

## **The community colleges of Texas are focused on the success of the students who seek educational opportunities at our institutions.**

The success of our students drives colleges, their faculty, and staff around the state to make a difference in the lives of Texans. Community Colleges recognize that they must have a partner in the State of Texas to ensure that the success of our students remains the priority.

To accomplish this goal, TACC/CCATT propose a 5-point Campaign that asks state leaders to join us in this critical effort.

### **5-Point Campaign: Legislative Priorities**

- 1. Workforce and Skills Alignment**
- 2. Measuring and Funding Success**
- 3. College Readiness**
- 4. Transfer and Articulation**
- 5. Texans in Community Colleges**

## I. Workforce and Skills Alignment:

Texas community colleges are educating students and building their skills in the industries that are critical to sustaining Texas economic prosperity. Community colleges provide course offerings that link local and regional workforce demands to meet requirements across a range of industries.

The continued success of Texas depends on an educated workforce that is prepared for the jobs of today and tomorrow.

### Policy Recommendations:

1. Continue and enhance funding for the Skills Development Fund to expand the ability of community colleges to work with multiple employers to better serve students and workforce needs in each region around the state.
2. Continue and enhance funding for the Jobs and Education for Texans (JET) program. This program allows community colleges across the state to purchase critical equipment needed to provide state-of-the-art workforce training.

### Policy Statements:

1. The state should empower community colleges by developing a process by which colleges who demonstrate the need for proposed bachelor degree programs in their region are allowed to offer those degrees to students.

“Texas’ success depends on an educated workforce ...”

## II. Measuring and Funding Success

While individual success is defined by each student, community colleges succeed by helping students achieve their goals for learning. Community colleges support student success in Texas no matter where students are starting from or where their educational paths take them. To ensure the effectiveness of this effort the state of Texas must continue to be a partner with its local community colleges.

### Policy Recommendations:

1. The Texas Legislature should provide \$2.011 billion for community and technical college instructional funding as recommended by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.
2. The state should continue with the new funding strategy implemented during the 83rd legislative session:
  - Core college operations: \$50 million for the 2016-17 biennium; \$1 million per college district.
  - Student Success Points: 10% of remainder
  - Contact Hours: 90% of the remainder.
3. For the 2016-17 biennium, student success points should be funded at a rate that is no less than the rate student success points were funded for the 2014-15 biennium (\$185 per student success point).

Rider #23 in the Public Community/Junior College section of the General Appropriations Act passed by 83rd Texas Legislature required community colleges and the Higher Education Coordinating Board to jointly develop a student success point system in which institutions will compete against themselves:

*"The allocation system shall be developed in a manner that compares the performance of the college district to itself using the allocation for student success points in the 2014-15 biennium as the baseline for comparison."*

*General Appropriations Act, 83rd Session*



### III. College Readiness

Community colleges provide the vast majority of developmental education in Texas that helps students to become college-ready. Community colleges are committed to ongoing collaboration with public school districts across the state to prepare students who are not college-ready by establishing and achieving long-term educational goals and accelerating progress through developmental education. Community colleges also provide early college experiences for more than 120,000 high school students across the state.

#### Policy Recommendations:

1. The Legislature should continue state funding for the New Mathways Project at the Charles A. Dana Center at the University of Texas at Austin, a statewide approach to reforming developmental education. The project includes the development of a set of accelerated mathematics courses and support systems to help students more quickly learn (and earn college-level credits) in rigorous mathematics.

#### Policy Statements:

1. Early college experiences are increasingly critical and valuable for students and for the state. From dual credit courses to early college high schools, community colleges are working to ensure students can access quality higher education and enhance their pathways to success. The state should fund both community colleges and school districts to support the collaboration called for in HB 5. Such funding will help in creating better alignment and pathways for students.
2. HB 5 (from the 83rd Session) is working to restructure the high school curriculum and creating new opportunities for collaboration between public school districts and community colleges. As with any large policy change, implementation of HB5's provisions will come with challenges, and TACC will continue to work with state and public school leaders to identify policy recommendations that will help enhance this important change to education in Texas.



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## IV. Transfer and Articulation

Community college students have the opportunity to develop skills and define individual success, preparing them for the workforce or transfer to a college or university. It is imperative to the success of community college students to create an easy pathway to achieving goals. A complex system that differs across the higher-education system can negatively impact student transfer.

### Policy Recommendations:

1. Require the use the common course numbering system at all public institutions of higher education. This change will enhance the ability of students and college advisors to have a clear understanding of course transfer. Currently, all community colleges in Texas utilize the common course numbering system, but not all public universities do the same.

“Community college students have the opportunity to develop skills and define individual success ...”

## V. Texans in Community Colleges

Community colleges offer a diverse array of educational opportunities for students at all skill levels and from every corner of Texas. Our students represent traditional-age young adult students, those returning for new workforce skills, veterans seeking to reenter the workforce, and lifelong learners at various levels of professional development.

### Policy Recommendations:

1. Community colleges are a primary provider of Adult Basic Education (ABE) opportunities across Texas. This is part of the state directed mandate for our colleges in the State Education code, which requires community colleges in Texas to be open enrollment institutions.
  - The State should provide sufficient funding for Adult Basic Education. Currently Texas only provides funding to serve approximately 100,000 statewide out of more than 3 million eligible.
2. The ability to afford college opportunities is an issue that many students struggle to overcome. In Texas, less than ten percent of all grant aid to community college students comes from the state of Texas. But these dollars can be critical in allowing a student to pay for their education.
  - Any increase in Texas Grants funding should also include a corresponding increase in funding for the Texas Educational Opportunity Grant (TEOG) program.