

High School Completion and Success Initiative Council

Strategic Plan

Adopted on March 11, 2008

Effective Immediately

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Council Membership

The statute establishing the High School Completion and Success Initiative Council specifies that the Council is to be comprised of nine members, two of whom are the Commissioner of Education, statutorily designated as the presiding officer, and the Commissioner of Higher Education. The remaining seven members are to be appointed by the Commissioner of Education from lists of nominations provided by the Governor (three members), the Lieutenant Governor (two members) and the Speaker of the House of Representatives (two members). Appointed members are to be individuals who have distinguished experience in developing and implementing high school reform strategies and promoting college and workforce readiness. Appointed members serve terms of two years and may be reappointed for additional terms.

Designated Members:

Mr. Robert Scott
Commissioner of Education
Texas Education Agency

Dr. Raymund Paredes
Commissioner of Higher Education
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

Appointed Members:

Mr. Christopher Barbic
Head of Schools
YES College Preparatory Schools
Beginning date of term: 12-07-07

Ms. Cindy Ramos-Davidson
Chief Executive Officer
El Paso Hispanic Chamber of Commerce
Beginning date of term: 1-18-08

Dr. Don McAdams
President
Center for Reform of School Systems
Beginning date of term: 12-13-07

Dr. Rosa Maria Vida
Superintendent
Diocese of Laredo
Beginning date of term: 12-07-07

Dr. Rod Paige
Chairman
Chartwell Education Group, LLC
Beginning date of term: 12-07-07

Mr. James M. Windham
Chairman
Texas Institute for Education Reform
Beginning date of term: 12-07-07

Ms. Chris Patterson
Research and Policy Consultant
Beginning date of term: 12-07-07

Introduction

Background

In May 2007, the 80th Texas Legislature created the High School Completion and Success Initiative Council (Council) by passing House Bill (H.B.) 2237. This bill secured unanimous approval from both the House and Senate, and passed the Conference Committee with only one dissenting vote.

The Senate Research Center's analysis of the Committee Substitute for H.B. 2237 states that the sponsors (Senator Florence Shapiro and Representative Rob Eissler) intended H.B. 2237 to strengthen the performance of Texas high schools and improve the oversight of funds devoted to improving high school completion and the workforce/college readiness of high school graduates. (See Appendix 1 for the Sponsor's Statement of Intent.)

According to the final bill summary, H.B. 2237 establishes the Council to identify strategic priorities and make recommendations to improve effectiveness, coordination, and alignment of high school completion and college and workforce readiness efforts and requires it to adopt a plan to: (1) specify strategies to identify, support, and expand programs to improve high school completion rates and college and workforce readiness; (2) establish specific goals with which to measure the strategies' success in achieving those aims; (3) identify strategies for aligning and coordinating federal and other funding sources that may be pursued for high school reform, dropout prevention, and preparation of students for college or for work; and (4) identify key objectives for appropriate research and program evaluation. The Council also must make recommendations based on the strategic plan to the commissioner of education or the commissioner of higher education for the use of federal and state funds appropriated or received for high school reform, college readiness, and dropout prevention.

Council Charges

H.B. 2237 charges the Council with the following responsibilities:

- identifying best available research in instruction techniques and technology regarding college and workforce readiness for the Intensive Technology-Based Academic Intervention Pilot [Texas Education Code (TEC) §29.097];
- identifying strategic priorities for and making recommendations to improve the effectiveness, coordination, and alignment of high school completion and college and workforce readiness efforts (TEC §39.352);
- adopting a strategic plan (TEC §39.357);
- making recommendations to the Commissioner of Education or the Commissioner of Higher Education, as applicable, for the use of federal and state funds appropriated or received for high school reform, college readiness, and dropout prevention (TEC §39.361); and
- recommending statutory changes to promote high school completion and college and workforce readiness (TEC §39.365).

Guiding Principles

Research has shown that dropping out is a gradual process that starts as early as elementary school, and that there are a number of factors that contribute to whether a student graduates.¹ Studies indicate that students who are least skilled in reading by the end of the third grade are less likely to graduate. Additionally, poor grades, attendance, school disciplinary problems, and failure to advance to the next grade can gradually lead to a decline of interest in, disengagement from, and dropping out of school. Research reveals that most dropouts follow identifiable pathways through the educational pipeline, and educational experiences, coupled with demographic characteristics, offer powerful predictors of dropping out.²

¹ *No Child Left Behind Act: Education Could Do More to Help States Better Define Graduation Rates and Improve Knowledge about Intervention Strategies* (2005). Report to Congressional Requestors. United States Government Accountability Office. GAO-05-0879, Washington D.C., p.31.

² Jerald, C.D. (2006). *Identifying Potential Dropouts: Key Lessons for Building an Early Warning System*. American Diploma Project Network. Achieve, Inc., p.3. http://www.achieve.org/files/FINAL-dropouts_1.pdf.

Schools and districts have implemented a broad range of interventions to address these factors that can be described as (a) school-wide restructuring, (b) alternate forms of education and supplemental services, and (c) strategies to enhance the capacities of educators and schools. Few interventions have been rigorously evaluated, and the effectiveness of these approaches has yet to be demonstrated, although the research does identify some promising practices and conveys the following important lessons:³

- because dropping out has much to do with how schools operate and the educational experiences students have within schools, the dropout problem is amenable to solutions;
- early identification and intervention offers the best opportunity for preventing students from dropping out; and,
- high schools with smaller enrollments, better interpersonal relationships among students and adults, teachers who are more supportive of students, and a curriculum that is more focused and more rigorous exhibit lower dropout rates.

Based on this research and on testimony provided by experts in dropout prevention and college and workforce readiness, the Council developed the following principles to guide its work.

- Today's knowledge-based, global economy requires all youth to acquire education or training after high school graduation to be competitive, successful, and earn an adequate income.
- High school completion and high standards must be connected, and all students should be prepared for postsecondary success.
- With the appropriate curricula, instruction, and support, all students are able to overcome the educational disadvantages now associated with race and ethnicity; we must make a concerted effort to eliminate the achievement gap evident in Texas public schools.

³ Jerald, C.D, (2006) . pp. 3-6, http://www.achieve.org/files/FINAL-dropouts_1.pdf.

- All students must be held to the same high expectations for workplace and college (postsecondary) success and the gap between student groups, often associated with income, race, and ethnicity, must be eliminated.
- For Texas public schools to achieve success, all students must demonstrate continuous gains as measured according to the state's accountability system.
- How schools operate and the educational experiences students have in schools strongly affect the likelihood that students will complete or dropout of school.
- Dropping out of school is a process that can be predicted in the early grades for a majority of students, and early identification of struggling students and immediate intervention offers the best opportunity to help students complete and succeed in high school.
- Reading proficiency, one of the strongest indicators of student success that can be identified as early as first grade, should be a focus of efforts to improve high school completion and success and college and workforce readiness.
- Increasing high school completion and success and college and workforce readiness requires a longitudinal K-16 statewide data and accountability system.

Development of a Strategic Plan

As an initial step in the development of a Strategic Plan, the Council addressed the issue of defining college and career readiness. Responding to recent national research concluding that the knowledge and skills necessary for a high school graduate to succeed in college are the same as those required to enter workforce training for a skilled position, the Council determined that all students should be prepared for postsecondary success with the same level and degree of rigor. To underscore these findings, the Council has chosen to employ the term “postsecondary success” to reflect its conviction, based in research, that readiness for college and the workforce requires the same level of rigorous preparation. Consequently, the Council has set forth the following operational definition of postsecondary success. Postsecondary success is the range of academic, workforce, and social proficiency that high school students should acquire to successfully transition into:

- skilled employment,
- advanced training in the military,
- an associate's degree,
- a bachelor's degree, or
- technical certification.

The Council set about developing the Strategic Plan by interacting with numerous experts on a wide range of issues and programs related to postsecondary success. The Council then considered and developed responses to six strategic questions which addressed the Council's statutory charges. Based on these deliberations, the Council identified its strategic priorities for funding, which were then converted into strategic objectives. An action plan to implement these strategic objectives was developed and existing programs supporting the action plan were identified. As a final step, the Council decided which objectives were not sufficiently addressed and directed that unallocated funds be used in those areas.

Critical Components

In developing its strategic plan, the Council concluded that the following critical components are essential to the effective implementation of high school completion and success initiatives funded through this plan.

- Each school district shall adopt and demonstrate adherence to keeping students on track for high school graduation and postsecondary success as the district's organizing principle, and this will be the primary criterion for qualification for programmatic grant funding under this Strategic Plan.
- All school districts shall implement through their curriculum the Texas College Readiness Standards employing the REL Southwest crosswalk as a reference.
- All students should have the opportunity to select from multiple pathways, including alternative delivery systems, to achieve postsecondary success.
- All initiatives shall be evaluated rigorously by qualified evaluators at the end of the first year to assess implementation, at the end of the second year to

determine interim outcome progress, and at the end of the fourth year to provide a summative assessment of program effectiveness.

Effective Date

The strategic plan is adopted by the Council effective immediately and applies to all contracts entered into and all grants awarded on, before, and after August 31, 2008.

Mission

To ensure strategic coordination among all state efforts to improve high schools, including, but not limited to, the new programs established under H.B. 2237

Goals

- I. To reduce high school dropout rates
- II. To improve postsecondary success
- III. To close gaps in achievement among student socio-economic, racial, and ethnic groups

Objectives

1. Identification and Alignment of Programs

- 1.1 Create a carefully aligned system of high school completion and success initiatives, including but not limited to the programs in H.B. 2237, with a broad choice of different types of programs to enhance, supplement, and build local capacity to improve postsecondary success
- 1.2 Give priority to programs that possess elements which have potential for statewide replication and are based on the best available research or promising ideas, which include:
 - A rigorous academic core curriculum that incorporates the College Readiness Standards,
 - Personalized learning environments,
 - Academic and social support,
 - Relevant teaching and learning designed to promote postsecondary success, and
 - Effective educators and leaders
- 1.3 Focus on economically disadvantaged students who are at risk of dropping out or have already dropped out, on students who have academic deficiencies, and on students who are underrepresented in the college-going population through a variety of service providers including school districts, open-enrollment charter schools, regional education service centers, institutions of higher education, and non-profit organizations
- 1.4 Increase the number of effective educators and leaders
- 1.5 Establish a P-16 focus by requiring grantees to demonstrate that they have a college-going culture that leads to postsecondary success
- 1.6 Leverage and align programs with other sources of funding including local, federal, and private

- 1.7 Give priority to programs that have a goal of becoming self-sustaining after three years

2. *Support for Programs*

- 2.1 Maintain quality technical assistance and rigorous professional development for educators and leaders to support the implementation of programs
- 2.2 Monitor all programs carefully to ensure fidelity to the program model and progress toward achieving performance goals

3. *Expansion or Discontinuation of Programs*

- 3.1 Commit to funding for a period of time sufficient to determine whether a program is a success or not (research suggests this period is 3 to 5 years)
- 3.2 Externally evaluate programs, whenever possible, and provide informal performance reports on all programs against a set of performance measures
- 3.3 Expand or continue programs that are effective or meet performance goals, and discontinue programs that do not meet performance goals or are ineffective
- 3.4 Assess program cost-effectiveness in terms of outcome measures and efficiency, using common metrics

4. *Research and Evaluation*

- 4.1 Provide internal and external stakeholders with comprehensive program evaluations
- 4.2 Utilize both short- and long-term measures for qualitative and quantitative analyses, as appropriate, to evaluate programs
- 4.3 Establish multi-year longitudinal evaluations, where possible, to ensure that sufficient data is available to determine the effectiveness of programs
- 4.4 Identify lessons learned and promising practices based on published research and evaluation results

Action Plan

1. Identification and Alignment of Programs

1.1 Create a carefully aligned system of high school completion and success initiatives, including but not limited to the programs in H.B. 2237, with a broad choice of different types of programs to enhance, supplement, and build local capacity to improve postsecondary success

1.2 Give priority to programs that possess elements which have potential for statewide replication and are based on the best available research or promising ideas, which include:

- **A rigorous academic core curriculum that incorporates the College Readiness Standards,**
- **Personalized learning environments,**
- **Academic and social support,**
- **Relevant teaching and learning designed to promote postsecondary success, and**
- **Effective educators and leaders**

1.2.1 Create early college high schools that:

- provide students with a rigorous academic program linked to the College Readiness Standards that results in both completion of a high school diploma and 60 credit hours towards an associate's degree and/or baccalaureate degree, through programs such as Advanced Placement, International Baccalaureate, and dual credit courses
- individualize the learning experience of each student
- ensure student success by requiring grantees to provide a structured student support system for academic acceleration,

including advisories, personalized learning communities, individual graduation plans, and guidance/counseling

- incorporate into the curriculum project- and work-based, contextual learning with a global perspective based on postsecondary standards
- demonstrate that teachers selected are highly effective and have demonstrated the ability to work with students at risk of not graduating from high school
- provide teacher development through teacher mentoring and induction programs

1.2.2 Create T-STEM academies that:

- offer a rigorous, well-rounded course of study, including:
 - a focus on science, engineering, technology and math that is linked to the College Readiness Standards
 - 12-30 hours of college credit
 - participation in service learning, internships, UIL competitions (robotics and math) or science and technology fairs
- individualize the learning experience of each student
- ensure student success by requiring grantees to provide a structured student support system for academic acceleration, including advisories, personalized learning communities, individual graduation plans, and guidance/counseling
- incorporate into the curriculum project- and work-based, contextual learning with a global perspective based on postsecondary standards
- provide teacher development through teacher mentoring and induction programs

1.2.3 Support redesign of underperforming high school campuses using researched-based models that:

- increase the percentage of high school students who complete college-preparatory courses in core curriculum courses

- provide ongoing, targeted professional development for all teachers and administrators
- ensure district and board engagement through mandatory training and participation in the grant selection process
- ensure campus teachers and leaders receive assistance from an external technical assistance provider with significant, demonstrated leadership experience and expertise in school-wide reform and improved instruction and learning strategies

1.2.4 Support targeted interventions, including those required by statute, that:

- increase student readiness for rigorous college-preparatory high school coursework by incorporation of the College Readiness Standards into a fully aligned P-16 curriculum
- provide structured and purposeful extra-curricular, after school, summer, and related programs aimed at increasing student engagement with, and participation in, the school community for students at risk of dropping out through statutory programs such as the Grants for Student Clubs, and other programs, such as the Ninth Grade Transition Program
- provide students with appropriate academic and social support to address issues related to the risk of dropping out, such as the Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program

1.2.5 Create other comprehensive and transformative programs based on the best available research and key research elements identified in Objective 1.1, including programs for which a variety of service providers are eligible such as school districts, open-enrollment charter schools, regional education service centers, institutions of higher education, or non-profit organizations.

1.3 Focus on economically disadvantaged students who are at risk of dropping out or have already dropped out, on students who have academic deficiencies, and on students who are underrepresented in the college-going population through a variety of service providers, including school districts, open-enrollment charter

schools, regional education service centers, institutions of higher education, and non-profit organizations

- 1.3.1 Require targeted intervention programs to serve students who have academic deficiencies, at-risk of dropping out of school, or have already dropped out of school through traditional and alternative education settings, including a dropout recovery program for which a variety of service providers are eligible such as school districts, open-enrollment charter schools, regional education service centers, institutions of higher education, or non-profit organizations
- 1.3.2 Require comprehensive school reform model programs to target students who are high-need, economically disadvantaged, academically deficient, and who are traditionally underrepresented among college-going populations (examples include ECHS and T-STEM Academies).
- 1.3.3 In accordance with TEC §39.358, limit eligibility for specific H.B. 2237 dropout prevention grants, including the Math Instructional Coaches Pilot Program, the Grants for Student Clubs, the Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program, the Technology-Based Academic Intervention Pilot, and the Intensive Summer Program, to districts exhibiting, during each of the three preceding school years, those characteristics that strongly correlate with high dropout rates

1.4 Increase the number of effective educators and leaders

- 1.4.1 Support proven models, such as UTeach, to increase the number of effective teachers
- 1.4.2 Provide districts exhibiting high dropout rates and low student achievement with resources and access to professional development in reading and math for their middle and high school teachers through programs such as the Mathematics Instructional Coaches Pilot Program

- 1.4.3 Support principal leadership training for high-need secondary schools
- 1.4.4 Incorporate professional development focused on effective leadership and instructional strategies tied to postsecondary standards into comprehensive whole school reform models
- 1.4.5 Collaborate with regional institutions of higher education to increase relevant and appropriate professional development to improve student achievement at the secondary level

1.5 Establish a P-16 focus by requiring grantees to demonstrate they have a college-going culture that leads to postsecondary success

- 1.5.1 Require each grantee to develop a P-16 strategic plan and demonstrate how its grant application addresses deficiencies in the district and campus' overall P-16 strategy
- 1.5.2 Create partnerships between local school districts and institutions of higher education by requiring grantees to establish an articulated plan with an institution of higher education so that students graduate with college credit hours (examples include ECHS and T-STEM Academies)
- 1.5.3 Require comprehensive school reform model grantees to create partnerships with employers to expose students to postsecondary careers (examples include ECHS and T-STEM Academies)
- 1.5.4 Encourage redesign schools to increase the percentage of students who complete the Recommended High School Program, complete college preparatory programs, graduate with postsecondary credit, and achieve a concentration in a career technical area through programs such as High Schools That Work (HSTW)
- 1.5.5 Provide opportunities to create a college-going culture and to increase student and parental awareness of rigorous high school and college standards and of college preparation programs and activities through programs like the Intensive Summer Programs and the Ninth Grade Transition Program

- 1.5.6 Provide intense academic instruction during the summer semester to promote college and workforce readiness for students identified as being at risk of dropping out through programs like the Intensive Summer Programs and the Ninth Grade Transition Program
- 1.5.7 Require the use of College Readiness Standards in all comprehensive whole school reform programs
- 1.5.8 Promote participation on P-16 councils by all grantees

1.6 Leverage and align programs with other sources of funding including local, federal and private

- 1.6.1 Require all applicants to identify how other resources (federal, state, local, and private) available to the school will be utilized to coordinate services to support and sustain the grant program
- 1.6.2 Require grantees to develop partnerships with businesses and non-profit organizations to provide students with learning, earning, and internship opportunities through programs like T-STEM Academies and the Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program
- 1.6.3 Require redesign grantees to coordinate with and leverage federal, local, and other funds to implement the Campus Improvement Plan
- 1.6.4 Create opportunities, like the Texas High School Project, to facilitate a dialogue among other organizations providing funding for high school completion and success programs to determine how best to align, integrate, or leverage those external funds, if appropriate, to support state funding objectives
- 1.6.5 Research available federal, private, and other funding sources and determine whether the constraints and conditions attached to those funds will allow the state to coordinate with those funds in a manner that reinforces, complements, and supports state objectives

1.6.6 Require all applicants to explain how the grant program will support the state's priority education goals and curriculum standards, as deemed appropriate

1.7 Give priority to programs with a goal of becoming self-sustaining after three years

1.7.1 Require grantees to prepare a budget demonstrating sustainability after three years

1.7.2 Require applicants to identify how other resources (federal, state, local, and private) available to the school will be utilized to coordinate services to support and sustain the grant program

1.7.3 Require a local match, such as the High School Allotment, where appropriate or required by statute

2. Support for Programs

2.1 Maintain quality technical assistance and rigorous professional development for educators and leaders to support the implementation of programs

2.1.1 Require grantees to participate in on-going and sustained support from highly effective technical assistance providers committed to ensuring the successful implementation of the postsecondary success strategy

2.1.2 Support technical assistance providers whose qualifications include experience in successfully starting and/or leading secondary or charter schools and experience in effectively building partnerships and working with public and higher education

2.2 Monitor all programs carefully to ensure fidelity to the program and progress toward achieving performance goals

- 2.2.1 Develop and require comprehensive whole school reform grantees to use a blueprint for implementation based upon established and successful frameworks
- 2.2.2 Use the blueprint for implementation to monitor all comprehensive whole school reform grantees and adjust program implementation as appropriate
- 2.2.3 Use progress reports to monitor the implementation and performance of all grant programs

3. *Expansion or Discontinuation of Programs*

3.1 Commit to funding for a period of time sufficient to determine whether a program is a success or not (research suggests this period is 3 to 5 years)

- 3.1.1 Commit multi-year funding to each new program grantee to provide an adequate project period to determine success or failure
- 3.1.2 Obtain interim evaluations of program progress toward program goals and recommend modifications based on program reviews

3.2 Externally evaluate programs, whenever possible, and provide informal performance reports on all programs against a set of performance measures

- 3.2.1 Conduct independent evaluations of programs, such as the Texas High School Project Evaluation
- 3.2.2 Provide reports on implementation progress and performance for all programs against a set of performance measures

3.3 Expand or continue programs that are effective or meet program goals, and discontinue programs that do not meet performance goals or are ineffective

- 3.3.1 Analyze performance on an interim basis to measure progress in accomplishing program goals

- 3.3.2 Require grantees to submit comprehensive, interim, and final reports analyzing program achievements against the original program goals
- 3.3.3 Require justification for any deviations from program design and performance
- 3.3.4 Determine a benchmark of performance linked to postsecondary success that indicates success and failure to be utilized in deciding whether to expand, continue, or discontinue programs

3.4 Assess program cost-effectiveness in terms of outcome measures and efficiency, using common metrics

- 3.4.1 When possible, apply common metrics for measuring cost-effectiveness across programs
- 3.4.2 Identify and collect appropriate and meaningful data that could be used to determine cost-effectiveness and efficiency of a program
- 3.4.3 Analyze data to determine the cost-effectiveness of a program in terms of outcome measures
- 3.4.4 Make determinations about expansion or continuation of programs based on the assessment of cost-effectiveness and efficiency

4. *Research and Evaluation*

4.1 Provide internal and external stakeholders with comprehensive program evaluations

- 4.1.1 Collect program specific achievement data, including value-added and academic growth data whenever possible, to document the process and outcomes of program implementation
- 4.1.2 Identify barriers to program implementation on federal, state, and local levels
- 4.1.3 Use formative data and information to modify and improve programs

4.2 Utilize both short- and long-term measures for qualitative and quantitative analyses, as appropriate, to evaluate programs

4.2.1 Analyze data, including value-added, academic growth, and comparable data when available, to evaluate program effectiveness relative to student, teacher, and school characteristics

4.2.2 Perform qualitative and quantitative data analyses to measure program outcomes against short and long-term performance measures

4.3 Establish multi-year longitudinal evaluations, where possible, to ensure that sufficient data is available to determine the effectiveness of programs

4.3.1 Collect longitudinal formative and summative data to be used to modify and improve existing programs

4.3.2 Produce interim reports that will provide information to modify existing and future programs

4.3.3 Collect longitudinal summative data, like the data collected through the Texas High School Project Evaluation, to make overall determinations about the effectiveness of programs

4.4 Identify lessons learned and promising practices based on research and evaluation results

4.4.1 Based on evaluation findings, recommend legislation and policy that will guide the implementation of successful postsecondary initiatives

4.4.2 Based on research findings, create models of effective programs to serve as guides for school districts implementing dropout prevention and postsecondary readiness programs

4.4.3 Determine the potential of programs or key program elements for statewide replication

Performance Measures

The Strategic Plan's performance measures are to be used to assess the performance of each program implemented under the High School Completion and Success Initiative Strategic Plan. The Council has set the following performance targets for individual grant programs and the composite of all completion and success grants.

A. Improve Graduation Rates

Long Term Indicators	Composite of All Grantees
Reduce longitudinal grade 9-12 dropout rate	By 1.0% annually
Increase longitudinal grade 9-12 graduation rate	By 0.8% annually
Interim Indicators	
Reduce the percentage of students retained in 9 th grade	By 0.5% annually
Increase exit-level TAKS passing rate	By 5.0% annually

B. Improve College and Workforce Readiness⁴

Long Term Indicators	Composite of All Grantees
Reduce the percentage of entering college students unprepared for college work as evidenced by their failure to meet one or more parts of the Texas Success Initiative (TSI) standards	By 2.0% annually
Interim Indicators	Composite of All Grantees
Increase the percentage of students who meet or exceed college-ready criteria in both English Language Arts and mathematics on the TAKS, SAT, or ACT test	By 2.0% annually

⁴ As college readiness standards are developed and adopted, the college readiness performance targets may be subject to change.

Interim Indicators	Composite of All Grantees
Increase the percentage of students who attain the commended performance level on the English Language Arts section of the Grade 11 exit-level TAKS or its equivalent	By 7.0% annually
Increase the percentage of students who attain the commended performance level on the Mathematics section of the Grade 11 exit-level TAKS or its equivalent	By 5.0 % annually
Increase the percentage of students taking and scoring at or above criterion on Advanced Placement or International Baccalaureate examinations	By 3.0% annually in students taking examinations and 1.0% annually in students passing examinations.
Increase the percentage of students taking and earning college credit through dual credit courses	By 0.5% annually
Increase the percentage of students who graduate on the Recommended or Distinguished Achievement High School Programs.	By 10% annually

List of High School Completion and Success Programs and Glossary of Terms

What follows is a description of the high school completion and success programs implemented under the High School Completion and Success Initiative Council Strategic Plan. These programs are designed to reduce dropouts, promote college and workforce readiness, and increase the number of effective high school teachers and leaders.

All programs designated with an asterisk (*) are required to be established by H.B. 2237, 80th Texas Legislature. Other programs not designated with an asterisk are authorized under TEC §39.115 or §39.360 in H.B. 2237 but are not required.

Comprehensive Whole School Reform Models

Comprehensive Whole School Reform Models involve coherent school-wide improvements that cover all aspects of a high school's operations, including improving the capacity and quality of campus leadership, the campus instructional program, campus climate and culture, and district support for reform efforts. These types of models are not intended to be separate projects that are added onto existing programs or separate projects within a school but rather school-wide systemic reform.

Early College High School

Early College High Schools (ECHS) are often located on college campuses and allow students who may not otherwise consider attending college an opportunity to earn a high school diploma and two years of college credit. The target population includes first-generation college students, low-income students, students of color, and English language learners.

Research Elements:

- Rigorous academic curriculum tied to postsecondary standards
- Strong academic and social support
- Personalized learning environment
- Professional development for rigorous instruction and principal leadership

Program Type:

- Dropout prevention
- College and workforce readiness

Texas High School Redesign and Restructuring

The Texas High School Redesign and Restructuring (Redesign) program provides funding to low-performing high schools to support school-wide redesign according to research-based reform models with the goal of increasing student achievement and graduation rates.

Research Elements:

- Creating a safe learning environment
- Developing rigorous academic curriculum tied to postsecondary standards
- Strong academic and social support
- Personalized learning environment
- Professional development for rigorous instruction, principal leadership, and district and board engagement

Program Type:

- Dropout prevention
- College and workforce readiness

Texas High Schools That Work Enhanced Design Network

The Texas High Schools That Work Enhanced Design Network (HSTW Network) supports high schools in the use of key principles as a framework for improving academic and career/technology instruction and overall student achievement.

Research Elements:

- Creating a safe learning environment
- Strong academic and social support
- Personalized learning environment
- Rigorous academic curriculum tied to postsecondary standards

Program Type:

- Dropout prevention
- College and workforce readiness

T-STEM Initiative—T-STEM Academies

The Texas Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Initiative (T-STEM) is designed to improve instruction and academic performance in science- and mathematics-related subjects at high schools across Texas through applied and relevant instruction in mathematics and science tied to postsecondary standards. The T-STEM Initiative consists of three critical components: T-STEM Academies, T-STEM Centers, and the T-STEM Network.

The T-STEM Academies (T-STEM Academies) are designed to increase student achievement by engaging and exposing high-need, economically disadvantaged students to highly effective science and mathematics instruction while simultaneously acting as demonstration sites to inform math and science teaching and learning statewide. Academies provide a rigorous, well-rounded education with outstanding science and mathematics instruction and with technology integrated across the curriculum. Academies are small, non-selective schools, encompassing grades 6-12 or actively working with feeder middle schools.

Research Elements:

- Rigorous academic curriculum tied to postsecondary standards
- Relevant teaching and learning in mathematics and science using educational technology and applied learning (engineering)
- Strong academic and social support
- Personalized learning environment

- Professional development for relevant and rigorous instruction in math and science
- Strong workplace and career connections

Program Type:

- Dropout prevention
- College and workforce readiness

Targeted Student Interventions

Targeted interventions are activities and programs designed to improve student performance by addressing a particular issue or to provide services to a specific group of students with common interests or similar needs.

Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program*

The goal of the Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program (Collaborative Dropout Pilot) is to coordinate services among community-based, school-based, and other government entities to provide proven, research-based intervention services to reduce the number of students who drop out of school and increase the college and workforce readiness of students.

Research Elements:

- School and community collaboration
- Academic and social support
- Relevant teaching and learning through workplace connections
- Personalized learning environment

Program Type:

- Dropout prevention

Grants for Student Clubs*

The Grants for Student Clubs pilot program (Student Clubs) will provide grants to fund academic or co-curricular student club activities for students at risk of dropping out of school.

Research Elements:

- Social support
- Student engagement

Program Type:

- Dropout prevention

Intensive Summer Programs*

Intensive Summer Programs (ISP) provide an intensive four-week summer program at high school in English Language Arts, mathematics, and science and at middle school in reading and mathematics in collaboration with a higher education institution to promote high school completion and success and college readiness.

Research Elements:

- Rigorous academic curriculum tied to postsecondary standards
- Strong academic and social support
- Personalized learning environment
- Professional development for rigorous instruction

Program Type:

- Dropout prevention

Intensive Technology-Based Academic Intervention Pilot Program*

The Intensive Technology-Based Academic Intervention Pilot program (Technology-Based Pilot) will provide intensive technology-based supplementary instruction in English, mathematics, science, or social studies for students in grades 9 through 12 identified as at risk of dropping out of school.

Research Elements:

- Academic support
- Relevant teaching and learning using educational technology
- Professional development in rigorous and relevant instruction

Program Type:

- Dropout prevention

Ninth Grade Student Transition Program

The Ninth Grade Student Transition Program (Ninth Grade Transition) seeks to facilitate the significant transition between middle and high school for students identified as at risk of dropping out of school. This program implements research-based strategies and interventions during the summer transition and the first semester of ninth grade and tracks student grades, attendance, and other progress during the first semester of ninth grade so that schools can intervene immediately to make sure students stay on track to graduate.

Research Elements:

- Redesigning the ninth grade to keep students “on-track”
- Academic and social support
- Relevant and accelerated instruction
- Personalized learning environment

Program Type:

- Dropout prevention

Student Excellence and Readiness through Volunteers in Education *

The Student Excellence and Readiness through Volunteers in Education (SERVE) program provides volunteers to teach research-based curriculum in the classroom or after school programs to enhance college readiness, workforce readiness, dropout prevention, or personal financial literacy.

Research Elements:

- School and community collaboration
- Academic and social support
- Relevant teaching and learning through workplace connections

Program Type:

- Dropout prevention
- College and workforce readiness

Texas High School Completion and Success

The Texas High School Completion and Success Program (THSC&S), in its third and final year, provides services such as high quality tutoring, credit recovery options,

accelerated learning opportunities, mentoring, counseling, and diagnostic assessment to students in underperforming high schools. Lessons learned from implementation and evaluation of these grants served to guide the development of the more comprehensive and focused High School Redesign and Restructuring program.

Research Elements:

- Strong academic and social support
- Personalized learning environment

Program Type:

- Dropout prevention

T-STEM Initiative—Co-curricular Engineering Activities

The goal of the Co-curricular Engineering Activities program (Engineering Activities) is to provide schools the opportunity to develop co-curricular options involving engineering and robotics activities that emphasize applied mathematics and science. The program will target middle and high school students identified as at risk of dropping out of school for the purpose of engaging students in postsecondary pathways in the science, technology, engineering, and math fields.

Research Elements:

- Rigorous academic curriculum tied to postsecondary standards
- Relevant teaching and learning in mathematics and science using educational technology and applied learning (engineering)
- Relevant teaching and learning through workplace connections

Program Type:

- Career and workforce readiness

T-STEM Initiative—T-STEM Network Acceleration Grant

The T-STEM Network Acceleration Grant program (NAG) is designed to increase student achievement in mathematics and science by providing resources to eligible high school campuses for the purpose of analyzing student achievement data in mathematics and science. This analysis is then used to develop instructional plans and implement math and science acceleration strategies. The grant program also serves to connect

grantee schools with the T-STEM Network to enable them to share lessons learned with T-STEM Academies, T-STEM Centers, and other Texas middle and high schools.

Research Elements:

- Rigorous academic curriculum tied to postsecondary standards
- Relevant teaching and learning in mathematics and science using educational technology and applied learning (engineering)
- Professional development for relevant and rigorous instruction in math and science

Program Type:

- Career and workforce readiness
- Effective teachers and leaders

T-STEM Initiative—T-STEM Network Science Achievement Program

The T-STEM Network Science Achievement Program (NSAP) is designed to provide additional funding to campuses demonstrating the most improvement in science TAKS test scores after participating in the Texas Accelerated Science Achievement Program (Texas ASAP). Additional funds are to be used to continue and enhance the implementation of science acceleration programs that have demonstrated results and to document and disseminate guidelines on how to replicate the successful programs for campuses serving similar demographics across the state. The grant program also serves to connect grantee schools with the T-STEM Network to enable them to share lessons learned with T-STEM Academies, T-STEM Centers, and other Texas middle and high schools.

Research Elements:

- Rigorous academic curriculum tied to postsecondary standards
- Relevant teaching and learning in mathematics and science using educational technology and applied learning (engineering)
- Strong academic and social support
- Professional development for relevant and rigorous instruction in mathematics and science

Program Type:

- College and workforce readiness
- Effective teachers and leaders

Effective Teachers and Leaders

Effective teachers and school leaders are essential to any effort to improve student learning and performance, including the high school completion and success initiatives in this Strategic Plan. Unfortunately, Texas continues to face shortages of highly effective educators and leaders trained and experienced in high school reform. Moreover, many of the existing principal certification requirements do not address some of the most critical skills needed for transforming underperforming high schools.

Mathematics Instructional Coaches Pilot Program*

The Mathematics Instructional Coaches Pilot program (Math Coaches) will provide grants to school districts to contract with approved service providers to develop the knowledge and expertise of secondary math teachers.

Research Elements:

- Professional development in rigorous and relevant instruction in mathematics

Program Type:

- Effective teachers and leaders

Pilot High School Principal Certification Program

Pilot High School Principal Certification Program (Principal Certification) grants to universities establish more rigorous requirements and more specialized training for high school principals. Building on best practices nationwide, the programs incorporate elements emphasizing use of multi-disciplinary curriculum, relevant learning experiences, and principal mentor and cohort groups. Generally, the programs are based on business leadership and best practice models offered through a joint program of the business school and education school.

Research Elements:

- Professional development for improving teaching and learning, providing rigorous and relevant instruction, and effective leadership

Program Type:

- Effective teachers and leaders

Professional Development Activities for Teachers and Administrators*

Professional Development Activities for Teachers and Administrators (Professional Development) provides funding for professional development activities to implement curriculum and instruction that is aligned with college readiness standards.

Research Elements:

- Professional development in rigorous instruction aligned to college readiness standards

Program Type:

- Effective teachers and leaders

Texas Science, Technology, Engineering and Math Pre-Service Teacher Preparation Program—UTeach Replication

The purpose of the T-STEM Pre-service Teacher Preparation Program (UTeach) is to increase the number of effective mathematics and science teachers certified and placed in secondary schools serving low-income students. This will be accomplished through replication of the UTeach program at three university sites across Texas. The UTeach replication sites include: the University of Houston, the University of Texas at Dallas, and the University of North Texas. Each site will recruit undergraduates majoring in math and science to train and certify them as highly effective teachers for Texas schools.

Research Elements:

- Rigorous academic curriculum tied to postsecondary standards
- Professional development for rigorous instruction in mathematics and science

Program Type:

- Effective teachers and leaders

Technical Assistance

Technical Assistance provides support for grantees in the implementation of grant programs to ensure that grantees have increased access to established studies and research-based practices; technical assistance, such as coaching and training; professional development for principals and teachers; and, access to a professional learning community to encourage sharing of effective instructional practices and strategies.

Campus Turnaround Team Support

The Campus Turnaround Team Support (Campus Turnaround) program provides additional funding to support the establishment of a statutorily-required regional network that will assist in the turnaround of low-performing middle and high school campuses.

Research Elements:

- Strong technical assistance and coaching to ensure appropriate implementation of school improvement strategies
- Professional development for rigorous instruction and principal leadership

Program Type:

- Effective teachers and leaders

Education Service Center Support for High School Improvement and College Readiness Efforts

The ESC Support for High School Improvement and College Readiness Efforts (ESC–TA) program provides funding to ESCs to support the dissemination of research-based dropout prevention and college readiness practices to middle and high schools and professional development to help secondary schools integrate college readiness standards into the curriculum and instructional materials.

Research Elements:

- Technical assistance and support for implementation of high school programs

Program Type:

- Effective teachers and leaders

Exemplars

Exceptional programs producing promising results for improved student performance through enhanced college readiness, career and technology education, and professional development have been identified and funded to serve as demonstration sites for schools interested in learning about and replicating these promising practices.

Exemplars are selected based on their demonstrated ability to serve high-need students including low-income, high minority, Limited English Proficient (LEP), and special education populations. Grant recipients include secondary schools, universities, and nonprofit organizations.

Research Elements:

- Rigorous academic curriculum tied to postsecondary standards
- Relevant teaching and learning
- Professional development for relevant and rigorous instruction
- Strong workplace and career connections

Program Type:

- College and workforce readiness
- Effective teachers and leaders

Technical Assistance and Support for Grant Programs

Technical Assistance and Support for Grant Programs (TA & Support) involves grants to organizations with expertise in research-based instructional and leadership strategies and with rich content knowledge to support coaching and professional development in specific grant activities. Technical assistance grants have been made to support Early College High School, Redesign and Restructuring, and T-STEM Initiative grant programs.

Research Elements:

- Strong technical assistance and coaching to ensure fidelity of implementation
- Professional development for rigorous instruction tied to postsecondary standards and principal leadership

Program Types:

- Effective teachers and leaders

T-STEM Initiative—T-STEM Centers (Federally Funded)

The T-STEM Initiative T-STEM Centers (T-STEM Centers) includes federal funding for the creation and development of seven T-STEM Centers tasked with supporting T-STEM Academies and all Texas schools by designing science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) curricula, delivering professional development, demonstrating and disseminating best practices for effective and integrated STEM teaching and learning, and creating strategic partnerships among businesses, higher education entities, and school districts.

Research Elements:

- Developing rigorous academic curriculum tied to postsecondary standards
- Professional development in rigorous science and mathematics instruction using technology and applied learning (engineering)

Program Type:

- College and workforce readiness
- Effective teachers and leaders

T-STEM Initiative—T-STEM Network

The T-STEM Network is a facilitated dynamic learning community committed to sharing knowledge and proven best practices with all Texas high schools interested in improving science, technology, engineering and mathematics education and careers. The T-STEM Network includes providing resources and tools to promote data-driven decision-making, identifying training and grant opportunities and hosting and disseminating best practices impacting student achievement.

Research Elements:

- Developing rigorous academic curriculum tied to postsecondary standards
- Professional development in rigorous science and mathematics instruction using technology and applied learning

Program Type:

- College and workforce readiness
- Effective teachers and leaders

Research and Evaluation

Research and evaluation includes a group of activities that employ systematic, empirical methods that draw on observation or experiment, involve rigorous data analyses that are adequate to test the stated hypotheses and justify general conclusions, and rely on measurements or observational methods that provide valid data across evaluators and observers, and across multiple measurements and observations.

Best Practices in Dropout Prevention Study

The Best Practices in Dropout Prevention Study (Best Practices) is to determine the best practices of campuses and school districts in Texas and other states regarding dropout prevention programs and to provide policy recommendations for dropout prevention efforts in Texas.

Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program Evaluation

Funding has been set aside for the external evaluation of the Collaborative Dropout Reduction Pilot Program (Collaborative Eval).

Intensive Summer Programs Evaluation

Funding has been set aside for the external evaluation of the Intensive Summer Programs (ISP Eval).

Math Instructional Coaches Pilot Evaluation

Funding has been set aside for the external evaluation of the Math Instructional Coaches Pilot Program (Math Coaches Eval).

Redesign and Restructuring and Middle College/Early College High School Evaluation

TEA has partnered with Resources for Learning (RFL) to conduct an evaluation of the High School Redesign and Restructuring Program and the Middle College/Early College High School Expansion Grant program (MCEC Eval). The studies consist of both qualitative and quantitative research methods to document critical aspects of grant

implementation and to extract preliminary indications of effective components and promising practices. A final report on the Middle College/Early College Expansion grant was published in May 2007, and a final report on Cycles 1 and 2 of Redesign and Restructuring will be published in March 2008.

Texas High School Project Evaluation

The Texas High School Project Evaluation (THSP Eval) is an \$8 million, seven-year longitudinal evaluation of the grants funded as a part of the Texas High School Project, a statewide initiative to improve high school education outcomes. The evaluation involves managing and analyzing large-scale quantitative and qualitative data sets, performing intensive case studies, conducting site visits to grant schools and comparison schools, surveying educators and leaders implementing the grants, and administering questionnaires to teachers and students. The evaluation is designed to provide policymakers, funding entities, and educational practitioners with objective and timely information about the progress and effectiveness of these programs...

Chart of High School Completion and Success Programs and Strategic Plan Objectives

The table below displays how the current programs match the High School Completion and Success Initiative Council Strategic Plan objectives. Program descriptions can be found in the List of High School Completion and Success Programs and the Glossary of Terms.

Objective	Program Areas				
	Comprehensive Whole School Reform	Targeted Student Interventions	Effective Teachers and Leaders	Technical Assistance	Research and Evaluation
1.1 Create an aligned system					
1.2 Give priority based on key elements for replication and on best available research or promising ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rigorous curriculum • Personalized learning • Academic and social support • Relevance • Effective educators & leaders 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECHS • Redesign • HSTW Network • T-STEM Academies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Dropout Pilot • ISP • Engineering Activities • Technology-based Pilot • Ninth Grade Transition • THSC&S • NAG • NSAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math Coaches • Principal Certification • UTeach 	NA	NA

Objective	Program Areas				
	Comprehensive Whole School Reform	Targeted Student Interventions	Effective Teachers and Leaders	Technical Assistance	Research and Evaluation
1.3 Focus on economically disadvantaged and academically deficient students	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECHS • Redesign • HSTW Network • T-STEM Academies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Dropout Pilot • Student Clubs • ISP • Technology-based Pilot • Ninth Grade Transition • SERVE • Engineering Activities • THSC&S 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math Coaches • UTeach 	NA	NA
1.4 Increase the number of effective educators and leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECHS • Redesign • HSTW Network • T-STEM Academies 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math Coaches • Principal Certification • Professional Development • UTeach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus Turnaround • ESC – TA • Exemplars • TA & Support Centers • T-STEM Centers • T-STEM Network 	NA
1.5 Establish a P-16 focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECHS • Redesign • HSTW Network • T-STEM Academies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Dropout Pilot • ISP • Ninth Grade Transition • SERVE • Engineering Activities • NAG • NSAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal Certification • Professional Development • UTeach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exemplars • T-STEM Centers • T-STEM Network 	NA

Objective	Program Areas				
	Comprehensive Whole School Reform	Targeted Student Interventions	Effective Teachers and Leaders	Technical Assistance	Research and Evaluation
1.6 Leverage and align programs with other sources of funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECHS • Redesign • HSTW Network • T-STEM Academies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Pilot • Student Clubs • ISP • Technology-based Pilot • Ninth Grade Transition • THSC&S • Engineering Activities • NAG • NSAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal Certification • UTeach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus Turnaround • ESC – TA • T-STEM Centers • T-STEM Network 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THSP Eval
1.7 Give priority to programs with a goal of becoming self-sustaining in three years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECHS • Redesign • HSTW Network • T-STEM Academies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Dropout Pilot • Student Clubs • ISP • Technology-based Pilot • Ninth Grade Transition • Engineering Activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UTeach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • T-STEM Centers 	NA
2.1 Maintain technical assistance and rigorous professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECHS • Redesign • HSTW Network • T-STEM Academies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Pilot • ISP • Technology-based Pilot • Ninth Grade Transition • SERVE • THSC&S • Engineering Activities • NAG • NSAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math Coaches • Principal Certification • Professional Development • UTeach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus Turnaround • ESC – TA • Exemplars • TA & Support • T-STEM Centers • T-STEM Network 	NA

Objective	Program Areas				
	Comprehensive Whole School Reform	Targeted Student Interventions	Effective Teachers and Leaders	Technical Assistance	Research and Evaluation
2.2 Monitor all programs to ensure fidelity to the model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECHS • Redesign • HSTW Network • T-STEM Academies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Dropout Pilot • ISP • Technology-based Pilot • Ninth Grade Transition • THSC&S • SERVE • Engineering Activities • NAG • NSAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math Coaches • Principal Certification • UTeach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exemplars • T-STEM Centers • T-STEM Network 	NA
3.1 Commit to funding for a period sufficient to determine success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECHS • Redesign • T-STEM Academies 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Principal Certification • UTeach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus Turnaround • T-STEM Centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THSP Eval
3.2 Externally evaluate programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECHS • Redesign • HSTW Network • T-STEM Academies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Dropout Pilot • ISP • THSC&S 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Math Coaches 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TA & Support 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Eval • ISP Eval • Math Coaches Eval • MCEC Eval • THSP Eval
3.3 Expand or continue effective programs and discontinue those that are ineffective					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Eval • ISP Eval • Math Coaches

Objective	Program Areas				
	Comprehensive Whole School Reform	Targeted Student Interventions	Effective Teachers and Leaders	Technical Assistance	Research and Evaluation
					Eval <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MCEC Eval • THSP Eval
3.4 Assess cost-effectiveness in terms of outcome measures and efficiency					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Eval • ISP Eval • Math Coaches Eval • MCEC Eval • THSP Eval
4.1 Provide stakeholders with comprehensive evaluations					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Practices • Collaborative Eval • ISP Eval • Math Coaches Eval • MCEC Eval • THSP Eval
4.2 Utilize both short- and long-term measures for qualitative and quantitative analyses					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborative Eval • ISP Eval • Math Coaches Eval • MCEC Eval • THSP Eval
4.3 Establish multi-year longitudinal evaluations					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • THSP Eval

Objective	Program Areas				
	Comprehensive Whole School Reform	Targeted Student Interventions	Effective Teachers and Leaders	Technical Assistance	Research and Evaluation
4.4 Identify lessons learned and promising practices based on research and evaluation results.					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best Practices • Collaborative Eval • ISP Eval • Math Coaches Eval • MCEC Eval • THSP Eval

Appendix 1—H.B. 2237

Statement of Sponsor's Intent

The Senate Research Center's bill analysis of the Committee Substitute for H.B. 2237 contains a statement of the sponsor's intent for the bill, which states the following:

For years, Texas has succeeded in producing quality elementary school students. Recent results on the National Assessment of Educational Progress show that our Texas 4th grade students outperformed the national average in both reading and mathematics, and that our 8th grade students outperformed the national average in mathematics.

However many Texas high schools fall short in preparing students for postsecondary studies and vocational opportunities. According to the Southern Regional Education Board, 22 percent of Texas adults between the ages of 24 and 44 do not have a diploma or GED, compared to the national average of 15 percent. Over 50 percent of students entering postsecondary studies have to take at least one remedial course in mathematics, reading or writing while in college.

In addition, the 78th and 79th Legislatures designated and appropriated over \$100 million to be used to remedy such problems, but there has been little oversight as to how those funds are to be used.