

# **Report on the Recruitment of Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities at Public Institutions of Higher Education in Texas**

**(Senate Bill 37, 84th Texas Legislature,  
Regular Session)**

**October 2020**

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## Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board



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### Agency Mission

The mission of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is to provide leadership and coordination for Texas higher education and to promote access, affordability, quality, success, and cost efficiency through *60x30TX*, resulting in a globally competitive workforce that positions Texas as an international leader.

### Agency Vision

The THECB will be recognized as an international leader in developing and implementing innovative higher education policy to accomplish our mission.

### Agency Philosophy

The THECB will promote access to and success in quality higher education across the state with the conviction that access and success without quality is mediocrity and that quality without access and success is unacceptable.

The THECB's core values are:

**Accountability:** We hold ourselves responsible for our actions and welcome every opportunity to educate stakeholders about our policies, decisions, and aspirations.

**Efficiency:** We accomplish our work using resources in the most effective manner.

**Collaboration:** We develop partnerships that result in student success and a highly qualified, globally competent workforce.

**Excellence:** We strive for excellence in all our endeavors.

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**

The Texas Education Code (TEC), Section 61.0664, authorized through the passage of Senate Bill 37, 84th Legislature, Regular Session, requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to conduct an ongoing study on the college recruitment of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). According to the statute, the study is to “identify previously made recruitment efforts, limitations on recruitment and possible methods for recruitment” for this population (TEC, Section 61.0664(c)). Reports are to be submitted to the governor and members of the Legislature by November 1 of each year.

Texas Education Code, Section 61.0663 mandates that the THECB maintain and annually update an inventory of postsecondary educational programs and services provided for persons with IDD by institutions of higher education. Data from public institutions of higher education are posted by institution on the THECB’s website and will be updated annually.

## Introduction

On July 28, 2020, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) provided the intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD) reporting contacts of all Texas public higher education institutions with instructions for accessing a survey for collecting recruitment-related data and requested that survey responses be submitted to the THECB by August 28, 2020.

This report is based on the results of that survey. It includes the number of institutions responding to the survey, a list of the survey questions, and, for those institutions reporting recruitment activities, a summary of their responses. In addition to a study on recruitment, Texas Education Code, Section 61.0664 requires the THECB to collect administrative data on students with IDD enrolled in public institutions of higher education (IHEs). Texas Administrative Code, Section 4.12 requires all IHEs to indicate whether an enrolled student is identified as having an IDD, which allows the agency to track their academic success. Those data collection efforts are included in this report during even-numbered years.

## Report on the Recruitment of Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities at Public Institutions of Higher Education in Texas

The Texas Education Code (TEC), Section 61.0664, authorized through the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 37, 84th Legislature, Regular Session, requires the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) to conduct an ongoing study on the college recruitment of persons with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD). According to the statute, the study is to “identify previously made recruitment efforts, limitations on recruitment and possible methods for recruitment” for this population (TEC, Section 61.0664(c)). Reports are to be submitted to the governor and members of the Legislature by November 1 of each year.

The THECB staff, with the assistance of stakeholders from public institutions of higher education (IHEs) and the community, annually develops and distributes a survey instrument for collecting recruitment-related data. On July 28, 2020, the THECB provided public institution contacts with instructions for accessing the 2020 survey and requested that responses be submitted by August 28, 2020. A copy of the recruitment questions is provided as [Appendix A](#).

Since the inception of the recruitment report in 2016, 84 institutions have responded to the annual survey. Data for 2020 included responses from 26 institutions. Of these 26 institutions, eight reported they engaged in some sort of recruitment activity targeting students with IDD. Specifically, two institutions recruited students with IDD into a postsecondary program, five institutions recruited students with IDD into general academic courses, and one recruited students into both. The top five recruitment actions for students with IDD at these eight institutions are identified in Table 1.

**Table 1. Top Five 2020 Recruitment Activities for Students with IDD**

Action	Count	Percent
Distribute materials about programs and services	7	87.5%
Include information in general college materials	7	87.5%
Present information at secondary schools	5	62.5%
Present at parent advocacy and support groups	5	62.5%
Participate in career fairs or transition fairs	5	62.5%

*Source: Survey of Recruitment of Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities at Public Institutions of Higher Education in Texas*

The most successful recruitment approach mentioned by institutions was connecting with K-12 partners. The limitations to recruiting students with IDD to institutions of higher education included:

- having insufficient time and staff to fulfill recruitment efforts;
- lack of awareness that programs exist;
- lack of financial aid for students enrolling in certain types of transitional programs for students with IDD;
- inability of students with IDD to attend recruitment activities due to unavailability of transportation; and
- inability of high school students and parents to attend presentations during the day due to class and work schedules.

Of the 84 institutions that have responded to the report since its inception in 2016, 24 reported they engaged in some sort of recruitment activity targeting students with IDD. Specifically, seven institutions recruited students with IDD into a postsecondary program, 13 institutions recruited students with IDD into general academic courses, and four recruited students into both. The top five recruitment actions for students with IDD at these 24 institutions are identified in Table 2.

**Table 2. Top Five 2016-2020 Recruitment Activities for Students with IDD**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Distribute materials about programs and services	19	79.2%
Present information at secondary schools	19	79.2%
Include information in general college materials	18	75.0%
Participate in career fairs or transition fairs	18	75.0%
Offer campus or program tours	17	70.8%

*Source: Survey of Recruitment of Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities at Public Institutions of Higher Education in Texas*

The most successful recruitment approaches mentioned by institutions were connecting with K-12 partners and collaborating with the Texas Workforce Commission-Vocational Rehabilitation Services. The limitations to recruiting students with IDD to institutions of higher education included:

- having insufficient time and staff to fulfill recruitment efforts;
- lack of space to enroll more students;
- lack of awareness that programs exist;
- underpreparation of incoming students with IDD as they transition into higher education;
- inability of students with IDD to attend recruitment activities due to unavailability of transportation;
- lack of financial aid for students enrolling in certain types of transitional programs for students with IDD; and
- inability of high school students and parents to attend presentations during the day due to class and work schedules.

In addition to the study on recruitment, Texas Education Code, Section 61.0664 requires the THECB to collect administrative data on students with IDD enrolled in public IHEs. Through collaboration with stakeholders, a rule was drafted and subsequently approved by the board of the THECB (Texas Administrative Code, Section 4.12) that requires all IHEs to indicate whether an enrolled student is identified as having an IDD and whether the student is enrolled in a program for students with IDD. Table 3 lists the number of students with IDD enrolled in credit-bearing courses, and Table 4 lists the number in state-funded continuing education courses.

**Table 3. Students with an IDD Enrolled in Credit-Bearing Courses**

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Total Reported Students</b>	<b>Students Reported as Enrolled in a Program for Students with IDD</b>
Academic Year 2017-2018	3,594	145
Academic Year 2018-2019	4,150	52
Fall 2019*	3,202	31

Source: CBM001

Note: Numbers are unduplicated across semesters within an academic year and across institutions.

\*Data from the full Academic Year 2019-2020 is not certified at time of this report.

**Table 4. Students with an IDD Enrolled in State-Funded Continuing Education Courses**

<b>Academic Year</b>	<b>Total Reported Students</b>	<b>Students Reported as Enrolled in a Program for Students with IDD</b>
Academic Year 2017-2018	196	89
Academic Year 2018-2019	174	100
Fall 2019*	167	143

Source: CBM00A

Note: Numbers are unduplicated across semesters within an academic year and across institutions.

\*Data from the full Academic Year 2019-2020 is not certified at time of this report.

## Conclusion

The progress described in this report reflects the work of individuals in higher education institutions, K-12 schools and districts, and the Texas Workforce Commission, as well as parents, self-advocates, and community advocacy groups. These individuals and groups must continue to work closely together to provide improved recruitment of persons with IDD at public institutions of higher education in Texas.

While the response rate for institutions was about 66.7% in 2016, response rates in subsequent years have decreased. For example, only 26 institutions reported data in 2020. One possibility for these low response rates may be due to the process through which institutions are asked to provide their updates. Currently, it is difficult to discern whether institutions did not respond because they have no new information to report or if they simply did not respond to the request to update their information. THECB staff will explore possible changes for the upcoming year to address some of these challenges.

In addition, as stipulated in Texas Education Code, Section 61.06641, the Advisory Council on Postsecondary Education for Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities has been charged with advising the THECB on policies and practices to improve postsecondary education opportunities for persons with IDD. Collectively, the THECB, the advisory council, and stakeholder organizations will work to improve access to higher education for individuals with IDD.

**Appendix A:**  
**Survey Questions Regarding Recruitment of Persons with  
Intellectual and/or Developmental Disabilities**  
**August 2020**

Within the past year, has your institution taken steps to specifically recruit students with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD)? Check all that apply.

- Yes – Into a Postsecondary Program for Students with IDD
- Yes – Into general academic courses at the institution
- No

Which of the following actions have you taken to recruit persons with IDD? Only select if the recruitment activity was specifically targeted for individuals with IDD. Check all that apply.

- Post program or service information on third-party website (example: thinkcollege.net)
- Operate a website for postsecondary transition programs for students with IDD
- Distribute materials about programs and services
- Present information at secondary schools
- Present at parent advocacy and support groups
- Include information in general college materials, such as websites, orientation sessions
- Participate in career fairs or transition fairs
- Offer campus or program tours for students with IDD
- Prepare recruitment counselors to include information about recruiting special populations
- None

List other recruitment activities you have undertaken for students with IDD that were not included in the list above.

List approaches have been successful for your institution in recruiting students with IDD.

List issues have that you have found that limit your ability to recruit students with IDD and how have you addressed them.

If applicable, please provide additional information about your institution's goals, efforts or future plans to recruit students with IDD.



This document is available on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board website:  
<http://highered.texas.gov>.

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