

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

Texas Education Code, Section 61.0664

October 2022

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Agency Mission

The mission of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) is to serve as a resource, partner, and advocate for Texas higher education, 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.

Please cite this report as follows: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. (2022). Report on the Recruitment of Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities at Public Institutions of Higher Education in Texas. Austin, TX.

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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 even-numbered 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 is updated annually.

Introduction

On July 29, 2022, 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 19, 2022.

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.

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 even-numbered 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 for collecting recruitment-related data. On July 29, 2022, the THECB provided public institution contacts with instructions for accessing the 2022 survey and requested that responses be submitted by August 19, 2022. A copy of the recruitment questions is provided as [Appendix A](#).

Since the inception of the recruitment report in 2016, 94 institutions have completed the survey. Data for 2021 included responses from 17 institutions, seven of which reported engaging in a recruitment activity for students with IDD. Specifically, three institutions recruited students with IDD into a postsecondary program, three institutions recruited students with IDD into general academic courses, and one recruited student into both. Data for 2022 included responses from 43 institutions, 20 of which reported engaging in a recruitment activity for students with IDD. Specifically, two institutions recruited students with IDD into a postsecondary program, 13 institutions recruited students with IDD into general academic courses, four recruited students into both, and one did not recruit into any of the above. The top five recruitment actions for students with IDD in 2021 and 2022 are identified below.

Table 1. Top Five 2021 Recruitment Activities for Students with IDD

Action	Count	Percentage
Include information in general college materials	7	100%
Distribute materials about programs and services	6	86%
Present information at secondary schools	6	86%
Participate in career fairs or transition fairs	5	71%
Offer campus or program tours for students with IDD	5	71%

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

Table 2. Top Five 2022 Recruitment Activities for Students with IDD

Action	Count	Percentage
Distribute materials about programs and services	15	75%
Include information in general college materials	14	70%
Offer campus or program tours for students with IDD	14	70%
Present information at secondary schools	13	65%
Participate in career fairs or transition fairs	13	65%

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 in 2021 and 2022 was distributing information to networks through partnerships with K-12 schools, local organizations, parents, and campus visits. Institutions identified the following limitations to recruiting students with IDD in 2021 and 2022:

- Having insufficient time and staff to fulfill recruitment efforts
- Lack of awareness from transition specialists 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 and/or cost of transportation
- Inability of high school students and parents to attend presentations during the day due to class and work schedules
- Not being able to identify students with IDD early on as institutions are dependent on students self-reporting
- Under-preparation of incoming students with IDD as they transition into higher education
- COVID-19 protocols that restricted institutions' ability to offer campus visits and access to students

Students with IDD Summary 2016-2022

Of the 94 institutions that completed the survey, 35 reported they engaged in some sort of recruitment activity targeting students with IDD. Specifically, six institutions recruited students with IDD into a postsecondary program, 21 institutions recruited students with IDD into general academic courses, seven recruited students into both, and one did not recruit into any of the above. The top five recruitment actions for students with IDD at these 35 institutions are included in Table 3.

Table 3. Top Five 2016-2022 Recruitment Activities for Students with IDD

Action	Count	Percent
Include information in general college materials	28	77.8%
Present information at secondary schools	27	75.0%
Distribute materials about programs and services	27	75.0%
Participate in career fairs or transition fairs	27	75.0%
Offer campus or program tours for students with IDD	26	72.2%

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 distributing information to networks through partnerships with K-12 schools, local organizations, parents, and campus visits. In addition, several institutions talked about other recruitment efforts they were either currently engaged in or planned to implement:

- Offering continuing education classes past the two-year certification
- Developing and offering STEM camps
- Expanding opportunities for students to participate in customized training
- Creating smoother pathways and additional support for students to enroll in workforce certificates, degrees, and industry specific careers
- Offering programs that encourage students' personal growth and workplace readiness
- Helping students build connections on campus to improve students' academic, social, and career goals

Additionally, institutions reported that they offered several services or accommodations to their students with IDD ranging from classroom accommodations (e.g., small class size, assistive technology, headphones, and health breaks), transition services (e.g., educational support, social support, counseling, tutoring, and career/employment), and alternative testing centers.

Finally, institutions reported several challenges that limit their ability to recruit students with IDD:

- Having insufficient and limited time, staff, and space to fulfill recruitment efforts enrollment or offer testing for accommodations
- Lack of awareness from transition specialists 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 and/or cost of transportation
- Inability of high school students and parents to attend presentations during the day due to class and work schedules
- Not being able to identify students with IDD early on as institutions are dependent on students self-reporting

- Under-preparation of incoming students with IDD as they transition into higher education
- COVID-19 protocols that restricted institutions' ability to offer campus visits and access to students

In addition to the study on recruitment, TEC, Section 61.0664, requires that THECB to collect administrative data on students with IDD enrolled in public IHEs. Through collaboration with stakeholders, a rule was drafted and approved by the THECB's board (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 4 lists the number of students with IDD enrolled in credit-bearing courses, and Table 5 lists the number in state-funded continuing education courses. Enrollment in credit-bearing courses in academic year 2021-2022 declined from the 2020-2021 academic year. However, enrollment in continuing education courses increased from the 2020-2021 academic year to the 2021-2022 academic year.

Table 4. Students with an IDD Enrolled in Credit-Bearing Courses

Academic Year	Total Reported Students	Students Reported as Enrolled in a Program for Students with IDD
2017-2018	3,594	145
2018-2019	4,150	52
2019-2020	4,254	56
2020-2021	3,988	49
2021-2022	2,910	31

Source: CBM001 and CBM0C1

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

Table 5. Students with an IDD Enrolled in State-Funded Continuing Education Courses

Academic Year	Total Reported Students	Students Reported as Enrolled in a Program for Students with IDD
2017-2018	196	89
2018-2019	174	100
2019-2020	223	156
2020-2021	117	60
2021-2022	115	87

Source: CBM00A

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

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.

THECB staff is currently considering alternative tools for collecting survey responses to reach a goal of 100% participation from institutions on an annual basis. The alternative tools will provide easier access to the survey and a clearer data set of updates from the participants.

In addition, as stipulated in Texas Education Code, Section 61.06641, the Advisory Council on Postsecondary Education for Persons with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities provides reports every even-numbered year to advise 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 Developmental Disabilities August 2022

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.

**Texas Higher
Education
COORDINATING BOARD**

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

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