students with quality advising services. Zachry & Schneider (2010) found that some institutions report advisor-student ratios at 1:1000, but strategies to improve academic and career advising and counseling must go beyond increasing the number of advisors and counselors available to students.

Advising programs that provide intentional academic and career advising, including transition-to-college support, should not be the responsibility of a handful of staff on a campus. Support from state, district, and campus leadership to build and sustain innovative programs that promote student success is essential. The Developmental Education Demonstration Project institutions provided a variety of examples of cost-effective academic advising models, such as cohort advising, faculty advising, online advising, and short-term intensive classes that focused on college and career readiness (see Appendix C for more information). The state should support the scaling of promising practices for successfully advising underprepared students across institutions of higher education – notably at Texas public two-year colleges where 86 percent of developmental education students are enrolled.

Objective 4.1: Institutions will develop and implement a student advisory program that requires an individualized plan for academic success for each underprepared student. The components of the individualized, holistic plan must include the following:

- Career advising, including career pathways and labor market information;
- Course-based and/or non-course competency-based developmental education options;
- Campus and/or community student support services/resources;
- Degree plan or plan of study;

- Regular interaction between student and designated point of contact (e.g., advisor, faculty member, peer and/or community mentor, etc.);
- Registration for next semester/next steps; and
- Differentiated placement (as defined in Coordinating Board rules, §4.53).

Objective 4.2: Institutions will provide advising staff, faculty, and other support personnel with opportunities for professional development to increase their understanding of the needs of underprepared students.

Objective 4.3: Institutions will develop and implement an evaluation plan to ensure the quality and effectiveness of advising programs and services specifically addressing the needs of underprepared students.

Goal 5: Increase the preparedness of developmental educators.

Rationale for Goal 5

The majority of developmental education classes are taught by adjunct or part-time faculty who are often disconnected from departmental decision-making and implementation of new programmatic strategies (Rutschow & Schneider, 2011). Furthermore, developmental instructors, regardless of full or part-time status, tend to have limited training in teaching underprepared students. If developmental education students are to be successful, instructors must provide quality and effective instruction. This requires that educators, policymakers, and researchers develop more integrated, targeted, and sustained approaches to professional development.

Objective 5.1: Institutions will submit to the Coordinating Board a long-range plan for their faculty and staff development focused on improving teaching, learning, advising, and counseling for underprepared students.

Objective 5.2: The Coordinating Board and institutions will increase the number of ongoing professional development opportunities made available to full-time and adjunct faculty and staff who provide developmental coursework to students.

Objective 5.3: The Coordinating Board will study and analyze the fiscal and instructional impact on the development and implementation of a statewide credential program for developmental educators and support personnel.

Goal 6: Continue to improve the quality and effectiveness of developmental education programs in Texas.

Rationale for Goal 6

Texas' higher education plan, *Closing the Gaps by 2015*, calls for institutions to achieve national recognition for programs and services. As one measure of national recognition, the percentage of institutions that have obtained, or are currently seeking, developmental education program certification through the National Association of Developmental Education (NADE) has increased from 16 percent in 2010 to 25 percent in 2012. NADE certification centers on the following:

- Demonstration of theoretical applications;

- Use of quality practices as defined by professional research and literature of the field; and
- Analysis of baseline and comparative evaluation data in the continuous and systematic assessment and evaluation of those programs.

Statewide initiatives addressing program quality and effectiveness include improvements related to assessment and placement of underprepared students (see Goal 7). The coursework and/or interventions in which these students are placed offer accelerated instruction and address learning outcomes specific to their needs. For example, compressed courses enable students to complete two levels of the same subject area in one semester instead of two. Non-course competency-based options, including those offered through modular instruction, allow students to receive additional practice and timely feedback on those outcomes that are particularly challenging. These options also enable faculty members to determine the number of contact hours needed to address students' areas of weakness while still allowing the flexibility to modify those requirements as the learning process takes place. Integrated reading and writing learning outcomes better align with the expectations of credit-bearing courses. This integration represents a key area of instructional change receiving both statewide and national attention as a way to not only accelerate students' progress but improve outcomes in credit-bearing coursework. Finally, research completed at the Community College Research Center (CCRC) (Scott-Clayton, 2012) suggests that mainstreaming models allowing students to simultaneously enroll in credit-bearing coursework and developmental education interventions of the same subject area are showing the most promise. These and other initiatives as described in Appendix C are integral to statewide developmental education reform efforts.

To measure program effectiveness, evaluation of developmental education programs at the state and institutional levels must occur to ensure continuous improvement. The Coordinating Board requires institutions to evaluate their programs annually and report findings through the Developmental Education Program Survey (DEPS). In addition, currently available data, such as those collected through the Coordinating Board's annual Coordinating Board Management (CBM) reports, inform stakeholders of the progress of improvements on local and statewide levels. For example, institutional resumes, accessible through each institution's website home page as well as the Coordinating Board website, include annual and trend data on persistence, completions, and transfers of underprepared students. Finally, evaluation of developmental education programs, defined in statute and Coordinating Board rules⁶ as "a systematic method of collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer questions about developmental education courses, interventions, and policies, particularly about their effectiveness and cost-efficiency," must be conducted regularly to determine progress toward meeting statewide goals of increased student success.

Course and program effectiveness should be based on common learning outcomes, and the Coordinating Board has worked with faculty subject-matter experts of the Learning Outcomes Work Groups (LOWG) in spring 2012 in the development and identification of learning outcomes, aligned to the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards, for reading, writing, integrated reading and writing, English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), and intermediate mathematics courses. The LOWG will resume their work in spring/summer 2013 to address student success and remaining mathematics courses.

⁶ Texas Education Code §51.3062(a-1) and Texas Administrative Code §4.53

To gauge the state of developmental education programs in terms of quality and effectiveness, the Coordinating Board retained the Texas Education Research Center (ERC) at The University of Texas at Austin to study these programs across Texas as part of a broad legislative initiative to strengthen developmental education. The Texas ERC developed analyses to help describe the state of developmental education course-taking as well as to predict student outcomes based on a variety of student- and institutional-level inputs. To examine developmental education more in depth, several logistic regression models were explored to determine the odds of students enrolling in and completing subject-level developmental coursework. Findings suggest that student characteristics, such as ethnicity or prior achievement, are key factors affecting both enrollment and completion.

In a companion, qualitative analysis – *Higher Standards in Higher Education: Qualitative Developmental Education Trends Across Texas* – the Texas ERC is exploring results from case studies of 12 diverse institutions of higher education across the state, focusing on the lessons learned in implementing programs on their campuses. Findings from this study, expected early 2013, will provide a snapshot of current programs and help inform future recommendations for quality and effectiveness improvements.

Clearly, Texas institutions have made progress in addressing the needs of underprepared students through various statewide and national initiatives. However, significant challenges remain.

Objective 6.1: The Coordinating Board will work with institutions to increase the percentage of institutions with state and nationally recognized program and service certifications that focus on promoting the success of underprepared students.

Objective 6.2: The Coordinating Board will continue to develop student learning outcomes for developmental education course work and/or interventions to ensure alignment, consistency, and quality of curricula based on the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) and as published in the Coordinating Board’s Academic Course Guide Manual.⁷

Objective 6.3: Institutions will analyze and report to the Coordinating Board annually the fiscal and instructional impacts on student outcomes directly related to quality and improved outcomes of developmental education courses and interventions:

- Technological delivery of developmental education courses to improve learning;
- Diagnostic assessments to determine a student’s specific educational needs to allow for appropriate developmental instruction;
- Modular developmental education course materials;
- Use of tutors and instructional aides to supplement developmental education course instruction as needed for individual students;
- Internal monitoring mechanisms used to identify student’s area(s) of academic difficulty;
- Periodic updates of developmental education course materials; and
- Assessments after completion of a developmental education intervention to determine a student’s readiness for entry-level academic course work.

⁷ The Academic Course Guide Manual is the official list of approved courses maintained by the Coordinating Board that may be offered for state funding by Texas public two-year colleges.

Objective 6.4: The Coordinating Board will analyze and synthesize the findings from institutional reports to communicate annually the progress towards meeting the developmental education goals and use data-based decision-making in recommending adjustments, if any, to the goals and objectives in the 2012-2017 Statewide Developmental Education Plan.

Goal 7: Improve the assessment and placement of first-time-in-college (FTIC) students.

Rationale for Goal 7

Research indicates that appropriate placement in the first semester of developmental education coursework influences future student persistence (Adelman, 2006; Prince, 2005). Texas institutions rely on four Coordinating Board-approved assessments (ACCUPLACER, ASSET, COMPASS, and THEA) and exemption scores on three others (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, ACT, and SAT) to determine college readiness for FTIC students. Recent studies completed at the Community College Research Center (CCRC) (Scott-Clayton, 2012) indicate that assessment scores that students receive are not perfect predictors of success in the first college-level course after developmental education. Additionally, a study commissioned by the Coordinating Board and conducted by the Educational Policy Improvement Center (Conley & Seburn, 2010) determined that the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) were more rigorous and cognitively demanding than the four current Coordinating Board-approved TSI assessments and the ACT and SAT assessments used for exemption purposes.

In addition to determining the rigor and cognitive demand of the four TSI assessments and two exemption-based tests as compared to the CCRS, Conley and Seburn also measured the CCRS content coverage across all six assessments. In general, they found similar content coverage to that of the CCRS with only one key content area – Research – having zero coverage across all six assessments. However, there are some gaps from one test to another as well as areas of unique coverage. For example, for the key content area of Algebraic Reasoning, the coverage ranged from 63 percent to 100 percent across the six assessments. On the other hand, the coverage was 80 percent on three of the assessments and 100 percent on the other three assessments for the key content area of Writing.

Clearly, the current TSI assessments present challenges for institutions in placing students into college credit or developmental education since they are not as rigorous or cognitively demanding as the CCRS and content coverage is uneven. Having a uniform assessment and measures of performance leads to consistency in placement and ultimately improves the analysis of placement and outcomes. A single statewide assessment instrument and common diagnostic tool with results available to advisors, faculty members, and students immediately upon completion will improve both the efficiency and effectiveness of advising and placement decision-making on the individual student level. It also provides useful aggregate data to help inform statewide policies for program evaluation and improvement.

Recent research by the CCRC (Scott-Clayton, 2012) suggests the use of multiple indicators that consider the student holistically can improve a student's placement to more likely lead to increased persistence and success. These indicators include the following:

- High school grade point average;
- Class rank;

- Prior academic experience;
- Assessment of non-cognitive factors (e.g., motivation and self-efficacy); and
- Personal factors (e.g., hours worked, childcare, transportation, finances).

Furthermore, findings from the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE) suggest that participation by FTIC students in activities such as orientation and workshops prior to their taking the placement test can improve the outcomes for those students (Boylan, 2009; Venezia, Bracco, & Nodine, 2010; Gordon, 1999). Topics addressed during these activities include discussions about the importance of the test in the student's academic career as well as opportunities for practice and feedback on test items. These activities are most effective when they are mandatory, not optional, for students.

Objective 7.1: By fall 2013, institutions will implement the new TSI Assessment currently under development which will include the following components:

- Content items aligned with Critical TEKS (developed by public and higher education faculty to be used as the basis for the new STAAR End-of-Course assessments), STAAR End-of-Course assessments in English III and Algebra II, the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards, and the National Reporting System Educational Functioning Level Descriptors ABE standards;
- Diagnostic profile for students not college ready;
- Computer-adaptive testing with immediate results; and
- Resources for faculty, staff, and students to address demonstrated deficiencies.

Objective 7.2: Institutions will provide each FTIC student some pre-TSI Assessment activity(ies) including, but not limited to, workshops, orientations, and/or online modules to provide information regarding the following:

- Importance of TSI Assessment in students' academic career;
- TSI Assessment process and components, including practice with feedback of sample test questions in disciplinary areas tested;
- Developmental education options including course-pairing, non-course competency-based options, modular, and other non-conventional interventions; and
- Institutional and/or community student resources (e.g. tutoring, transportation, childcare, financial aid).

Objective 7.3: The Coordinating Board will study and analyze the indicators that consider holistically both cognitive (i.e., assessment results in reading, writing, and mathematics; diagnostic profile) and non-cognitive factors for the most effective and efficient placement of each student and provide findings to institutions for use in advising and placement.

Objective 7.4: The Coordinating Board will develop a statewide standard of practice that efficiently employs the most effective indicators for use by institutions to enhance the decision-making process in the assessment and placement of students.

Goal 8: Research current practices in Developmental Education English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs at Texas public two-year colleges and fund promising initiatives and practices that increase the success of limited English proficient students.

Rationale for Goal 8

The study of promising initiatives and practices in developmental education ESOL programs (also called English as a Second Language (ESL) for academic purposes or academic ESL programs on community college campuses) was not addressed by the Developmental Education Demonstration Project institutions. ESOL programs are very similar to the more general developmental education programs in that they both serve students with a wide array of prior educational and work experience. However, a unique difference is the multiple levels of educational attainment found in an ESL programs. For example, some immigrants in an academic ESL class could hold advanced degrees from their home countries while others could hold a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Another challenge for ESOL programs is that the current Coordinating Board-approved TSI assessments and the new TSI Assessment being developed by the College Board are not designed to evaluate academic English language proficiency. An ESOL student may score high in reading and writing on a TSI assessment, but be unable to understand or use spoken English. Although integrated reading/writing, accelerated instructional strategies, or modularized curricula may support higher achievements of native speakers of English, there is little research to determine whether these same interventions and changes to curricula will support students enrolled in ESL for academic purposes programs.

Objective 8.1: The Coordinating Board will study the alignment of academic English language proficiency exams and the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards to determine (1) whether and to what extent any existing academic English language proficiency exams appropriately measure college readiness, and (2) the feasibility of using such exams for TSI purposes.

Objective 8.2: The Coordinating Board will revise annually the DEPS to ensure that the survey captures an accurate picture of the variety of ESOL programs offered at Texas public two-year colleges.

Objective 8.3: The Coordinating Board will provide funding fiscal year 2013 to Texas public two-year colleges to study and analyze the current ESOL programs to ensure curriculum alignment, to address possible duplication of services, and to determine whether the language proficiency assessments used are appropriate to the population served.

Goal 9: Improve alignment of adult education and postsecondary education and training, including developmental education and/or workforce training.

Rationale for Goal 9

When transitioning to postsecondary academic and/or workforce training programs, students in adult basic education and developmental education programs have similar academic, financial, and personal needs – lack of personal readiness and financial support for taking that step. Educators should recognize these similar challenges to eliminate duplication of services and expand opportunities for both groups. Unfortunately, adult and developmental education administrators, advisors, and faculty often do not know of the work their colleagues are doing across these two fields of practice. Therefore, it is vital that more resources are shared and that purposeful, collaborative professional developmental opportunities are provided for faculty and staff in both

development and adult education programs, with some attention to external adult education providers.

Objective 9.1: Institutions will ensure that lower-skilled students identified by the TSI Assessment as pre-developmental education are served by appropriate adult education programs either within the institution or by adult education providers in the community.

Objective 9.2: The Coordinating Board and institutions will provide professional development opportunities that facilitate collaboration and foster partnerships among adult and developmental education faculty, support staff, administrators, and local workforce, literacy, and community organizations, with focus on the following:

- Require that advisors and staff address academic, workforce, and regional career options with students;
- Identify and implement effective strategies for counselors in both fields of practice to determine the personal/financial readiness of adult education students entering postsecondary education;
- Require that faculty identify and use multiple instructional strategies as necessary for the varied learning styles and challenges of the adult learner;
- Require advisors to identify and use appropriate types of advising services and provide information on multiple financial support services to lower-skilled adults entering Texas public two-year colleges; and
- Provide administrators and staff with tools and resources for blending or braiding⁸ institutional, state, and federal funding streams that more appropriately support the education and training of adult basic education students transitioning to postsecondary education and/or training as well as support lower-skilled students identified in developmental education.

Objective 9.3: Institutions will integrate contextualized basic skills or lower-skills coursework in reading, writing, mathematics, and ESOL with occupational and vocational training programs.

Objective 9.4: Institutions will appoint on each campus a transition advisor responsible for the following:

- Outreach and college advising for adult education populations in adult education programs in the community;
- Strengthening community partnerships with social service agencies and other community organizations that support low-income adults and independent younger students; and
- Building seamless connections across various academic, workforce, and support programs across the campus for adult learners and independent younger students transitioning from adult education programs in the community.

Objective 9.5: The Coordinating Board will develop an Advisor's Guide to help financial, career, and transition advisors understand how institutions can braid or blend local, state, and federal funds to ensure that lower-skilled learners with financial need are supported in integrated and contextualized basic skills and vocational or workforce training programs.

⁸ Braided or blended funding models are "tools for using multiple funding streams to support a common group of activities on behalf of a defined population in need." See <http://sparkpolicy.com/blend-or-braid/>

Conclusion and Recommendations

During a recent Committee on Higher Education hearing (June 20, 2012), State Senator Judith Zaffirini said, “Student success is at the heart of all we do, . . . and in this time of decreasing state appropriations, increasing tuition rates, and increasing student debt, we must ensure that we don’t sacrifice excellence for the sake of efficiency.” The nine goals addressed in this statewide plan clearly describe a path for the most efficient and effective use of limited resources while continuing to keep excellence at the center point. Professional development, technology, and ongoing research will help guide institutions towards meeting the vision set forth in this Plan.

Establishing the most effective pathways for underprepared students to achieve success may require major transformations at institutions. They must re-envision how best to use their full-time and adjunct faculty, tutors, and other support staff in ways not always conducive to systems designed for efficiency. Efficient systems use the least resources in their application of similar processes and rules to large groups, often without consideration for the individual needs and strengths. But the common theme among all the recommendations and best practices for improving developmental education calls for an individual approach – with student assessment and placement based on a student’s individual strengths and needs. This dichotomy must be reconciled as part of the institution’s transformation of its developmental education programs and support systems. Each institution must consider the additional costs in time, staff efforts, expenditures, and resource reallocations as these shifts occur.

Based on the goals and objectives outlined in the 2012-2017 Developmental Education Plan, five recommendations are offered to the Texas Legislature to ensure that the Plan’s vision is realized and that Texas public colleges and universities receive the support necessary to make substantive changes in the delivery of developmental education.

Recommendation 1: Continue to promote scaling of acceleration models that are non-course competency- based, integrated, take advantage of new technologies, and enable successful outcomes leading to the award of more certificates, transfers, and degrees, along with other workforce and personal enrichment goals.

Rationale for Recommendation 1: The Coordinating Board contracted with the Public Policy Research Institute (PPRI) at Texas A&M University to independently evaluate the Developmental Education Demonstration Project (DEDP). While the Rider 52 report, “Developmental Education Best Practices,” provides details on specific findings from the DEDP initiative, the following provides a brief summary of curricular design and instruction initiatives shown to increase acceleration and improve learning outcomes for underprepared students:

- Mainstream Model: students are placed into credit-bearing gateway coursework with appropriate developmental education support. These models are also known as “blended” and “co-requisite” and include the FOCUS math program.
- Integrated Model: students are placed into developmental education interventions that integrate two separate but related courses into one by addressing common outcomes through a holistic, intense approach that leads to accelerated and improved learning and improved transferability of knowledge and skills to credit-bearing coursework. This model is

also known as “paired coursework” and includes the Integrated Reading and Writing courses.

- Non-Course Competency-Based Options: students are placed into developmental education interventions that are shorter than traditional options and focus primarily on students’ demonstrated strengths and needs. Instruction is often supplemented through technologically-based software programs that provide expanded practice, instant feedback, and flexibility to promote and accelerate learning. The Rider 34 report, “Non-Course Competency-Based Developmental Education: Challenges, Interventions, and Recommendations,” provides more specific details on these interventions.

In addition, PPRI findings reported that institutions requiring mandatory participation of underprepared students in the following advising and student support initiatives showed improved student persistence and success:

- Early Alert/Warning Systems
- Pre-Assessment/Orientation Programs
- Student Success Courses
- Tutoring and Supplemental Learning Programs
- Learning Communities

Recommendation 2: Continue to promote and fund the professional development necessary to support quality and effectiveness in teaching and learning, advising, and support services for underprepared students, including the study of the impact of a statewide developmental educator credential.

Rationale for Recommendation 2: PPRI findings noted that professional development targeted at serving developmental education students addressing learning and instructional models outside the traditional played a key role in supporting and promoting necessary changes. In a 2012 report designed to establish a method for assessing the quality and effectiveness of academic advising services, the Coordinating Board recommends as a quantifiable measure of quality advising that 70 percent of full-time academic advisors should participate in two or more professional development activities during an academic year. Examples of progress in this area include the following:

- The Developmental Education Professional Development Academy at Alamo Colleges includes mentorships, research and publication opportunities, website forums for both full-time and adjunct faculty, as well as hosting and dissemination activities.
- Texas State University was awarded a grant to study and research the feasibility and potential impact of a statewide developmental educator credential. Final report is due to the Coordinating Board December 2012.
- The Coordinating Board has issued a Request for Proposals for a year-long, comprehensive professional developmental program to provide the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to faculty, staff, and administrators for statewide implementation of the Integrated Reading and Writing model.

Recommendation 3: Provide the necessary time and opportunity for institutions to select, scale, and implement the numerous research-based recommendations and best practices learned thus far to allow for meaningful and purposeful change that is lasting, sustainable, and effective.

Rationale for Recommendation 3: Many institutions in Texas have embraced change through national initiatives such as Achieving the Dream, Completion by Design, and League for Innovation in the Community College. In addition, institutions are also participating in state-sponsored grants

and initiatives, all addressing the completion agenda directed at improving the outcomes for underprepared students. While the Coordinating Board recognizes the importance of the sense of urgency, the expectations for change must be mitigated by provisions that allow for the necessary paradigm shifts eschewing “business as usual.”

Recommendation 4: Require the building or strengthening of partnerships among Texas public two-year college’s developmental education programs, adult basic education programs, workforce training programs, and family and social service agencies to better support lower-skilled adults and youth transitioning to college.

Rationale for Recommendation 4: The Coordinating Board continues to collaborate with public education and workforce agencies to address the needs of lower-skilled learners. This collaboration includes a proposed strategy of outreach and education addressing assessment and placement, transition advisors, instructional models, and funding options. The strategy includes a three-part phase-in addressing identification of the lower-skilled population through the new TSI Assessment and provides recommendations for viable options supporting transitions from post-secondary education and training to workforce opportunities. Continued legislative directives addressing collaborations and partnerships among agencies serving the adult population will ensure that limited state resources are employed optimally, efforts are shared, and duplication is avoided.

Recommendation 5: Require incorporation of all adult basic education and adult education data into the statewide data systems already in place for public education, higher education, and the workforce to ensure consistency and accuracy in tracking all students into the workforce.

Rationale for Recommendation 5: Texas has identified approximately 4.3 million residents without a high school degree or its equivalent. Each year, the state is only able to track those who enter a federally-funded adult education program and are entered into the Texas Educating Adults Management System (TEAMS) through the Texas Education Agency (TEA). However, if the individual is without a social security number or does not provide one when entering the federally funded program, it is not possible to track the student into higher education or the workforce. For this reason, it is difficult to track students from adult education programs to higher education and the workforce. Through TEAMS, the state has determined that 5 percent of the approximately 100,000 students who leave federally-funded adult education programs transition to higher education. In addition, many more may transition to higher education than we are able to determine since they may come from non-federally funded programs serving out-of-school youth and adults.

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Glossary of Terms

Acceleration - the reorganization of instruction and curricula in ways that expedite the completion of coursework or credentials based on an assessment of students' strengths and needs. It involves a departure from the traditional multi-course sequence in favor of a more streamlined structure. Some examples include, but are not limited to emporium models and modular models, co-requisites, course-pairing, and computer-assisted instruction.

Advising - the ongoing and intentional process by which faculty and/or staff members assist students to navigate their choice of courses or majors, access campus and community services, develop career goals and short/long-term plans.

Assessment - the use of a Board-approved instrument to determine the academic skills of each entering undergraduate student and the student's readiness to enroll in freshman-level academic coursework.

Co-requisite – an instructional strategy whereby students are enrolled or reenrolled simultaneously in a developmental education course and/or intervention and the gateway course of the same subject matter within the same semester. The developmental component provides support that advances the students' success in the gateway course.

Course Pairing – See **Co-requisite**.

Developmental Coursework and/or Intervention - non-degree-credit coursework and/or activity designed to address a student's strengths and needs in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics and student success.

Developmental Education - developmental courses, tutorials, laboratories, and other means of assistance that are included in a plan to ensure the success of a student in performing freshman-level academic coursework.

Differentiated Instruction - the different instructional processes used to work within a student's varied skill levels, motivational attitudes and learning preferences.

Differentiated Placement - advising and placement of students based on individual strengths and needs.

Emporium-style – an instructional strategy that replaces traditional style lectures with a learning resource center model featuring interactive computer software and on-demand personalized assistance.

Institution of higher education or institution - any public technical institute, public junior college, public senior college or university, medical or dental unit, or other agency of higher education as defined in Texas Education Code, §61.003(8).

Mainstream - the practice of placing a developmental education student into a credit bearing college course. Mainstreaming is enhanced by providing additional support to the student.

Measureable Learning Outcomes - knowledge, skills, and abilities, and/or attitudes that students should be able to demonstrate upon completion of a course and/or intervention.

Minimum Passing Standards - The minimum scores which must be attained by a student in reading, writing, and mathematics that indicates the student's readiness to enroll in freshman-level academic coursework.

Modular Instruction – a method of teaching that is based on the building of skills and knowledge in discrete units. Instruction is provide using modules, or individual units of work. A student advances through each unit at pace that supports his/her learning style.

Non-Course Competency-Based Developmental Education Interventions (also known as non-course-based or non-semester-length options and interventions) - Interventions that use learning approaches designed to address a student’s identified weaknesses and effectively and efficiently prepare the student for college-level work. These interventions must be overseen by an instructor of record, must not fit traditional course frameworks, and cannot include advising or learning support activities already connected to a traditional course; interventions may include, but are not limited to, tutoring, supplemental instruction, or labs.

Non-Degree Credit Course - a course which may not be counted toward a degree or certificate. The term includes developmental, pre-collegiate and continuing education courses.

Non-traditional - an instructional strategy that differs from the traditional course-based model. Non-traditional courses are typically designed to accelerate the student’s learning.

Professional Development - the provision of ongoing and systematic learning opportunities for developmental educators and support staff that focus on research-based strategies, methodologies, and best practices resulting in effective and efficient coursework and/or interventions advancing the cognitive and non-cognitive skills of underprepared students seeking post-secondary enrichment, certificates, and degrees.

Program Evaluation - a systematic method of collecting, analyzing, and using information to answer questions about developmental education courses, interventions, and policies, particularly about their effectiveness and cost-efficiency.

Public Two-Year Colleges - any public junior college, public community college, public technical institute, or public state college as defined in Texas Education Code, §61.003.

Technology - the use of instructional aids, methods and/or other computer-based tools that enhance student learning.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: SENATE BILL 162

AN ACT

relating to developing a developmental education plan for students entering public institutions of higher education.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Subchapter C, Chapter 61, Education Code, is amended by adding Section 61.07611 to read as follows:

Sec. 61.07611. DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION PLAN; REPORT. (a) To serve students who require developmental education in an effective and cost-effective manner, the board shall develop a statewide plan for developmental education to be provided under Section 51.3062 that:

(1) assigns primary responsibility for developmental education to public junior colleges, public state colleges, and public technical institutes; and

(2) provides for using technology, to the greatest extent practicable consistent with best practices, to provide developmental education to students.

(b) In developing the developmental education plan, the board shall:

(1) research relevant issues related to developmental education;

(2) study and develop best practices for successful developmental education programs, including through use of pilot programs; and

(3) assess various methods of providing developmental education to students to determine which methods, if any, should be implemented on a statewide basis.

(c) Developmental education under the plan must include:

(1) technological delivery of developmental education courses that allows students to complete course work;

(2) diagnostic assessments to determine a student's specific educational needs to allow for appropriate developmental instruction;

(3) modular developmental education course materials;

(4) use of tutors and instructional aides to supplement developmental education course instruction as needed for particular students;

(5) an internal monitoring mechanism to identify a student's area of academic difficulty;

(6) periodic updates of developmental education course materials; and

(7) assessments after completion of a developmental education course to determine a student's readiness to enroll in freshman-level academic courses.

(d) The developmental education plan must provide for:

(1) ongoing training for developmental education program faculty members, tutors, and instructional aides at the institutions or other locations where those persons provide instruction; and

(2) ongoing research and improvement of appropriate developmental education programs, including participation by a group of institution of higher education faculty members selected by the board, to:

(A) monitor results of the programs;

(B) identify successful and unsuccessful program components; and

(C) identify possible solutions to program problems.

(e) Not later than December 1, 2012, the board shall submit to the governor, lieutenant governor, speaker of the house of representatives, and presiding officer of each legislative standing committee with primary jurisdiction over higher education a report concerning the initial development of the developmental education plan under this section, including any recommendations for redesign or reassignment among institutions of higher education of existing programs or implementation of new programs and, if appropriate, recommendations for legislation. This subsection expires January 1, 2013.

**APPENDIX B:
2009 STATEWIDE
DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION PLAN**



Statewide Developmental Education Plan 2010-2011 Biennium

July 30, 2009

Statewide Developmental Education Plan 2010-2011 Biennium

Introduction

In April 2008, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) released its funding formula recommendations for the 2010-2011 biennium. Included in those recommendations was a request that \$30 million dollars be trusteeed to the THECB to invest in innovative projects to dramatically improve developmental education in Texas. The THECB was successful in receiving \$5 million dollars toward this request. In addition to the \$5 million dollars appropriated by the 81st Texas Legislature, an additional \$4.1 million (\$1.1m-FY09 and \$3m-FY10) from the College Readiness Initiative strategy will be available to fund systemically-driven developmental education strategies. This document is an outline of a proposed plan to use the \$9.1 million in appropriated funds to improve the quality and effectiveness of developmental education in Texas.

Background

Texas developmental education is in need of systemic reform for the following reasons:

With such a diverse student population, Texas needs to implement innovative projects that are effective in addressing students' diverse needs, accelerating their progress toward college and career readiness, and improving overall student outcomes.

Academic advising is limited in availability and scope. Developmental education students need to receive appropriate advising, particularly during the first semester of enrollment.

Developmental education instructors do not have access to ongoing professional development to integrate current research into instructional practice.

Texas developmental education programs have not engaged in systematic evaluation of program components according to national standards on a wide scale.

Texas lacks a standardized Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessment that is aligned with the recently adopted College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS). Assessment instruments that provide useful diagnostic information to developmental education programs are vital to improving student outcomes.

The THECB needs to strengthen support from developmental education stakeholders through meaningful collaborations.

Texas lacks a comprehensive system to assist recent General Education Development (GED) diploma recipients with enrollment in postsecondary education programs.

Thus, the projects supported with funds from Fiscal Year 2009 and the 2010-2011 biennium should address six core areas:

- innovative program strategies (with an emphasis on accelerated course options)
- counseling and academic advising
- faculty development
- program excellence
- assessment and placement
- alignment with Adult Basic Education

Developmental Education Plan Goals

This section proposes six goals for developmental education for the 2010-2011 biennium. The discussion of each goal is supported by a rationale that factors in research and the results of an environmental scan of developmental education in Texas.

Goal 1: Identify and fund innovative projects to improve the access, acceleration, and success of students who need developmental education to achieve college readiness, with a specific emphasis on non-course based remediation efforts.

Rationale for Goal 1: The low rate of student success in developmental math around the state needs to be improved. Student success in developmental reading courses also needs improvement. While more students are in need of math remediation, research indicates that the single best predictor of success in college is whether a student needs or successfully completes reading remediation (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008).

There is inconsistency in the quality of developmental education programs in Texas. However, a small number of institutions have strong program components that are largely unknown to others in the field. By funding innovative projects (e.g., non-course-based remediation), Texas can determine the viability of these projects for statewide replication. Special emphasis should be directed toward students placed in math and reading remediation.

Goal 2: Improve the availability and quality of academic advising and counseling services for developmental education students.

Rationale for Goal 2: Academic advising and counseling services for first-time-in-college (FTIC) developmental education students are lacking in developmental education programs. Institutions appear to focus resources on increasing student access to courses without ensuring that students receive appropriate advising, particularly during their first semester. Strategies to improve academic advising need to go beyond just increasing the number of academic advisors and counselors available to serve students. THECB funding can be used to identify

and pilot innovative efforts to provide both basic and intensive advising programs for students (e.g., orientation and freshman experience).

Goal 3: Increase the preparedness of developmental educators.

Rationale for Goal 3: Teacher quality has a direct impact on student outcomes. In its January 2007 developmental education report, the Developmental Education Subcommittee of the Texas P-16 Council noted the inherent weakness of the professional development delivery system for Texas developmental educators. The subcommittee reported that developmental education professional development is lacking in availability, quality, and relevance and recommended that "Texas should increase the preparedness of developmental education educators by providing additional avenues for receiving professional credentials in developmental education and by providing increased and better professional development opportunities" (p. 11).

Goal 4: Improve the quality and effectiveness of developmental education programs in the state of Texas.

Rationale for Goal 4: The THECB's Strategic Plan for Texas Public Community Colleges calls for institutions to „Close the Gaps in Excellence“ by obtaining national recognition for programs and services. The proposed developmental education plan encourages programs to seek state and national recognition for developmental education programs. In addition, developmental education programs need to ensure that all courses are aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards. Because developmental education is an extension of high school readiness, it is important that the courses taught in Texas institutions are addressing these standards.

Goal 5: Improve the assessment and placement of first-time-in-college (FTIC) students into developmental education.

Rationale for Goal 5: Research indicates that correct and appropriate placement (not too high and not too low) in the first semester of developmental education coursework influences future student persistence (Adelman, 2006; Prince, 2005). Currently, Texas institutions rely on five core standardized assessments (TAKS, ACCUPLACER, ASSET, COMPASS, and THEA) to determine college readiness for FTIC students. However, the THECB has made preliminary analyses of the predictive nature of each assessment tool and has found that the assessment scores students receive are not very reliable predictors of success in the first college-level course after remediation. Additionally, the instruments in use have not been shown to be aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards. Finally, institutions and students “game” or “shop around” for the best

test that can increase the likelihood of meeting Texas Success Initiative requirements.

Another complicating factor in assessing and appropriately placing students is that a student can be placed in remediation using one assessment instrument and then retested with another assessment instrument. The use of different pre- and post-remediation assessment instruments prohibits consistent tracking of changes or growth due to developmental education courses.

Currently, institutions administer additional local or in-class assessments to not only “validate” the results of the assessments, but give more complete diagnostic information regarding a student’s strengths and weaknesses. Students may be advised to move to a higher or lower class based upon the additional assessments administered by learning centers or instructors. The information gained from the additional assessments is not required by state accountability reporting; however, the information gained can greatly increase the accuracy of guidance provided by academic advisors.

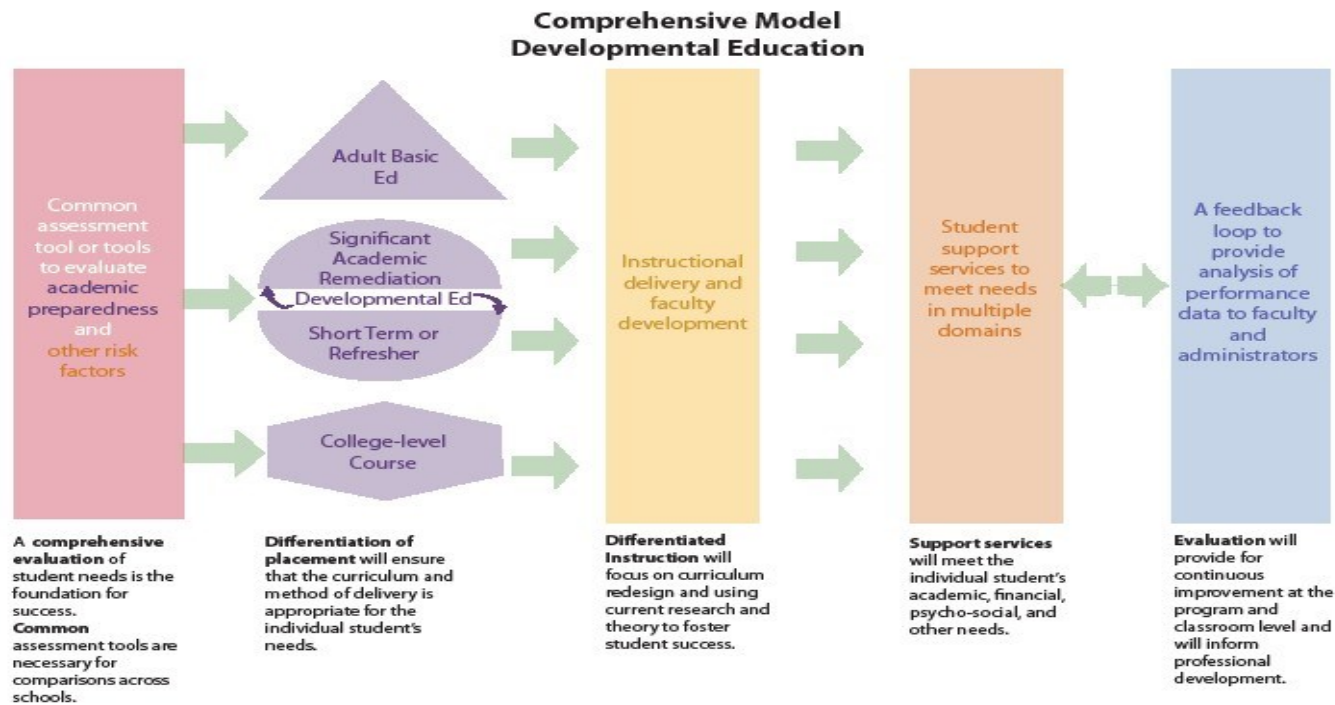
Having inconsistent assessments and measures of performance leads to inconsistency in placement and ultimately skews the analysis of placement and outcomes when students are moved based upon these supplemental assessment instruments administered at the class level. Texas needs to develop a single assessment instrument that has been validated and aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards to eliminate the need for this time-consuming shadow assessment process by institutions. Some instructors report as much as one week of lost instructional time in order to administer supplemental assessments.

Goal 6: Improve alignment of adult basic education with community colleges and career technical education.

Rationale for Goal 6: Rider 56 of the General Appropriations Act (House Bill 1) of the 81st Texas Legislature calls for the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, in coordination with the Texas Education Agency (TEA), “to develop and implement immediate and long-range coordinated action plans that align Adult Basic Education (ABE) and postsecondary education.”

The following illustration represents the comprehensive demonstration project model that will be implemented and rigorous evaluated under this strategy.

Figure 1. Proposed Comprehensive Model for Developmental Education Demonstration Projects



Explanation of Developmental Education Model Components

Model Component	Rationale
Assessment	Accurate assessment and placement of underprepared students is critical to their chances for success in remediation coursework. Students inappropriately placed within the developmental course sequence, because of weak assessment instruments and inaccurate cut-scores, often leads to frustration, course withdrawal, or failure for the student. The demonstration projects will investigate the use of a single diagnostic assessment instrument and the impact of using the current TSI state minimum standards for college readiness versus higher TSI standards set by many institutions.
Differentiated Placement	A one-size fits all approach to placement is impeding the progress of students that need limited remediation (i.e. students missing the cut-score by one or two points). Under this component we will investigate the effectiveness of placing students in course-based and non course-based options that takes into account work-life needs, remediates as quickly as possible, and provides students with the best opportunity for student success.
Faculty Development	A student that is appropriately placed into remediation can still be unsuccessful if the instructor in the classroom is not properly trained in the best practices from developmental education theory and research. Innovative strategies such as learning communities, modular curricula, and integrated reading/writing course models have only emerged in recent years. Demonstration project sites will focus on ensuring that all developmental education faculty are trained using the most recent evidence-based instructional strategies and receive technical assistance to implement them in the classroom.
Differentiated Instruction	The goal of a comprehensive professional development program is to ensure that faculty members are confident in their ability to differentiate instruction based on the diverse learning needs of the students entering their classrooms each semester. The use of a contextualized learning curriculum and experience teaching students with special learning needs is critical to preparing them for the diverse academic programs available particularly at 2-year public and technical colleges.
Support Services	Underprepared students need counseling and support services before, during, and after remediation. The most common support structures for developmental education students stop after the first or second semester. The demonstration sites will implement a support system that follows students through to certificate/degree completion.
Evaluation	Evaluation will focus on creating a continuous feedback loop. Through technical assistance from national experts in developmental education, demonstration sites will implement rigorous evaluation models to determine the effectiveness and scalability of program strategies. Demonstration sites will also be encouraged, through the use of incentive funding, to pursue national certification for their instructional and tutoring programs targeting developmental education students.

APPENDIX C: OVERVIEW OF DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION



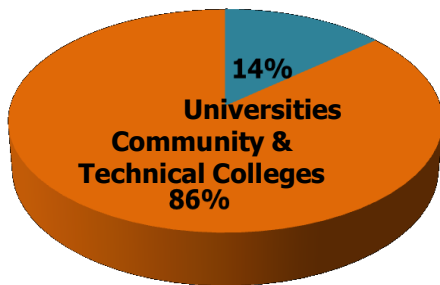
Transforming Developmental Education

The Challenge

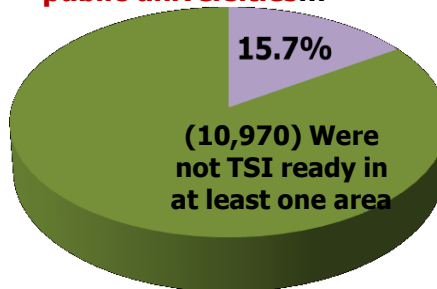
One of the greatest challenges facing higher education since the launch of Closing the Gaps by 2015 has been improving the academic preparedness of students enrolling in Texas higher education. Statewide, **41 percent** of students enrolled in Texas public higher education required some form of developmental education. The ability to perform college-level coursework is an important factor in the successful completion of college. Students entering higher education prepared to do college-level work graduate at twice the rate of students that do not. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, with the support and assistance from the Texas Legislature, institutions, and non-profit organizations, are piloting innovative strategies and transforming the delivery of developmental education to accelerate student success in college, career, and life.

STATEWIDE DEVELOPMENTAL EDUCATION PARTICIPATION, Fall 2010

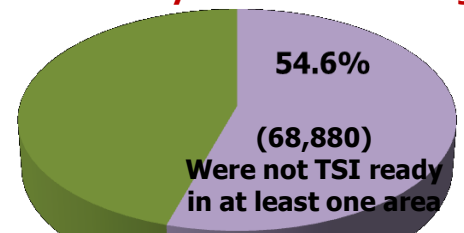
Statewide Percent of Students Not Ready by Higher Education Sector



Of the 69,724 enrolling at public universities...



Of the 126,075 enrolling at community and technical colleges...



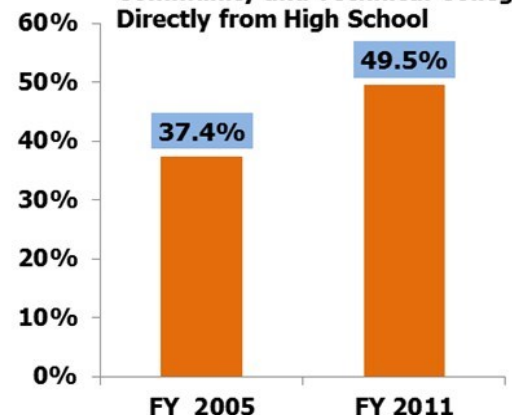
More than **8 in 10** students requiring developmental education attended community & technical college.

Total # of Students Not TSI Ready In At Least One Area: 79,850

Accelerating Developmental Education Success

Data on student readiness, as evidenced by the state's TSI assessments, has shown marked improvement. The chart on the right demonstrates that Texas has experienced a significant increase in the number of high school students enrolling directly at community colleges who meet state college readiness standards. These trends are encouraging and support continued commitment to the reform efforts under way. However, Texas and the nation have much work ahead. While we improve readiness, we must continue to invest in effective remediation.

Percent of College-Ready Students In All Three Areas Enrolling in Community and Technical Colleges Directly from High School



Developmental Education Demonstration Projects (DEDPs)

In 2010, the THECB in collaboration with select community colleges and universities, launched a developmental education initiative to identify and scale innovations designed to fundamentally reform a system that is failing students nationwide. Developmental education demonstration projects (pilot institutions listed below) are focusing on student needs by implementing **robust advising and monitoring systems, offering adult learning options with paths to career and college, and providing accelerated models such as modular, non-course based, and integrated course options to accelerate a student's pathway toward degree attainment.**

The state-funded, THECB-administered, **developmental education demonstration projects are designed to boost completion rates among at-risk students by improving remediation programs at colleges and universities.** These projects will help Texas promote systemic reform of developmental education programs for underprepared students in postsecondary institutions by improving access, acceleration, and student success. THECB staff members will be compiling and analyzing the data and best practices from the work of the DEDPs. The THECB will be evaluating the progress and outcomes of the DEDPs and recommend scalable and sustainable best practices as policy recommendations to the 83rd Texas Legislature in January 2013.

DEDP Institutions

Community College Awards

- Alamo Colleges
- El Paso Community College
- Tarrant County College District-South & Northeast Campus
- Lone Star College-Montgomery
- San Jacinto College

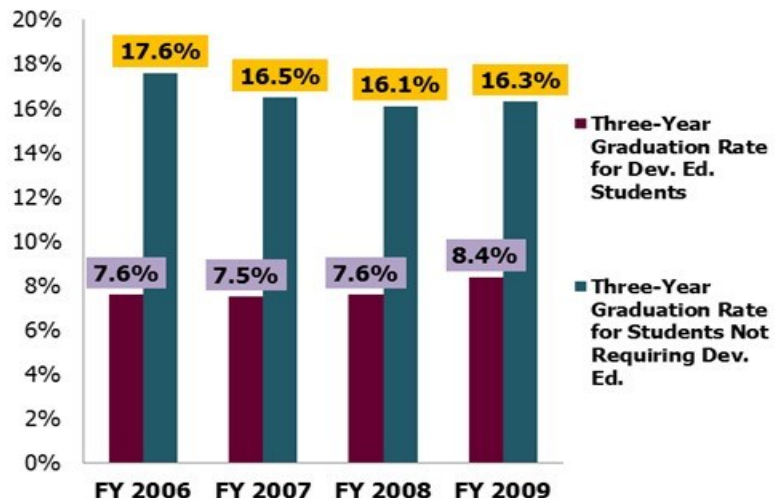
University Awards

- Texas State University-San Marcos
- Texas A&M University- Commerce
- The University of Texas-Pan American
- The University of Texas at Austin

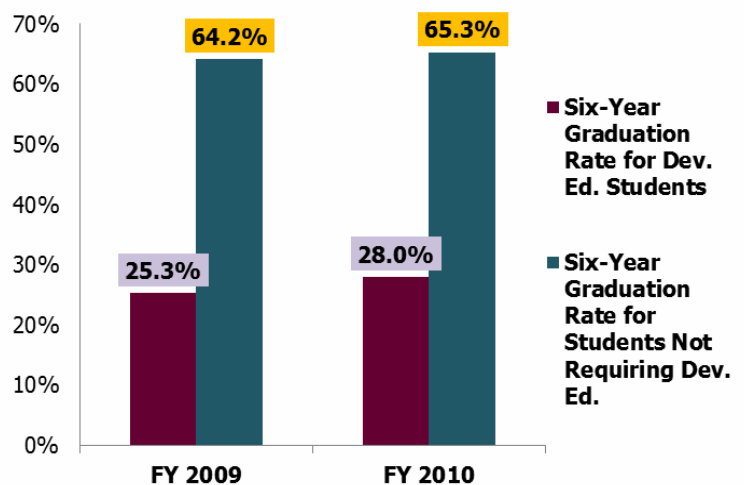
Statewide Efforts

The 82nd Texas Legislature, Regular Session, recognized the need for improving developmental education delivery through the passage of HB 1244, HB 3468, and SB 162. To engage institutional faculty and staff in the implementation of the legislation, the THECB developed the Developmental Education Advisory Committee. The advisory committee is charged with advising agency staff on addressing the legislative requirements, including evaluating developmental education programs statewide, providing feedback on related rule revisions, and working closely with national assessment experts to move Texas toward adopting a diagnostic Texas Success Initiative (TSI) assessment or assessments for satisfying college readiness. Beginning in the 2013-2014 academic year, the TSI assessment or assessments will be aligned with the College and Career Readiness Standards and include

Percent of First-Time, Full-Time Students Enrolled in Community Colleges Who Graduated After Three Years
Developmental Education Students vs. Students Not Requiring Developmental Education



Percent of First-Time, Full-Time Undergraduate Students Enrolled in Universities Who Graduated After Six Years
Developmental Education Students vs. Students Not Requiring Developmental Education



components for developmental education and adult basic education placement and diagnostics for underprepared students. The assessment is a key aspect of the Success Initiative to improving advising protocols for counselors and faculty as they consider the best combination of interventions, including concurrent, non-course based, and technology-based options that promotes acceleration, persistence, and most importantly, success.

Further, the advisory committee will work collaboratively with the Texas Developmental Education Initiative (DEI) in addressing guidelines for data collection and dissemination that inform scalability and sustainability concerns. The DEI is a collaboration of six states committed to building on demonstrated results in developmental education innovation across the country.

Completion Innovation Challenge Grant

In 2011, Complete College America (CCA), a nonprofit focused on dramatically increasing the nation's college completion rates through state policy change, awarded Texas a \$1 million Completion Innovation Challenge Grant to significantly transform developmental education in math. The grant expands the Fundamentals of Conceptual Understanding & Success (FOCUS) Program which aims to reduce time-to-degree by allowing students to fulfill remediation requirements while also receiving college credit for math within a single semester. This innovative instructional model has been developed and tested at Texas State University which will serve as the program coordinator for the participating community colleges. Fifteen community colleges largely composed of students from low-income and underrepresented ethnic groups representing every region of the state are expected to participate in the grant. During fall 2011 partner institutions participated in professional development, modified relevant policies, and revised course descriptions for spring 2012 course implementation.

The grant requires a leadership team be assembled for project implementation. The leadership team is chaired by a representative from the Governor's Office and comprised of two implementation site (campus) representatives, one legislative staff member on both the Senate and House Higher Education Committees, the program coordinator from Texas State University, and THECB staff. Specifically, the leadership team has been tasked with reviewing collected metrics and evaluating the progress toward implementation of the grant. Further, this team will advise the implementation partners on program changes and make developmental education policy recommendations to the Coordinating Board.

Summer Bridge Programs

In 2006, the 79th Texas Legislature, Third Called Session, provided the THECB with the authority to establish summer bridge programs at institutions of higher education to decrease the number of students needing developmental education and to overall increase student success. Since that time, institutions have received funding to offer these programs to rising high school juniors, seniors and recent high school graduates who scored below the required college readiness standard on the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) or other approved college readiness assessments. Institutions are required to provide instruction and academic support in English language arts or mathematics in no less than a four week period. In addition, instruction focuses on factors for college success. Analysis done by the THECB show intensive summer bridge programs have proven to decrease the need for developmental education. The THECB is in the process of developing a model summer bridge program that incorporates best practices associated with effective programs. This model program will be tested during summer 2012 and 2013 to ensure its efficacy and eventually scale statewide.

APPENDIX D: OVERVIEW OF ADULT BASIC AND SECONDARY EDUCATION



Adult Basic and Secondary Education

The Challenge

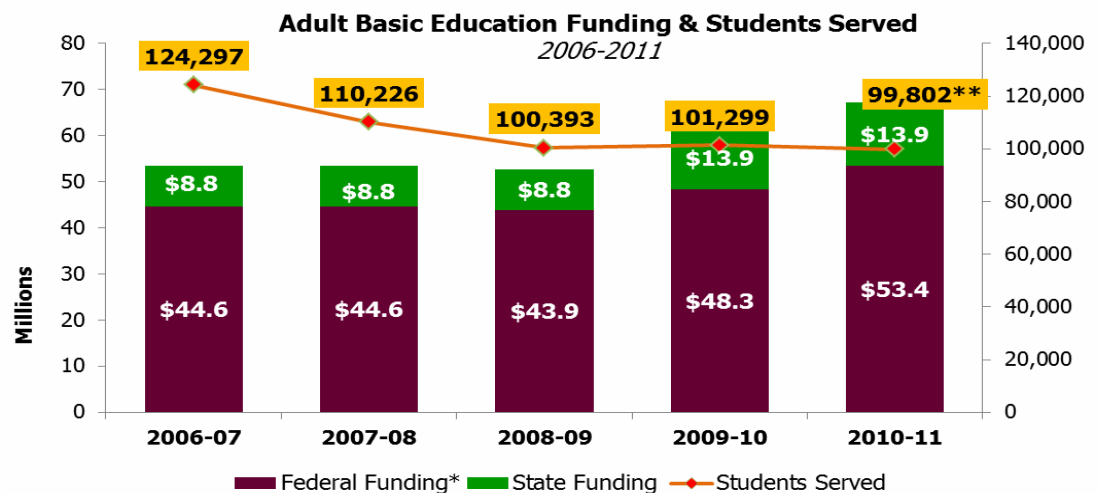
The demand for Adult Basic Education (ABE) services in Texas are high. In the 2010 American Communities Survey, one-year estimates of educational attainment, 3.6 million Texans qualified for adult education services and only 99,802 were served. Texas received \$53.4 million in federal funds for ABE Texas in 2010-11, with the state providing the required 25 percent matching funds for a total of \$67.3 million. With more and more jobs requiring some level of postsecondary education, it is critical to promote ABE programs to get Texans on a path to careers in high demand fields or to successfully transition to postsecondary programs. The potential to meet economic needs through the alignment of ABE and workforce is vast, however limited funding has led to a severely underserved adult population.

ABE Administration

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has federal and state fiduciary responsibility for ABE in Texas. Under an agreement with TEA, Texas LEARNS, an entity of the Harris County Department of Education, provides technical assistance, program oversight, and professional development management to 55 providers

of ABE in Texas. In 2007, the 80th Texas Legislature approved a General Appropriations Rider requiring the TEA and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) collaborate to develop and implement immediate and long-range coordinated action plans to align ABE and postsecondary education. The THECB now houses several programs in the Division of P-16 Initiatives that aim to improve the participation and success of lower skilled adults in postsecondary education and work training programs. These include the ABE Innovation Grants (ABE-IG), the Developmental Education Demonstration Projects (DEDP), the Intensive College Readiness Programs for Adult Education Students (IPAES), and the Transitions Project.

According to Texas LEARNS, the number of students served has declined over the years despite increased funding levels due to higher rates of student retention and improved program quality.



* Includes Federal TANF that flows through Texas Riders.

** The student number reflected does not include the Windham ISD incarcerated adults as reported to the U.S. Dept. of Education starting in 2011.

ABE Innovation Grants

The **ABE-IG** pilot programs are designed to establish career pathways for ABE students who score at the high intermediate English as a Second Language (ESL) level (literacy/reading) or low intermediate basic education level (reading). Adult education students take career/technical training courses concurrently with adult basic education support classes which are contextualized to the training course (e.g. Math for Welding). The support classes are taught by adult basic education faculty, by developmental education faculty, or by the certificate instructor and an ABE or developmental education faculty member. The ABE-IG institutions partner with community adult education providers (federally funded and non-federally funded), local workforce solutions centers, area non-profits serving adults, and continuing education programs on the college campus to provide integrated basic skills support and technical training that leads to a state, national, or Level 1 certificate in a high demand or targeted occupation in their local area. Evaluation of these programs began in fall 2011 and will continue through 2012-2013.

ABE & Developmental Education Demonstration Projects

The **DEDP institutions**, all of which have ABE-IG programs, align adult basic education with developmental education. The goal in this alignment is not to position adult education programs as a pathway into developmental education, but to identify lower skilled adults in developmental education and provide them with augmented student and academic support services including academic advising, career counseling, intensive, accelerated instruction focused on reading, writing, mathematics, and college success, and contextualized developmental education coursework integrated with a technical training certificate (e.g. English for Specific Purposes – Health Professions or Mathematics for Welding). Evaluation of these programs began in fall 2011 and will continue through spring 2012.

Intensive College Readiness Programs for Adult Education Students

The **IPAES** grantees assist recent GED graduates and adults with high school diplomas who have been out of school three or more years into postsecondary education and/or certificate training programs. The purpose of these intensive programs is to determine if short-term and accelerated academic instruction and support can improve transition to college, college persistence, and success for adult education students who are underrepresented in college enrollment rates and at-risk of dropping out from college. A successful IPAES provides academically at-risk students opportunities to gain skills associated with college persistence and success in first and second-year college courses. Specifically, these programs provide an intensive learning opportunity focusing on an accelerated college and career readiness curriculum in writing, reading, mathematics, and college success. These intensive, accelerated college readiness programs eliminate or reduce the amount of time adult learners may be in developmental education while improving their academic readiness for the rigor of college courses. Twelve programs were funded in 2010-2011 and ten were awarded continuation funds in 2011-2012. Since summer 2010, 479 adult education students have successfully completed an intensive program. During the 2010-2011 school year, all but one program reported significant increases in student scores on the mathematics section of the Texas Higher Education Assessment (THEA) with an average student increase of 18 points between the pre- and post-THEA. An analysis of the successful transition of this cohort into and through postsecondary education, including the rate of successful completion of developmental education and college-level coursework, is underway. Ten grantees were awarded in FY 2012.

Transitions Projects

The **Transitions Project** at Texas State University-San Marcos conducts research on best practices in adult education and developmental education alignment with the College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS) and postsecondary transition and success of adult basic skills students. There have been **three phases** of their work. The **first phase** consisted of a literature review on transitions and the development of a survey and focus group questions designed to discover how the 55 federally funded adult education programs in Texas were addressing the transition of adult education students into postsecondary education and/or working training programs. The survey of the providers and the focus group questions were conducted during **Phase II** of the project as well as a 96-hour online professional development opportunity on building a bridge between adult education programs and postsecondary education using the cross-disciplinary standards from the CCRS. An analysis of the differences between the Texas Adult Education Standards and Benchmarks and the CCRS was also conducted. In **Phase III**, the Transitions Project will utilize the research it has already completed and data from the first year evaluation of the IPAES grantee institutions to develop a framework for a successful eight week bridge program for adult education students. This framework will be disseminated to ABE programs, community college developmental education programs, and other interested parties through the Texas Center of Adult Literacy and Learning (TCALL), THECB Adult Education website, Texas LEARNS, and TEA.

Jobs for the Future

Most recently, the THECB contracted with **Jobs for the Future** (JFF) to provide **technical assistance and support to the ABE Innovation grantees** in FY 2012 continuing through FY 2013. JFF will provide technical assistance in 2012 to 14 community and technical colleges currently holding adult education innovation grants, and to 10-15 additional programs expected to be funded in spring FY 2012. The JFF team will visit each institution and provide each with a customized technical assistance plan and guide institutions as they work through the plan; JFF will provide professional development to grantees on (but not limited to):

- ✓ Contextualization of workforce training curriculum and GED
- ✓ Career counseling
- ✓ Case management advising
- ✓ Acceleration of basic skills/technical training

In addition, JFF will provide the THECB documentation of best practices across institutions in order to provide institutional and/or state policy recommendations to support scalability and sustainability of best practices.

For more information:

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