

Evaluation 2011

ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND OUTCOMES OF THE
TEXAS WORKFORCE SYSTEM





Texas Workforce Investment Council

January 2012

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Dear Fellow Texan:

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) is pleased to present the *Evaluation 2011* report on the Texas workforce system (system). Approved unanimously at the Council's December 16, 2011 meeting, it is the second report for *Advancing Texas: Strategic Plan for the Texas Workforce System (FY2010-FY2015) (Advancing Texas)* – documenting accomplishments by system partners during the second year of the plan's implementation.

State statutes require that the Council's evaluation report address five components:

- ▶ workforce system and program performance based on the Formal and Less Formal measures approved by the Governor;
- ▶ implementation of action plans by partner agencies as directed by the Council's System Integration Technical Advisory Committee;
- ▶ adult education action and achievements;
- ▶ local workforce board activities and alignment with the system strategic plan; and
- ▶ work development programs that focus on welfare to work initiatives.

This report is a unique compilation and analysis of system performance and achievements. Through the delivery of over 20 workforce education and training programs, state and local system partners served almost 5.3 million individuals in the last reporting year. Over 478,000 completed a degree, certificate or other measure of educational achievement, while almost 1.3 million individuals entered employment and over one million retained jobs.

Data reported for most programs now show the effects of the recession. As the recovery continues, the Texas economy remains comparatively strong. The system served fewer individuals this year, largely due to the phasing out of federal recovery relief funding. While the number entering employment was down, retention figures were up and the attainment of educational outcomes continued to rise.

With the second year of implementation complete, I am pleased to report that substantial progress was made toward achieving the 14 long term objectives contained in *Advancing Texas*. Our system partners are identifying ways to increase collaborative efforts as they carry out ongoing projects and begin new initiatives. This year, project teams completed planning for the design and implementation of pilots addressing critical areas such as career technical education and apprenticeship training, as well as programs designed to meet the needs of English language learners and those with low literacy levels.

I commend this report to you.

Sincerely,

Wes Jurey, Chair

Evaluation 2011

Accomplishments and Outcomes of the Texas Workforce System

Texas Workforce Investment Council
December 2011

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INTRODUCTION

The Council and Texas' Workforce System

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) was created in 1993 by the 73rd Texas Legislature. The Council is charged with promoting the development of a highly skilled and well-educated workforce for Texas, and assisting the Governor and the Legislature with strategic planning for and evaluation of the Texas workforce system. The 19-member Council includes representatives from business, labor, education and community-based organizations.

The workforce system is comprised of the workforce programs, services and initiatives administered by eight state agencies and 28 local workforce boards, as well as independent school districts, community and technical colleges and local adult education providers.

System partners are responsible for the delivery of 25 programs and services focused on education, workforce education and workforce training for three participant groups: adults, adults with barriers and youth. The Council collects and disseminates performance data and funding information on 20 workforce programs, as well as five academic education programs at the secondary and postsecondary levels. Information and data from these five programs assist in understanding the scope and effort of program delivery through high schools and community and technical colleges, and these entities' efforts to prepare students to transition to further education or enter the workforce.

Working with system partners, the Council completed a yearlong planning process in September 2009. The result of that process was *Advancing Texas: Strategic Plan for the Texas Workforce System (FY2010-FY2015) (Advancing Texas)*, which was approved by the Governor on October 23, 2009.

Advancing Texas was devised on a six-year timeframe to align with the Texas Strategic Planning and Performance Budgeting System. It will be reviewed and updated in 2012 and 2014.

Advancing Texas

The workforce system strategy is to provide its customers – employers, current and future workers of Texas – with access to relevant and comprehensive workforce services that span a continuum from career planning and preparation, to career development and enhancement.

Vision

Our world-class workforce system enables Texas to compete successfully in the global market.

Mission

The Texas workforce system creates a globally competitive workforce through collaborative workforce system partner relationships that align, leverage and integrate system services.

System Partners

- ★ Economic Development and Tourism
- ★ Texas Association of Workforce Boards
- ★ Texas Department of Criminal Justice – Windham School District
- ★ Texas Education Agency
- ★ Texas Health and Human Services Commission – Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services
- ★ Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- ★ Texas Veterans Commission
- ★ Texas Workforce Commission
- ★ Texas Youth Commission

The system strategic plan – *Advancing Texas* – and other Council products referenced in this report are posted on the Council's website at:

<http://governor.state.tx.us/twic/work/>.

Annual Evaluation

The Council is required by Texas Government Code Chapter 2308 to monitor the state's workforce system. As part of that responsibility, the Council annually reports to the Governor and the Legislature on the degree to which the system is achieving state and local workforce goals and objectives. This is the second evaluation report for *Advancing Texas*, covering the period September 1, 2010 through August 31, 2011.

State statutes require that the Council evaluate five elements in the workforce system:

- ▶ Formal and Less Formal performance measures
- ▶ Implementation of the system strategic plan, *Advancing Texas*
- ▶ Adult education action and achievements
- ▶ Local workforce board activities and alignment
- ▶ Work development programs that focus on welfare to work initiatives

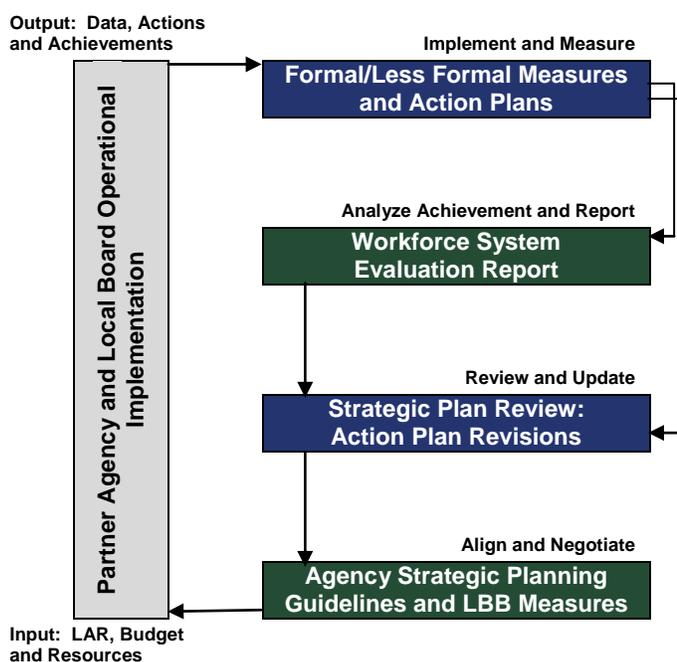
The Council utilizes a three-tier evaluation hierarchy that is one component of a comprehensive system performance framework, as illustrated in the graphic below. The framework depicts the inputs, outputs, and planning and evaluative components that form the cycle of planning, evaluation and implementation that the Council engages in with system partners.

The Implement and Measure box at the top right references the three evaluation tiers, which are comprised of metrics designed to evaluate system performance as well as progress toward achieving the long term objectives (LTOs) identified in the system strategic plan.

- ▶ Evaluation Tiers 1 and 2 consist of Formal and Less Formal measures, respectively, which are presented in the **Report Card Series** and **Less Formal Measures** sections of this report.
- ▶ The third tier consists of action plans (APs) and progress milestones toward the LTOs, as noted in the **System Accomplishments** section.

- Key:**
- Grey = delivery/yields
 - Green = formal evaluative actions and course correction
 - Blue = planning actions and impacts
 - LAR = Legislative Appropriation Request
 - LBB = Legislative Budget Board

Texas' Workforce System Performance Framework



Issues Identification

System partners operate in a complex, changing economic environment as they strive to provide employers, current workers and future workers with services that are comprehensive, timely and relevant. There continues to be increased demand for middle-skills jobs, those that require more than a high school degree but less than a four-year degree. In Texas, future workers will be needed in traditional health care, energy and technology-based jobs, as well as in the growth industries of wind, biofuel and energy efficiency. In addition, the state's demographic composition is changing, with the workforce projected to include larger proportions of women, Hispanics and prime-age (i.e., 25-54 years of age) workers.

The Council is charged with facilitating the development of a systemic, integrated approach to the delivery of programs and services that meet the needs of employers and individuals. In part, this is accomplished through identifying issues and working with system partners to achieve their resolution.

Over the *Advancing Texas* plan period, issues directly related to the scope of this report as outlined above will be included in the annual evaluation report. In addition to the issues outlined in this report, the

Council also identifies and works to address issues related to the state's workforce system through a variety of other mechanisms, including:

- ▶ *System Integration Technical Advisory Committee (SITAC)* – Established by the Council Chair in December 2003 to oversee implementation of the system strategic plan, SITAC members represent all partner agencies and the Texas Association of Workforce Boards.
- ▶ *Council Strategy Sessions* – Convened in addition to, or in conjunction with, regular Council meetings in order to identify and address systemic issues.
- ▶ *Issue Briefs and Reports* – Produced periodically to address specific workforce issues.
- ▶ *Stakeholder Roundtables* – Conducted periodically to obtain feedback regarding system stakeholder needs and to assess workforce system usage and satisfaction levels.

Measures and Definitions

Three tiers of performance measures are included in *Advancing Texas*:

- ▶ **Tier 1 – Formal** – System measures are outcome oriented. They establish responsibility for end outcomes or outputs that are central to the system's success. Such measures are essentially consistent across workforce programs and consist of the Formal measures found in partner agencies' performance measures for state-based budgeting and reporting. The four Formal measures that were approved by the Governor in 2003 remain in effect and were incorporated into *Advancing Texas*:
 - *Educational Achievement* – Number and percent of all program participants who obtain a degree, other credential of completion, or complete the level enrolled in either a training or educational program.
 - *Entered Employment* – Number and percent of all program participants who secure employment after exiting a program.
 - *Employment Retention* – Number and percent of all program participants who retain employment at a specified point after exiting a program.
 - *Customers Served* – Number of employers and individuals who received system services, including program participation.
- ▶ **Tier 2 – Less Formal** – Strategy-critical measures are also outcome oriented. These consist of the Less Formal measures that establish responsibility for end outcomes or outputs that are central to system partners' missions. There are six such measures for the current plan:
 - *Vocational ESL Graduates* – Number of vocational ESL graduates (subset of English as a Second Language (ESL) population).
 - *Vocational ESL Employment* – Rate of vocational ESL graduates who secure employment (subset of ESL population).
 - *Workforce Literacy Graduates* – Number of workforce literacy graduates (subset of Adult Basic Education (ABE) population).
 - *Workforce Literacy Employment* – Rate of workforce literacy graduates who secure employment (subset of ABE population).

- *CTE Concentrator Graduates* – Percent of Career Technical Education (CTE) concentrators (Code 2 and 3 CTE Participants) who graduate on the recommended or distinguished achievement high school program.
- *Employer Satisfaction* – Agency measures and definitions to be developed in fiscal year 2012.
- ▶ **Tier 3 – AP Specific** – Capacity-building measures are process oriented and establish responsibility for intermediate outcomes that identify and chart achievement of tasks and milestones. They are specific to a given AP and often require a high degree of collaboration between system partners.

In 2010, definitions and methodologies were negotiated with partner agencies, in consultation with the Governor's Office of Budget, Planning and Policy and the Legislative Budget Board (LBB). Only the Tier 1 Formal measures are included in agency Legislative Appropriation Requests, and may or may not be specified as a key measure¹.

Data Treatment and Limitations

Data for all Formal measures except Customers Served are presented as both an absolute number and as a percentage. All data are from the most recent 12-month reporting period available.

- ▶ *Agency Negotiation* – During 2004 data definition and methodology negotiations, the Council requested that where federal common definitions were relevant, those definitions be used, as well as similar program periods. The intent was to lessen the differences between data sets, thereby achieving a higher degree of relatedness and relevance when aggregating data across multiple programs. There are definitions and program periods that differ slightly from those used during the previous strategic plan period.
 - *Program-Level Reporting* – As required by statute, data are presented by program rather than by agency.
 - *Unduplicated Data* – In most cases, data are unduplicated and conform to the reporting definitions and methodologies agreed to by partner agencies. For example, Educational Achievement data may include duplicate data where a participant has outcomes for both education and training programs. Where known, these instances are footnoted on the applicable report card.
- ▶ *Data Revisions* – In preparing data for the 2011 evaluation, two agencies identified the need to submit corrected data for the 2010 reporting cycle. The Texas Veterans Commission and Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) reported that revisions were due to (1) data updates following further data entry by local workforce boards, (2) clarifications in reporting specifications and/or (3) coding improvements. Percentage point differences published in the **Report Card Series** for Change 2010-2011 and all report narrative reflect the revised 2010 data submitted by the agencies, found in the **Data Addendum** to this report.
- ▶ *Change Rates* – Data are presented and tracked longitudinally. This year, each report card includes columns for two rates of change:
 - *Change 2010-2011* – The one-year rate captures the change from the previous year to the current year. Expressed as a percentage, the rate represents the percentage point difference from 2010 to 2011.

¹ Key measures indicate the extent to which a state agency is achieving its goals or objectives and consist of the outcome, output, efficiency, and explanatory measures referenced in the General Appropriations Act for each agency. [LBB, *Performance Measure Reporting in ABEST* (December 2009)]

- *Cumulative 2009-2011* – The cumulative rate aggregates the rate of change from 2009 (baseline year) to the current year. Expressed as a percentage, the rate represents the percentage point difference from 2009 to 2011.
- ▶ *Explanation of Variance* –
 - *Variance Range* – Instances where the value in the Change 2010-2011 column was more than 5%, either positive or negative, are addressed within the appropriate report card section. This reporting is aligned to LBB performance measures reporting requirements. Agencies were asked to take special issues such as the economic recession and availability of federal stimulus funds into consideration again this year.
 - *Base Values* – Significant changes in numerator and/or denominator values from 2010 to 2011, but with no resulting significant rate change, were also reviewed where applicable. Such instances are addressed in the respective report card sections.
- ▶ *Rounding Convention* – A rounding convention has been applied to the Formal and Less Formal measures data: .001 to .004 has been rounded down to .00; .005 to .009 has been rounded up to the next highest hundredth. Rounding rules are applied after completion of applicable mathematical operation(s) such as division or subtraction.
- ▶ *Data Ownership* – Some partner agencies process their own data, while others have interagency agreements with other partner agencies for data processing. Raw data are confidential records owned by the applicable agency.
- ▶ *Unemployment Insurance Records* –
 - *Time Lag* – There is a significant delay in receiving and analyzing unemployment insurance (UI) wage records for measuring performance. For example, when looking at six-month retention factors, there is a six-month wait to establish the period of data collection, plus four to five months for employers to submit the data to TWC. This lag continues to pose significant challenges regarding timely performance measurement in other states, as well as Texas. This approximate one-year data lag is ongoing because of the UI records delay and the time necessary for agencies to process and report the data to the Council.
 - *Coverage* – An unknown number of program exiters obtain jobs that are not covered by the Texas UI system. For example, the self-employed, those who relocate and become employed in another state, and those who live in Texas but are employed across state lines are not reported in the Texas UI database. Such non-coverage issues result in lower levels of documented employment, reflecting negatively when the efficacy of education and training programs is evaluated. Data sets that are more complete may be available in instances where the agency can utilize other databases, such as the Wage Record Interchange System, to identify employment with employers who do not file UI wages in Texas.

Report Cards

The Council believes that the report card series is a useful tool to present overall system performance. System evaluation is complex and, although the four Formal measures are appropriate to provide a system snapshot, they should not be viewed in isolation from other factors. Agencies and programs have different service populations with unique needs and characteristics, which has a large effect on performance data. Additional limitations of specific significance to a single program are contained within the card footnotes or narrative.

System performance is presented in a series of five report cards that contain data reported by partner agencies for the Formal and Less Formal (Tiers 1 and 2) measures. Aggregate data are presented on

the four Formal measures report cards and on the System report card. However, it is important to note that not all data definitions or methodologies are identical. The total should be viewed only as a good approximation of overall system performance. The graphic on page 7 illustrates the relationship of Formal and Less Formal measures to the report card series.

- ▶ *Programs in the Report Card Series* – The 25 programs included in the report card series along with the short titles used in this report, are:

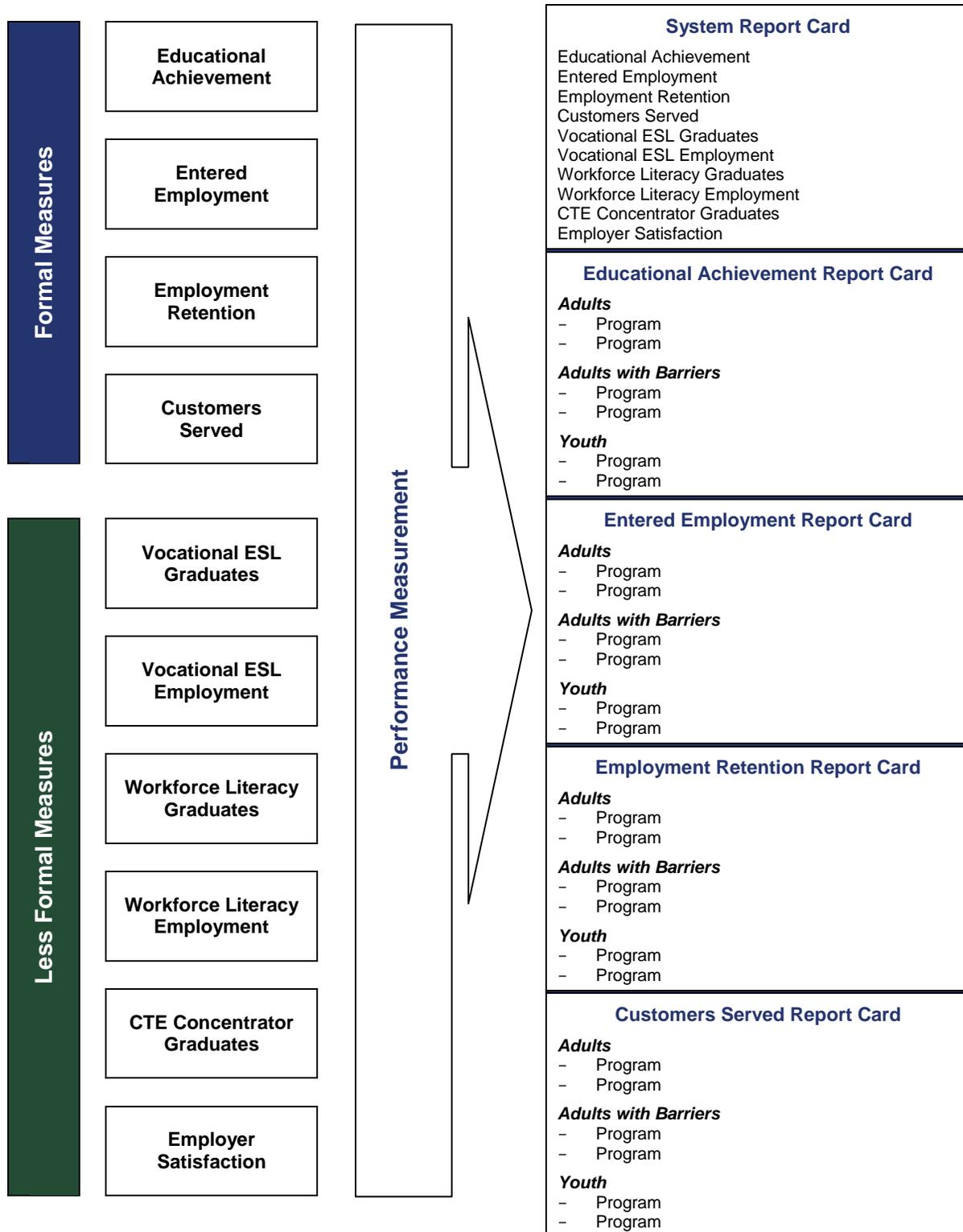
Programs in the Report Card Series	Short Title
Adult Education Workforce Investment Act II	Adult Education
Adults Workforce Investment Act	Adults WIA I
Apprenticeship Chapter 133	Apprenticeship
Blind Services	Blind Services
Community and Technical College Academic	CTC Academic
Community and Technical College Technical	CTC Technical
Dislocated Workers Workforce Investment Act	Dislocated WIA I
Employment Services - Wagner Peyser	Employment Services
Perkins Secondary Career Technical Education	Secondary CTE
Postsecondary Community and Technical College Corrections	Postsecondary CTC Corrections
Project Re-Integration of Offenders	Project RIO
Rehabilitation Services	Rehabilitation Services
Senior Community Service Employment Program	SCSEP
Secondary Education	Secondary
Secondary Academic Youth Corrections	Secondary Academic Corrections
Secondary Technical Youth Corrections	Secondary Technical Corrections
Secondary Academic Windham	Secondary Academic Windham
Secondary Technical Windham	Secondary Technical Windham
Self-Sufficiency Fund	Self-Sufficiency
Skills Development Fund	Skills Development
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training	SNAP E&T
Trade Adjustment Assistance	Trade Adjustment
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families Choices	TANF Choices
Veterans Employment and Training	Veterans E&T
Youth Workforce Investment Act	Youth WIA I

- ▶ *System Report Card* – This report card contains aggregate data for the four Formal measures, with the data sets combined across programs. It also includes data for the Less Formal measures, where available. Since Less Formal measures are specific to a single program there is no data aggregation.
- ▶ *Formal Measure Report Cards* – Individual report cards with accompanying analysis are included for each of the four Formal measures, with outcome data by program organized into three categories: Adults, Adults with Barriers and Youth. Each program is assigned to one of the three categories in order to establish the greatest level of outcome equivalency and comparability.

Programs in the Adults with Barriers category meet at least one of four criteria as a characteristic of the participant population: economically disadvantaged, educationally disadvantaged, incarcerated, or physically or mentally impaired and requiring adaptive or rehabilitative services. This includes programs that assist welfare recipients to attain education, skills and employment: Adults WIA I, TANF Choices, SNAP E&T, and Self-Sufficiency. Data for these programs addresses the Council’s mandate to report on work development programs that focus on welfare to work initiatives.

Report Card Structure for Reporting and Evaluating Measures

- ★ *System Report Card (1)* – Aggregates and weights based on total participant population.
- ★ *Formal Measure Report Cards (4)* – Report by population segment, program and aggregate.



REPORT CARD SERIES

The System report card shows the performance of Texas' workforce system and includes totals for each of the four Formal measures that have been aggregated and weighted by the number of program participants. The card also shows the number, percent where applicable, and rates of change for the Formal and Less Formal measures.

The System report card contains aggregate data for the four Formal measures, with the data sets combined across programs. In this report, the change columns reflect the increase or decrease between values in the 2010 report and those reported for 2011, and the cumulative change from 2009 to 2011.

Following the System report card, a report card for each Formal measure is presented and discussed. The next section of the report presents the Less Formal measures by goal, definition, benchmark and data sets.

The Council is required by statute to report program-level data and to provide an overall assessment of implementation of the workforce system strategic plan, *Advancing Texas*. As noted in the Data Treatment and Limitations section on page 4, the aggregate data presented in the report card series should be viewed as an approximation of overall system performance.

System

2011 Workforce System Report Card				
Formal Measures	Actual	Percent	Change 2010-2011	Cumulative 2009-2011
Educational Achievement ²	478,886	78.82%	2.34%	3.75%
Entered Employment ³	1,290,542	67.50%	-4.19%	-11.76%
Employment Retention ⁴	1,017,741	80.85%	1.39%	-2.54%
Customers Served ⁵	5,286,340	N/A	-2.12%	0.32%
Less Formal Measures⁶				
CTE Concentrator Graduates	110,607	81.52%	2.09%	N/A
Vocational ESL Graduates ^A	<i>not available</i>	-	-	-
Vocational ESL Employment ^A	<i>not available</i>	-	-	-
Workforce Literacy Graduates ^A	<i>not available</i>	-	-	-
Workforce Literacy Employment ^A	<i>not available</i>	-	-	-
Employer Satisfaction ^B	<i>not available</i>	-	-	-

The report card series is a useful tool to present overall system performance, but the data presented should be taken in context. Most programs are designed to serve participants that meet specific eligibility criteria and that have unique needs. Accordingly, program objectives and desired outcomes vary, and approved data definitions and methodologies are program-specific. Additionally, integrated service delivery strategies may result in duplication of customer counts across programs. The System report card contains aggregate data for all agencies' applicable programs by measure as noted on the Formal measure report cards. Due to known duplicates that cannot be removed from program-level data, adjustments have been calculated at the System level, with unduplicated data footnoted as applicable.

² The aggregate Educational Achievement rate, adjusted to exclude duplicate TWC customers, is 78.73%.

³ The aggregate Entered Employment rate, adjusted to exclude duplicate TWC customers, is 67.52%.

⁴ The aggregate Employment Retention rate, adjusted to exclude duplicate TWC customers, is 81.26%.

⁵ The aggregate Customers Served count, adjusted to exclude duplicate TWC customers, is 5,055,408. Project RIO-Youth participants (1,406) were also excluded as they are not included in the report card series.

⁶ Five of the six Less Formal measures are tied to planned pilot projects, with data not being available until future reporting cycles.

(A) The four Vocational ESL and Workforce Literacy measures will be defined as implementation proceeds and finalized in 2012.

(B) Agency-specific Employer Satisfaction measures and definitions will be developed in 2012.

Educational Achievement⁷

2011 Educational Achievement Report Card

	Actual	Percent	Change 2010-2011	Cumulative 2009-2011
Adults				
CTC Academic	20,106	26.57%	0.12%	0.30%
CTC Technical	9,138	21.79%	-1.02%	-1.39%
Apprenticeship	3,272	78.92%	3.66%	3.04%
Dislocated WIA I	3,382	92.10%	0.33%	-2.61%
Adults WIA I	5,396	92.21%	-1.56%	-1.42%
Adults Total	41,294	31.45%	0.93%	-0.11%
Adults with Barriers				
Adult Education	5,244	78.16%	-10.81%	-10.41%
Postsecondary CTC Corrections	1,306	32.79%	5.28%	1.64%
Secondary Academic Windham	5,287	83.55%	4.72%	1.36%
Secondary Technical Windham	5,278	76.56%	-1.74%	-3.47%
Adults with Barriers Total	17,115	71.57%	1.71%	1.31%
Youth				
Secondary CTE	130,417	96.12%	1.86%	7.58%
Secondary	287,164	91.43%	2.21%	3.43%
Youth WIA I	3,044	83.72%	8.03%	6.59%
Secondary Academic Corrections	454	39.00%	4.11%	-1.54%
Secondary Technical Corrections	704	39.66%	12.23%	21.85%
Youth Total	421,783	92.43%	2.32%	5.09%
Total	478,886	78.82%	2.34%	3.75%

⁷Educational achievement includes participant outcomes for both educational and training programs. Data subsets (duplicates) include Postsecondary CTC Corrections. The card total has been adjusted to provide an unduplicated count.

Educational Achievement Analysis

Educational Achievement –

number and percent of all program participants who obtain a degree, other credential of completion, or complete the level enrolled in either a training or educational program.

The data sets in the Educational Achievement report card are from those system programs and services that have the acquisition of knowledge and skills as a significant, intended outcome for participants. Data limitations other than those general limitations, such as time lag of unemployment insurance wage matching, are contained within the card footnotes or narrative.

Data

Adults

The data range for Adults is from 21.79% for CTC Technical programs to 92.21% for Adults WIA I. Three of the five programs increased from 2010, with the largest change reported for Apprenticeship (3.66%). Three programs also reported performance of greater than 78%, with a segment total of 31.45%. This represents an annual increase of 0.93%, but a slight two-year decrease (-0.11%) for the group.

CTC Academic and Technical program data are based on a starting cohort and total awards earned within a six-year period. The data sets include certificates, associate and higher degrees. While this data reflects the success of a specific cohort across time, it does not indicate the educational success of students in a 12-month period as measured by the awarding of certificates or associate degrees. In academic year 2009-10, 74,191 CTC academic and technical credentials were awarded. This represents an increase of 14.76% from 2010 and a two-year increase of 25.24%. The number is more than double the completions, or graduation rate, reported this year under the longitudinal definition. For this reason, the Council continues to request 12-month credential data from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) in order to provide a more complete representation of educational achievement in Texas' community and technical colleges.

Adults with Barriers

The data range for Adults with Barriers is from 32.79% for Postsecondary CTC Corrections to 83.55% for Secondary Academic Windham. With the exception of Postsecondary CTC Corrections, a program that deals with incarcerated adults, the programs in this group reported rates of over 76%. An overall increase of 1.71% was noted for the group, with a two-year rise of 1.31%.

After rising slightly last year (0.40%), Adult Education declined 10.81% this year and 10.41% from 2009. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) reported that, on a statewide basis, the greatest proportion of adult education students enter the program at the lower educational levels. Many leave prior to attaining a high school diploma or GED because of personal needs or the realization of the amount of time and effort necessary to complete their education.

Conversely, after a 2010 decrease (-3.64%), Postsecondary CTC Corrections rose 5.28% this year, resulting in a two-year gain of 1.64%. This program is operated by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's Windham School District. The agency noted that due to budget uncertainties for the next biennium, enrollments for postsecondary courses were limited to students who could complete the entire course prior to August 31, 2011. This enrollment limitation significantly increased the completion rate, particularly in vocational programs.

Youth

The Youth category includes five programs, with a data range of 39.00% for Secondary Academic Corrections to 96.12% for Secondary CTE. In the Youth segment, 421,783 individuals achieved educational outcomes, an increase of 2.32% from 2010 and 5.09% from 2009.

All five programs reported positive changes, including two increases that exceeded the 5% variance range:

- ▶ *Secondary Technical Corrections* – The largest gain (12.23%) was posted for this program. This represents a two-year gain of 21.85%. The Texas Youth Commission indicated that two factors led to opportunities for youth to obtain industry certifications: (1) one of the new Career and Technology Education/Industry certification programs added at the end of 2010 had a full year of operation and (2) the agency was able to fill a long-term instructor vacancy.
- ▶ *Youth WIA I* – The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) administers this program, which posted gains of 8.03% and 6.59% from 2010 and 2009, respectively. The agency attributed the improved performance to increased technical assistance which has improved local boards' understanding of the credentials recognized and associated data entry requirements.

Also of note, Secondary CTE has increased 7.58% since 2009. This year, 130,417 participants achieved an educational outcome, compared to 118,330 in 2009 and 122,827 last year.

Total

The absolute number of individuals with an educational achievement outcome (numerator) increased from 445,091 in 2009 to 478,886 this year. Over the two-year period, performance has risen 3.75%. Of the 14 programs, eight had absolute increases this year, with a notable change reported for Secondary, up 11,997.

Of the 607,563 program participants, 478,886 (78.82%) achieved an educational outcome, a one-year increase of 2.34% and two-year rise of 3.75%. Postsecondary CTC Corrections' completion numbers of 1,306 in the Adults with Barriers segment were subtracted from the aggregate of all programs to achieve the unduplicated performance total and percent.

Additional Data

The following data sets were provided by partner agencies so that a more comprehensive picture of educational achievement could be presented, thereby providing important contextual information.

- ▶ Career schools and colleges awarded 100,693 degrees and certificates, an increase of 19.74% from the prior year and 54.95% from 2009. This includes certificates reported by TWC (69,875, up 0.68% from 2010) as well as certificates and degrees reported by THECB. With more career schools and for-profit institutions reporting to THECB, the number of certificates and degrees increased from 9,994 in 2009 to 24,183 last year and 30,818 this year. This includes 22,199 certificates, 5,276 associate's degrees and 3,343 bachelor's degrees. THECB noted that the number of reporting institutions has increased significantly, rising from 94 to 138 this year.
- ▶ Of Secondary Windham enrollments, 41.00% completed the level enrolled, a slight decrease (-0.08%) from the previous year.
- ▶ Of the 449,767 enrollments in Secondary and Secondary CTE programs, 203,504 were in Tech Prep, an increase of 15,783 students (8.41%). TEA reports that the continued growth of Tech Prep programs during 2010-11 was likely due to a stronger emphasis on college readiness and the opportunity for students participating in such programs to earn college credit while in high school.
- ▶ Adult Education students completed the level enrolled at a rate of 54.05%, up from last year's rate of 52.30%. After falling last year, the number of adults who (1) enrolled, (2) were assessed and (3) had the minimum of 12 hours class time required for inclusion in federal reporting rose from 91,473 to 106,592 (16.53%). This represents a two-year increase of 6.33%. TEA attributes the higher number of adults assessed with 12 or more hours of class time to prioritization on student retention activities and services. The agency also noted that the continuing practice of managed enrollment promotes a student cohort model, which is successful in keeping students enrolled for longer time periods.

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Entered Employment

2011 Entered Employment Report Card				
	Actual	Percent	Change 2010-2011	Cumulative 2009-2011
Adults				
CTC Academic	20,895	88.93%	-0.08%	-0.30%
CTC Technical	26,583	84.57%	-1.84%	-2.10%
Skills Development	1,351	96.02%	10.29%	-0.13%
Trade Adjustment	2,023	74.57%	4.03%	-10.72%
Veterans E&T	37,452	64.19%	-5.53%	-12.66%
Employment Services	1,004,052	66.64%	-5.16%	-13.35%
Dislocated WIA I	7,217	78.15%	-2.58%	-9.15%
Adults WIA I	11,932	75.30%	-2.46%	-8.91%
Adults Total	1,111,505	67.40%	-4.91%	-12.87%
Adults with Barriers				
Blind Services	1,363	73.60%	5.91%	3.44%
Rehabilitation Services	11,496	58.36%	1.45%	1.44%
Adult Education	799	60.08%	-6.71%	-6.12%
SNAP E&T	17,985	83.12%	0.29%	-1.26%
Project RIO	25,119	53.09%	-5.29%	-20.10%
Self-Sufficiency	122	73.94%	-3.73%	-10.22%
SCSEP	199	41.89%	3.05%	2.20%
TANF Choices	20,983	78.05%	-2.79%	-6.74%
Adults with Barriers Total	78,066	65.41%	-1.77%	-9.93%
Youth				
Secondary CTE	95,708	70.47%	0.46%	-2.59%
Youth WIA I	5,263	69.87%	10.48%	-3.73%
Youth Total	100,971	70.44%	2.07%	-2.66%
Total	1,290,542	67.50%	-4.19%	-11.76%

Entered Employment Analysis

Entered Employment –

number and percent of all program participants who secure employment after exiting a program.

The data sets in the Entered Employment report card are from those workforce system programs and services that have the acquisition of employment as a significant, intended outcome for participants. Data limitations other than those general limitations, such as time lag of unemployment (UI) wage matching, are contained within the card footnotes or narrative.

As noted in the **Introduction**, there is a delay in receiving and analyzing UI wage records for measuring performance such as entered employment. While the programs have different reporting cycles, most of those with negative changes this year reflect performance for mid to late 2010. The effects of the economic recession are evidenced again this year and may continue to be a factor in the next reporting cycle.

Data

Adults

The data range for Adults is from 64.19% for Veterans E&T to 96.02% for Skills Development. Six of the eight programs reported performance of over 74%, but an annual decrease of 4.91% was noted for the group. Compared to 2009, group performance was down 12.87%.

While all eight programs experienced declines last year, two reported increases this year: Skills Development (10.29%) and Trade Adjustment (4.03%).

Last year, performance fell for all Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) programs and for the Texas Veterans Commission's (TVC) Veterans E&T program. Again this year, data for these programs (10/09-9/10) represent groups comprised exclusively of individuals who exited the program during the recession. Significant changes were posted for two TWC programs this year:

- ▶ *Skills Development* – Up 10.29% from 2010, TWC noted during 2011 increased emphasis was placed on developing partnerships with businesses that were in the best position to create new jobs and meet new hire goals.
- ▶ *Employment Services* – Although the percentage entering employment declined 5.16%, the number served increased from 1,473,176 to 1,506,680. Of those, 1,004,052 entered employment, compared to 1,057,751 the previous year. Since 2009, the percentage entering employment has declined 13.35%.

Three additional TWC programs also had significant two-year declines: Trade Adjustment (-10.72%), Dislocated WIA I (-9.15%), and Adults WIA I (-8.91%).

Veterans E&T decreased 5.53% this year, a two-year decline of 12.66%. TVC noted that the non-seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for fiscal year (FY) 2011 exiters was 8.2% compared to the FY 2010 rate of 6.9%.

Adults with Barriers

The data range for this group is from 41.89% for SCSEP to 83.12% for SNAP E&T. Of the eight programs, four reported entered employment rates of 70% or higher. Overall performance decreased slightly from last year (-1.77%) and significantly (-9.93%) from 2009.

Notably, four programs reported positive changes this year, with the largest increase by Blind Services (5.91%). The Health and Human Services Commission reported that the Division for Blind Services implemented various strategies during FY 2011 that resulted in the increase. Staff were trained in areas such as effective comprehensive assessments, maintaining contact with the consumer on a regular basis,

and more effective ways to assist the consumer with finding employment. Additional strategies were also developed for locating consumers with whom contact had been lost so the rehabilitation process could be successfully completed rather than the case being closed unsuccessfully.

After a slight increase last year, Adult Education declined 6.71% this year and 6.12% from 2009. Agency performance data is for the most recent standard reporting cycle for each program. Reporting for this program is for an earlier exit cohort (10/08-9/09) and, therefore, it was anticipated that the effects of the recession might be evidenced this year. The Texas Education Agency indicated that the economic downturn had limited employment opportunities for undereducated adults.

Project RIO declined again this year (-5.29%), resulting in a two-year decrease of 20.10%. TWC noted that the offender population is traditionally last in the hiring queue and in most instances first in the layoff queue. It is consistent to see this population affected disproportionately during periods of high unemployment.

Two additional TWC programs also had significant two-year declines: Self-Sufficiency (-10.22%) and TANF Choices (-6.74%).

Youth

For the two programs, entered employment outcomes ranged from 69.87% for Youth WIA I to 70.47% for Secondary CTE. Overall performance increased 2.07% from 2010, but declined 2.66% from 2009.

After decreasing last year, performance for Youth WIA I rose 10.48%. TWC reported that performance was unusually low last year due to the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Summer Employment initiative, which increased the number of youth served who did not intend to remain employed. This year, the number served (7,533) and entering employment (5,263) approximated the 2009 levels of 8,785 and 6,465, respectively. In comparison, the extra funding accounted for 23,779 served and 14,122 entering employment last year.

Total

Of the 1,911,861 program participants, 1,290,542 (67.50%) entered employment. This represents a decrease of 11.76% from 2009 and a one-year decline of 4.19%. Ten of 18 programs showed one-year decreases, an improvement over 2010. Notably, one-year double-digit percentage increases were posted for Youth WIA I (10.48%) and Skills Development (10.29%), but five programs had double-digit decreases for the two-year period.

The absolute number of individuals served rose again, while the number entering employment fell this year. The number of program participants (denominator) was 1,911,861, up from 1,877,596 in 2010 and 1,530,423 in 2009. The number entering employment (numerator) decreased from 1,345,999 in 2010 to 1,290,542, but 11 of 18 programs reported absolute increases.

For most programs, data reported last year reflected the first group of participants exiting during the recession. Performance declines were expected to continue in 2011 and possibly in the next reporting cycle given the delay in UI wage reporting.

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Employment Retention

2011 Employment Retention Report Card

Adults	Actual	Percent	Change 2010-2011	Cumulative 2009-2011
CTC Academic	12,906	85.83%	-0.29%	-1.14%
CTC Technical	22,066	91.51%	0.47%	-0.53%
Skills Development	25,601	95.76%	4.09%	2.58%
Trade Adjustment	2,027	91.27%	6.05%	-1.46%
Veterans E&T	36,460	82.19%	-0.09%	-4.72%
Employment Services	850,698	80.54%	1.54%	-2.88%
Dislocated WIA I	6,002	88.71%	1.09%	-1.46%
Adults WIA I	12,299	83.16%	-0.68%	-2.04%
Adults Total	968,059	81.34%	1.45%	-2.77%
Adults with Barriers				
Blind Services	630	86.78%	0.60%	0.07%
Rehabilitation Services	7,722	85.27%	0.14%	-0.63%
Adult Education	3,360	65.57%	-2.24%	-2.59%
SNAP E&T	8,210	85.03%	4.03%	8.84%
Project RIO	13,046	62.99%	3.68%	-2.30%
Self-Sufficiency	213	77.45%	-4.17%	-5.62%
TANF Choices	11,489	78.54%	1.71%	3.33%
Adults with Barriers Total	44,670	74.23%	1.76%	0.31%
Youth				
Youth WIA I	5,012	59.67%	-11.93%	-15.92%
Youth Total	5,012	59.67%	-11.93%	-15.92%
Total	1,017,741	80.85%	1.39%	-2.54%

Employment Retention Analysis

Employment Retention –

number and percent of all program participants who retain employment at a specified point after exiting a program.

As with Entered Employment, the data sets in the Employment Retention report card are from those workforce system programs and services that have the acquisition and maintenance of employment as a significant, intended outcome for participants. Data limitations other than those general limitations, such as time lag of unemployment insurance (UI) wage matching, are contained within the card footnotes or narrative.

There is a significant delay in receiving and analyzing UI wage records for measuring retention. The programs have different reporting cycles, with some of the reported measures reflecting the initial effects of the economic recession last year as noted in the *Evaluation 2010* report. It was anticipated that would be a more significant factor this year. Despite that concern, improved outcomes were reported for a majority of the programs.

Data

Adults

The data range for Adults is from 80.54% for Employment Services to 95.76% for Skills Development. Overall, this segment increased 1.45% from last year while posting a two-year decline of 2.77%.

Five of the eight programs reported increases this year, improving over last year when all eight experienced declines. Only the Skills Development program posted a two-year gain, rising 2.58% from 2009.

One program reported an increase that exceeded the 5% variance range: Trade Adjustment (6.05%). The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) indicated that given economic conditions, employed workers might be more reticent to leave existing employment. The agency reported this led to a higher level of job stability and retention for existing employment.

Adults with Barriers

The data range for Adults with Barriers is from 62.99% for Project RIO to 86.78% for Blind Services, with five of seven programs reporting retention of over 77%. Overall, performance increased 1.76% and 0.31% from 2010 and 2009, respectively. Five of the seven programs posted positive changes from 2010, with the greatest increases reported for SNAP E&T (4.03%) and Project RIO (3.68%).

Self-Sufficiency had the largest one-year decrease, falling 4.17%. This year's data set (4/09-3/10) included participants who all exited after the onset of the economic recession, with weaker labor market conditions prevailing.

Significant two-year changes were posted for SNAP E&T (8.84%) and Self-Sufficiency (-5.62%).

Youth

Youth data includes only one program. Performance for Youth WIA I fell 11.93%, a two-year decline of 15.92%. TWC reported that the non-seasonally adjusted unemployment rate for fiscal year (FY) 2011 exiters was 7.9% compared to 5.4% for FY 2010 exiters. With the delay in receiving and analyzing UI wage records for measuring employment, this year's employment retention cohort (4/09-3/10) is the first comprised exclusively of individuals who exited during the recession.

Total

Of the 1,258,778 program participants who entered employment, 1,017,741 (80.85%) retained employment. This represents an increase of 1.39% from 2010 but a two-year decrease of 2.54%.

The absolute number of individuals entering employment fell this year, but the number retaining employment improved over last year. The number of individuals finding employment (denominator) was 1,258,778 compared to 1,262,300 in 2010. The number retaining employment (numerator) increased, rising from 1,003,095 to 1,017,741. The largest increase was reported for Employment Services, with 31,463 more individuals retaining employment.

Last year, data reported for most programs reflected the first participant group with some individuals who exited during the recession. That accounted for the performance declines experienced by programs with positive trends during the last strategic plan period, which includes all programs in the Adults category. That trend was expected to continue in this reporting cycle, but outcomes across programs were more positive than anticipated.

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Customers Served⁸

2011 Customers Served Report Card			
	Actual	Change 2010-2011	Cumulative 2009-2011
Adults			
CTC Academic	459,723	7.82%	21.30%
CTC Technical	202,411	9.46%	24.75%
Apprenticeship	4,172	0.63%	2.28%
Skills Development	31,208	-7.66%	8.61%
Trade Adjustment	5,159	-23.58%	-20.25%
Veterans E&T	68,151	-11.36%	-26.15%
Employment Services	1,651,886	-9.49%	-7.89%
Dislocated WIA I	13,744	-31.15%	-18.72%
Adults WIA I	21,297	-35.70%	-31.14%
Adults Total	2,457,751	-5.87%	-2.24%
Adults with Barriers			
Blind Services	10,426	-0.10%	2.78%
Rehabilitation Services	74,789	-0.19%	3.99%
Adult Education	113,916	13.47%	3.31%
SNAP E&T	53,519	39.57%	95.78%
Project RIO	48,516	-8.73%	-2.74%
Self-Sufficiency	50	-78.90%	-96.97%
SCSEP	1,522	-12.73%	1.20%
TANF Choices	47,785	0.39%	14.20%
Postsecondary CTC Corrections	3,983	-26.06%	-39.62%
Secondary Academic Windham	69,249	-4.77%	-6.54%
Secondary Technical Windham	11,199	3.36%	-0.81%
Adults with Barriers Total	434,954	4.61%	6.99%
Youth			
Secondary CTE	1,033,875	0.63%	2.08%
Secondary	1,347,324	1.47%	3.37%
Youth WIA I	12,034	-33.77%	-62.83%
Secondary Academic Corrections	2,610	-15.20%	-30.40%
Secondary Technical Corrections	1,775	-33.35%	-45.57%
Youth Total	2,397,618	0.78%	1.79%
Total	5,286,340	-2.12%	0.32%

⁸ Educational achievement includes participant outcomes for both educational and training programs. Data subsets (duplicates) include Postsecondary CTC Corrections. The card total has been adjusted to provide an unduplicated count.

Customers Served Analysis

Customers Served –

number of employers and individuals who received system services, including program participation.

As with all other Formal measures, the data sets in the Customers Served report card are from Texas' workforce system programs and services. Data limitations other than those general limitations addressed in the **Introduction** are contained within the card footnotes or narrative.

While Customers Served is typically defined and treated as a lag measure, it was recommended for inclusion as a Formal measure for two reasons:

- ▶ Customers Served may be used as a lead measure for the purpose of system strategic planning given its tie to program infrastructure usage and capacity; and
- ▶ Total Customers Served indicates the number of individuals served by system programs and services. It should be noted that a given individual might receive services from one or more programs, either concurrently or at different points in time. Thus, the absolute number of individuals served is typically less than the total presented on the Customers Served report card as it represents aggregate, program-level participation counts. While known duplicates cannot be removed from program-level data, adjustments have been calculated at the System report card level, footnoted as a point of reference on page 9.

With the exception of Adult Education (7/09-6/10), program data submitted this year reflects participation from August/September 2010 through August 2011. The beginning effects of the recession were evidenced by several programs in *Evaluation 2009*, with that trend continuing in *Evaluation 2010*. This year's results are mixed. In many cases, significant decreases in service levels were due to the expiration of supplemental funding such as that provided under the American Recovery and Reinvestment (ARRA) of 2009.

Data

Adults

The data range for Adults is from 4,172 customers served by Apprenticeship programs to 1,651,886 served by Employment Services through local boards' workforce centers and WorkInTexas.com. The nine programs in this segment reported serving 2,457,751 individuals, down 5.87% from last year and 2.24% from 2009.

CTC Academic and CTC Technical both increased significantly based on fall 2010 enrollment figures. CTC Academic rose from 426,399 to 459,723, a gain of 7.82%, while CTC Technical posted a 9.46% increase, climbing to 202,411. This represents two-year gains of 21.30% and 24.75%, respectively, for the programs. The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board noted that the continued recession led to more students enrolling in community college to retrain for new jobs or to earn a degree or certificate to increase their chances of obtaining employment.

Veterans E&T (-11.36%) declined again this year, with a two-year decrease of 26.15%. Last year, the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) attributed the lower than expected performance to the U.S. Department of Labor's (DOL) issuance of Priority of Service guidelines that transferred more basic employment service functions to non-TVC, workforce center staff. This allowed TVC staff to provide more one-on-one intensive services to the most difficult to serve who are identified through a comprehensive assessment process and often receive assistance overcoming numerous, serious barriers to employment. This year, the agency noted that the number of unemployment insurance (UI) claimants filing initial claims (TVC and non-TVC) declined more than 16% compared to fiscal year (FY) 2010, resulting in significantly fewer claimants seeking workforce system services. As noted in the **System Accomplishments** section feature, TVC continues to improve outreach strategies for veterans and employers.

Five Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) programs posted decreases that exceeded the 5% variance range:

- ▶ *Adults WIA I and Dislocated WIA I* – Last year’s significant increases reflected the economic recession and the growing number of unemployed individuals. Both posted double-digit decreases this year: Adults WIA I fell 35.70%, a two-year decline of 31.14%, while Dislocated WIA I decreased 31.15% and 18.72% from 2010 and 2009, respectively. In mid-2009, the local boards received ARRA funds totaling nearly \$30 (Adults) and \$32 (Dislocated) million for the WIA I programs. DOL’s intent was that the majority of the ARRA funds be spent in the first year of availability. To ensure this was accomplished, TWC established a spending threshold of 80% by June 30, 2010, with 100% to be expended by December 31, 2010. As these funds were exhausted, the number served declined. In addition, the boards’ FY 2012 Adults WIA I allocations decreased by approximately 7%, which may lead to further declines in the number of customers served.
- ▶ *Trade Adjustment* – The number served decreased 23.58% and 20.25% from 2010 and 2009, respectively. For this program, the number of clients served is based on qualifying layoffs affecting workers, and as noted by TWC, significantly fewer layoffs were certified as trade-related in FY 2011. The Trade Adjustment Act Amendments of 2009 that significantly expanded the types of layoffs eligible for trade certification expired February 14, 2011. Thus, the number of new workers covered by certified trade petitions decreased significantly from FY 2009-10 to FY 2011.
- ▶ *Employment Services* – After increasing last year, the number served declined 9.49%, a two-year decrease of 7.89%. TWC noted that UI claimants historically comprise over 60% of the Employment Services customers served. The number of UI claimants filing initial claims declined from FY 2010 by more than 16%, resulting in significantly fewer claimants seeking services from the workforce system and thus fewer Employment Service customers in FY 2011.
- ▶ *Skills Development* – Performance for this state-funded program fell 7.66%, but increased 8.61% since 2009. TWC attributed the decrease to economic uncertainties, which caused employers to be more conservative with (1) new hire commitments and projections and (2) releasing incumbent workers for training.

Adults with Barriers

The data range for Adults with Barriers is 50 customers served by the Self-Sufficiency program to 113,916 customers served by Adult Education and literacy programs. The 11 programs in this segment reported serving 434,954 individuals, an increase of 4.61% from last year and 6.99% from 2009.

After declining last year, this year’s figure of 113,916 served by Adult Education programs (7/09-6/10) represents a 13.47% increase from 2010, and a two-year change of 3.31%. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) reported that the positive variance is due to the one-time receipt of additional federal funds due to a miscalculation by the U.S. Department of Education and partial allocation of additional state funds received for the FY 2010-11 biennium.

Four TWC programs posted significant changes, including three decreases and one gain:

- ▶ *SNAP E&T* – After rising 40.27% last year, the number of SNAP E&T participants rose again this year (39.57%), a two-year gain of 95.78%. TWC attributed the 2010 gain to the weaker economy that resulted in increased caseloads, a trend that continued this year. SNAP assists participants in obtaining employment through participation in work programs and education and training activities.
- ▶ *Self-Sufficiency* – This program provides grants to CTCs and community-based organizations to implement customized job training programs in cooperation with employers, to help low-income individuals and those receiving public assistance achieve self-sufficiency and independence. TWC noted that the agency did not receive adequate proposals for funding in 2011, and therefore, the 78.90% decrease (-96.67% from 2009) is based on earlier contracts that were closing out.

- ▶ *SCSEP* – The availability of ARRA and DOL bonus funding made available through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2010 allowed more low-income, older job seekers to receive paid, on-the-job training and employment services last year. The expiration of ARRA funds led to a 12.73% decrease this year, with a resulting change of 1.20% from 2009.
- ▶ *Project RIO* – Previously, the Legislature provided funds to serve an additional 10,000 adult and youth ex-offenders and TWC worked with the local boards to ensure that this expectation was met. As with other programs, the weaker economy resulted in more unemployed individuals needing reemployment assistance. However, in FY 2011, TWC reported that the number served decreased 8.73%, a reduction roughly proportionate to the decrease in overall job seeker served numbers.

Operated by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice's Windham School District (WSD), the Postsecondary CTC Corrections program served 3,983 this year, down 26.06% from 5,387 served last year. The agency reported that, in some cases, class offerings were reduced in response to the state's mandated 2.5% budget reduction for FY 2011. Due to budget uncertainties for the 2012-13 biennium, enrollments for the summer term were limited to students who could complete entire academic and vocational courses prior to August 31, 2011. While this change increased the percentage achieving an educational outcome, it greatly reduced the number served. With state funding also reduced for FY 2012, WSD and contracted colleges began phasing out certain course offerings. Workforce classes were reduced by over 70%, reducing participant numbers proportionately.

Youth

The data range for the Youth category is 1,775 customers served through Secondary Technical Corrections programs administered by the Texas Youth Commission (TYC) to 1,347,324 customers served by Secondary programs. The five programs in this segment reported serving 2,397,618 individuals, up slightly (0.78%) from the prior year and 1.79% from 2009.

As anticipated, the number of customers served under Youth WIA I decreased significantly again, falling 33.77% this year and 62.83% for the two-year period. In 2009, the local boards received nearly \$70 million in ARRA funds for a Summer Employment Program, but this option did not carry forward into 2010. As with the additional ARRA funds for the Adults and Dislocated WIA I programs, DOL's intent was that the majority of the funds be spent in the first year of availability. TWC established the same expenditure requirements for the Youth WIA I program, and thus as these funds were exhausted the number of youth served declined.

TYC-administered programs also served fewer individuals this year, with decreases reported for both. Secondary Academic Corrections fell 15.20% and Secondary Technical Corrections 33.35%. This represents two-year declines of 30.40% and 45.57%, respectively. With 960 youth newly committed to TYC in FY 2011, the average daily population was lower than budgeted, resulting in lower enrollments in TEA secondary courses.

Total

Partners in Texas' workforce system served 5,286,340 individuals, representing a 2.12% decrease from last year, but a slight increase (0.32%) from 2009. Of the 25 programs, service levels rose for nine this year, compared to 16 last year.

TWC reported that 159,756 employers received services, up 7.15% from 2010 and a two-year increase of 6.79%. The agency noted that while Texas continues to feel the effects of the stagnant national economy and the unemployment rate has stayed above 8%, the state has experienced job growth. Local boards continue to work with employers to fill their hiring needs, as well as to provide labor market information and other services to those not in a position to hire.

In many cases, the higher participation rates reported in 2010 reflect service levels, and receipt of additional program funding, during the height of the recession. This measure is not affected by the reporting delays inherent for post-program measures such as entered and retained employment. Therefore, the effects of the economic downturn that began in 2009 were most evident in the data

reported last year for this measure. Programs associated with negative economic conditions and layoffs such as Dislocated WIA I that saw significant increases in 2010 fell to lower levels this year.

Notably, continued upward trends for many academic and skills-based programs indicate increased efforts to provide individuals qualified to meet the increased demand for middle-skills jobs or in preparation for shifting skill needs.

LESS FORMAL MEASURES AND BENCHMARKS

Action Plans

Approved by the Governor in October 2009, the six new Less Formal measures were derived from action plans (APs) contained in the three key performance areas (KPAs) of *Advancing Texas*. These strategy-critical measures establish responsibility for end outcomes or outputs that are central to system partners' missions and linked directly to programmatic long term objectives (LTOs).

Actions and Outcomes

Five of the six Less Formal measures are tied to pilot projects, with data not being available until future reporting cycles. For the remaining measure, data reported in 2010 established the measure's benchmark. The measures and related LTOs are presented below, grouped by KPA. Additional details on AP implementation are presented in the **System Accomplishments** section.

KPA: Systems, Operations Competencies and Integration

LTO – By 2013, Texas will decrease high school dropout rates by implementing rigorous career technical education (CTE) as a part of the recommended or advanced high school graduation program.

A one-year change rate has been added, with a cumulative change rate to be incorporated in 2012.

LTO S2 Measure:

CTE Concentrator Graduates – Percent of CTE concentrators (Code 2 and 3 CTE Participants) who graduate on the recommended or distinguished achievement high school program.

Benchmark (established by data submitted for 2010 report): 79.43%

CTE Concentrator percentage: 81.52%

Data: 110,607 graduates from a population of 135,688

Change from data reported in 2010: 2.09%

KPA: Customer Outcomes

LTO – By 2013, design and implement integrated Adult Education and workforce skills training programs to enhance employment outcomes for the English language learner population.

There are two Less Formal measures for LTO C3. Both will be defined as implementation proceeds and will be finalized in 2012.

LTO C3 Measure 1:

Vocational ESL Graduates – Number of vocational ESL graduates (subset of English as a Second Language (ESL) population).

LTO C3 Measure 2:

Vocational ESL Employment – Rate of vocational ESL graduates who secure employment (subset of ESL population).

LTO – By 2013, design and implement targeted Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs to enhance employment outcomes for populations requiring workplace literacy skills.

There are two Less Formal measures for LTO C4. Both will be defined as implementation proceeds and will be finalized in 2012.

LTO C4 Measure 1:

Workforce Literacy Graduates – Number of workforce literacy graduates (subset of ABE population).

LTO C4 Measure 2:

Workforce Literacy Employment – Rate of workforce literacy graduates who secure employment (subset of ABE population).

KPA: Programs, Products and Services

LTO – Partner agencies will gather data from employer customers at appropriate intervals to determine employer needs and satisfaction.

Agency-specific measures and definitions will be developed for approval as part of the first update to *Advancing Texas*, to be considered by the Council in March 2012 and subsequently submitted to the Governor for approval. Five system partners have projects that address measurement of employer satisfaction with system products and services:

- ▶ Health and Human Services Commission – Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services
- ▶ Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- ▶ Texas Veterans Commission
- ▶ Texas Youth Commission
- ▶ Windham School District

LTO P5 Measure 1:

Employer Satisfaction – Definition(s) to be determined.

SYSTEM ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Action Plans

Action plans (APs) are the high-level plans that identify the major tasks, milestones, timeframes and performance measures necessary for achieving the 14 long term objectives (LTOs) and/or system goals outlined in *Advancing Texas*. Typically, APs span multiple years and assign accountability to system partner(s) for each major task or milestone. They are driven by the plan's overall mission, strategy statements, LTOs and critical success factors.

Two types of APs are included in *Advancing Texas*:

- ▶ *System* – affect the system as a whole, include multiple partners at various times and are directly linked to the system LTOs.
- ▶ *Partner* – affect a specific partner and are usually linked to a programmatic LTO of a specific agency.

Key Outcomes

Outcomes for the 14 LTOs are presented below, grouped by the plan's three key performance areas (KPAs). During the development of *Advancing Texas*, the KPAs were determined by examining similarities between the critical business issues and by identifying where those issues affect the state's workforce system.

KPA: System Operations, Competencies and Integration

This KPA includes four APs that address system issues such as the need for current supply-demand information and several projects related to career technical education (CTE).

LTO S1 – Produce each biennium, commencing in 2010, a report that documents an assessment of the number and type of postsecondary education and training credentials (certificate, level two certificate, associate, bachelor's and advanced degrees) required to match the demand for a skilled and educated workforce. The assessment will include the number of forecast net job openings by occupation at each level of postsecondary education and training and the number of credentials needed to match that forecast.

... working to effectively integrate planning initiatives that require partner coordination to ensure alignment.

LTO S1 addresses an integrated planning initiative that requires partner coordination. Work is in progress by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to create a supply and demand database. Readily available supply-demand reports will provide data needed for education and training providers to plan and better align their programs to industry needs as customers can access local data and produce customized reports.

TWC's Strategic Workforce Assessment Project (SWAP) provides pre-defined occupational subsets for local workforce development area target occupations, AchieveTexas career clusters and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) occupations. New features, reports, data items and analytical tools are in continuous development, dependent on user needs and available funding.

Within SWAP, an occupations-to-programs crosswalk, validated by TWC, utilizes the Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP). A process for updating and validating the CIP-SOC crosswalk has been developed, but implementation was on hold as of September 2011. Last year, the agencies reported that ongoing data collection mechanisms had been identified for:

- ▶ *Supply* – THECB will provide annual enrollment and graduation data at the 4-/6-digit CIP code level. Program-level data will be used initially, with course-level data expected to be available in 2013.
- ▶ *Demand* – TWC provided employment and job opening projections, with 2018 projections now available.

In August 2011, TWC completed a draft *SWAP User's Guide* for use in introducing stakeholders to SWAP's analysis tools. Because the static document would require updates as tools and resources evolve, TWC plans to create an interactive format to better guide users in developing reports. This will allow for continued evolution of online tools. Current plans are to develop multiple user scenarios that pose hypothetical education or workforce planning issues and demonstrate how SWAP can be used to provide the appropriate data and analysis to address the issue. Tentative plans are to pilot test the interactive guide with selected colleges in early 2012.

LTO S2 – By 2013, Texas will decrease high school dropout rates by implementing rigorous career technical education as a part of the recommended or advanced high school graduation program.

... college and career readiness will be achieved by the availability of both academic courses and rigorous career technical education courses.

CTE programs provide valuable career education, and often lessen the risk of students dropping out. Texas needs enhanced and more effective integration of academic and CTE options at both the secondary and postsecondary levels in order to increase graduation rates and assist with student transition to further education or into the workforce.

LTO S2 focuses on college and career readiness, with the intent of increasing the availability of both academic and rigorous CTE courses to support students through a range of choices including two- and four-year degrees, apprenticeship and the military. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) previously completed the plan's initial tasks, including:

- ▶ CTE courses that satisfy fourth-year math or science graduation requirements were developed and adopted by the State Board of Education (SBOE). The nine new courses met graduation requirements for the 2010-11 school year.
- ▶ CTE Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS, state-mandated curriculum), incorporating the College and Career Readiness Standards, were adopted by the SBOE and effective as of August 2010.

Work on several tasks continued this year:

- ▶ Professional development initiatives related to CTE TEKS have been designed and training for 24,000 CTE teachers was completed in August 2010. Training modules for the nine courses that meet math or science graduation requirements were scheduled to be available online last year. Due to the success of face-to-face training and priority of developing other online courses, the modules were rescheduled to come online in fall 2011. In the interim, education service centers and other entities have continued to provide the information at conferences and dedicated training events.
- ▶ Steps taken to incorporate the new CTE TEKS include:
 - *Secondary/Postsecondary Crosswalk* – The Advanced Technical Credit Leadership Committee (ATC) reviews and updates the crosswalk annually. ATC is exploring simpler methods for transcribing postsecondary credit and expanding college membership in this optional statewide articulation initiative. Reviews have been completed for 2011-12 (69 of 194 courses). ATC also trained 11,484 teachers on 1,370 campuses in 892 districts.
 - *Workforce Education Course Manual (WECM)* – THECB reviews the WECM on a periodic schedule to ensure course currency. TEA reviews corresponding TEKS courses in an effort to ensure secondary/postsecondary alignment.
 - *Tech Prep Consortia Plans* – THECB dissolved the consortia effective August 31, 2011 following federal defunding of Tech Prep. Two consortia will continue to operate under other auspices and funding. Previously, Tech Prep consortia provided the majority of teacher training for the ATC program. The program is working to identify alternative venues and delivery methods.
- ▶ TEA continues to develop and deploy early college high schools, with the number increasing to 54, including five academies supported by the Texas Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (T-STEM) Initiative. The agency is also conducting a planning year for six additional potential schools.
- ▶ Criteria are being developed for the Campus Distinction Designations for the 21st Century Workforce Development program as required by House Bill 3 (81st Legislature). Staff has drafted a list of stakeholders, a literature review, a list of possible measurement criteria/indicators, and a list of possible award methodologies. Committee meetings are tentatively scheduled to begin this school year.
- ▶ As of August 2011, end of course (EOC) studies were in the planning stage. EOC data are not yet available as EOC assessments have not been implemented.

LTO S3 – By 2013, education and training partners will have the infrastructure necessary (policies, procedures, data processes, rules, and capabilities) to facilitate the effective and efficient transfer of academic and technical dual credit courses from high schools to community colleges and four-year institutions.

... lack of clear and aligned educational policy and regulations for secondary and postsecondary transitions can limit the efficiency and effectiveness of educational outcomes.

More coordinated and integrated planning efforts are needed to improve programs and initiatives in an effort to ensure seamless education and career transitions. LTO S3 focuses on the processes for transferring dual credit from high schools to postsecondary institutions.

TEA and THECB are working on multiple processes and initiatives related to dual credit transfer options. Key actions include:

- ▶ The partners continue to provide information to high school counselors about the differences between workforce and academic dual credit programs and transfer options for courses and programs. This year: (1) a “Frequently Asked Questions” section on dual credit was added to TEA’s website; (2) a contractor was hired to provide training modules through TEA’s Project Share online platform; and (3) community colleges were provided with summary documents that outline the differences between the various types of dual credit opportunities available to students.
- ▶ *Research Study of Texas Dual Credit Programs and Courses* (March 2011) was published. TEA, in collaboration with THECB, contracted with American Institutes for Research and Gibson Consulting Group, Inc. to conduct the study.
- ▶ TEA is also charged with designing and executing a research study regarding dual credit as a substitute for EOC exams. As noted in the LTO S2 report above, EOC studies are in the planning stage. EOC assessments have not yet been implemented but will be phased in beginning with 2011-12 ninth grade students, adding successive grades annually through 2014-15.
- ▶ Beginning fall 2011, THECB data systems will allow the tracking of students from dual credit into college level courses with associated course grades included. This will provide significantly greater opportunities to evaluate the preparedness level of students who take courses as dual credit versus as a traditional college course in addition to the success that each group has in successive college courses. Data analysis will be limited to the number of cohorts included in the system, beginning with the FY 2012 cohort.
- ▶ THECB is working with two- and four-year institutions to develop explicit learning outcomes that will be consistent across academic courses taught at institutions statewide. Faculty teams have developed learning outcomes for approximately 19% of course sections at community colleges and 25% of the enrollments. This effort is expected to continue for several years in order to complete the process for the most frequently offered and taken courses. Less

frequently used courses or unique need courses will not be completed at a state level.

- ▶ TEA continues to deploy early college high schools. As noted in the LTO S2 report above, there are currently 54, including five T-STEM academies. The agency is also conducting a planning year for six additional potential schools. However, funding reductions may limit school participation.
- ▶ TEA also continues to work with public high schools to meet the Texas Education Code §28.009 mandate to offer all students at least 12 hours of college credit. While there are no specific benchmarks for this task, the agencies are refining data collection strategies as noted above.

LTO S4 – By 2013, design and implement a demonstration program targeted to improve perception of career options that career technical education (CTE) programs enable.

... career and technical education is often perceived as a less desirable career option.

LTO S4 focuses on increasing awareness of CTE as preparation for desirable career options. This is increasingly important as over the next 20 years many high skill, high wage jobs critical to Texas' economy will require some postsecondary education, but less than a four-year degree.

During *Advancing Texas'* development, the Council elected to be responsible for this AP, with the Executive Committee providing oversight. This is consistent with the Council's charge in Texas Government Code §2308.101(8) to encourage, support, or develop research and demonstration projects designed to develop new programs and approaches to service delivery.

In September 2010, the Council published *Research Findings: Raising Awareness of Career Technical Education in Texas Schools*. The report:

- ▶ identified promising practices in Texas high schools related to the provision of information and decision making support that enable counselors, students and parents to understand and value career options and pathways afforded by CTE programs;
- ▶ disaggregated the practices to activities to determine common elements, with those elements then validated against national examples of best practices; and
- ▶ specified the most prevalent, validated activities with the greatest potential for incorporation into a replicable model.

In November 2010, staff convened a task group to design an outreach and awareness model that incorporates the promising CTE practices identified in the research. The group used the findings to assist staff in developing the model for a pilot project and a Request for Applications (RFA).

The structure of the model is sequential and cohort-based. The best practices target students and their parents with specific

activities for each of the three years (grades 9-11). The RFA will be released when funds become available. It is anticipated that there will be four awards, with final selection based on school size and community type (rural/urban). Successful, replicable demonstrations have the potential to increase awareness and educate students, parents, and counselors about the wide range of career and educational choices available through CTE.

KPA: Customer Outcomes

To meet the growing and changing demands of Texas' employers, everyone must be part of the critical pool of potential employees. *Advancing Texas* identifies four target populations, addressed by the four LTOs outlined below.

LTO C1 – By 2013, the blind and disabled populations will achieve additional employment outcomes.

... the blind and disabled, who with focused assistance can achieve enhanced employment outcomes.

LTO C1 specifies that the Health and Human Service Commission's (HHSC) Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services (DARS) will develop system capabilities, including transition technologies, designed to ensure employment outcomes for workers with disabilities or who are blind or visually impaired.

For several years, DARS has been involved in successful, innovative models that have created and facilitated partnerships between business/industry and rehabilitation providers. The Council's February 2010 *Profiles in Success* featured individuals involved in this DARS initiative.

To build on and replicate these models, a competitive request for proposals was issued in fall 2009. In March 2010, contracts were issued to 10 providers in multiple industries and with various job opportunities. Two were later discontinued by mutual consent due to limited performance; the remaining eight are scheduled to run through March 2012. DARS continues to monitor the contracts and provide technical assistance.

DARS also utilizes an 'imbedded training model' when working with medium to large business in a variety of industries. The agency works with business and Community Rehabilitation Programs to develop customized, on-site training which often includes a physical conditioning component to benefit individuals transitioning from idle to full time work. These partners' positive experience is evident by their expansion of this program within their companies, as well as by their marketing to other employers. From February 2010 through January 2011, DARS successfully closed an estimated 1,200 cases.

Using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) of 2009 funds, this initiative was expanded to multiple businesses in the medical, hotel and grocery sectors. In the first year (March 2010-February 2011), 116 participants were successful in gaining employment. Based on performance and projected need, the ARRA contracts will be converted to a fee for service basis when they end in February 2012.

LTO C2 – By 2013, the veteran population will achieve additional employment outcomes.

... veterans, who while they often have a wide range of disabilities can with training, referral and placement services return to the civilian workforce.

LTO C2 specifies that the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) will work to ensure state and leveraged federal services provide veterans with the programs, products and services necessary to accommodate their needs and to enable them to enter the workforce successfully. Additional information is presented in **Featured Action Plan: Increase Veteran Employment** at the end of this report section.

Although the entered employment rate has declined during the recession, progress continues to be made for the AP's major tasks. In late 2009, the agency launched a new statewide initiative by hiring a dedicated Business Outreach Coordinator. The addition of this position provided the opportunity to work more closely not only with employers but also with TVC and local workforce boards to leverage more training and placement services for veterans. The successful effort was expanded in July 2011 when TVC instituted the Veterans Business Representatives (VBR) initiative with positions strategically located across the state.

Veterans also receive support through a network of over 90 field offices, including assistance from locally-based Veterans Employment Representatives.

Other actions include:

- ▶ *REALifelines (RLL)* – Working with the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) and the Veterans Administration, TVC has increased outreach, awareness and participation in this program that helps injured veterans return to civilian life. Texas has three RLL counselors, located at Brooke Army Medical Center, Fort Bliss and Fort Hood. During the period January-June 2011, 240 veterans enrolled in the program.
- ▶ *Transition Assistance Program (TAP)* – In coordination with the DOD, TVC facilitates multi-day TAP seminars. The seminars are designed to provide job search and related services to military personnel within 180 days of separation or retirement. There are 11 TAP sites statewide, staffed with experienced facilitators who are also veterans. From August 2010-July 2011, 360 TAP workshops were conducted with 16,033 participating.
- ▶ *Outreach* – Last year, TVC launched a series of public service announcements and the new texas-veterans.com website that provides state and federal benefits information for veterans, active duty service members, spouses and dependents. Outreach to major corporations is ongoing through the VBR initiative.

LTO C3 – By 2013, design and implement integrated Adult Education and workforce skills training programs to enhance employment outcomes for the English language learner population.

... English language learners, who constitute a rapidly growing population requiring additional skills for workforce-related success.

LTO C3 requires TEA and TWC to develop new and enhance existing methods, programs and processes for programs that address both language and occupation skill acquisition by the over 17 years of age English language learner (ELL) population. The ELL population is comprised of individuals who have a high school diploma or postsecondary credential in their native country but are typically underemployed or unemployed due to lack of English proficiency and occupational skills certification.

TWC was responsible for working with the state demographer to identify where individuals are located as well as their native language. Since work on a related Council report occurred at the same time, the Council collaborated with the state demographer to gather the required data, publishing the first companion paper to *A Primer on Adult Education in Texas* in March 2010. The paper included information from the state demographer on the nativity, education and working age of Texas' population. Data shows the current adult education service need is over 3.8 million individuals who qualify, with that number expected to double by 2040. Of that number, almost 1.7 million are in the ELL population, with over 500,000 of those in the target population for this AP.

A work group was formed in September 2010 to design and develop a pilot model to be executed through community and technical colleges (CTCs) and local boards. The group, assisting with action plans C3 and C4, includes representatives from TEA, TWC, THECB, CTCs, local boards, adult education providers and Council staff.

To address the lack of available funding for pilot projects, THECB offered to support and fund the effort under Riders 45 and 56, Senate Bill 1 (81st Legislature). An RFA was issued specifying the pilot parameters. Due to a lack of applicants, it was revised and reissued. Pilot parameters specified in action plan C3 were retained, but changed from required to preferred criteria. This allowed the projects to be more flexible while still focusing on the intended outcomes.

Pilot implementation was scheduled to begin in August 2011 at Alamo Community College District, Amarillo Community College, El Centro College of the Dallas County Community College District, Hill College, South Texas College, Tyler Junior College and Wharton County Junior College. In addition, a previously funded program at El Paso Community College will be monitored as a pilot.

LTO C4 – By 2013, design and implement targeted Adult Basic Education (ABE) programs to enhance employment outcomes for populations requiring workplace literacy skills.

... those with low literacy levels, who can be assisted through target literacy programs to gain or maintain employment.

Similarly, LTO C4 specifies that TEA and TWC are responsible for developing new and enhancing existing methods, programs and processes for programs targeted at the over 17 years of age workforce literacy population that address workplace literacy acquisition. Workforce literacy skills are the basic and soft skills considered necessary to perform in entry-level occupations or the skills needed to adapt to technological advances in the workplace.

TWC utilized several methods to identify and assess local board relationships with adult education providers, including surveying both groups and reviewing local board plan information as well as research conducted for development of the *LEP Guide for Workforce Professionals* (2007). Study results were provided to the C3/C4 work group charged with developing an outreach and delivery model that fits within existing ABE funding and program initiatives and that can be offered concurrently with ABE levels 4-6.

A nationally recognized career awareness curriculum, previously offered by some Texas sites with highly successful results, has been selected. Several other activities were completed to support pilot implementation scheduled to begin in September 2011:

- ▶ Pilots have been negotiated with 10 providers in three regions reported to have robust relationships with their workforce partners: Alamo, Capital Area and Gulf Coast.
- ▶ Adult education providers have submitted proposals, with TEA processing contracts.
- ▶ The providers received technical assistance as well as the guidelines and timelines for launching pilot initiatives that support adult learner transitions to workforce training and/or employment.
- ▶ Adult education instructors met with local workforce literacy teams, selected pilot sites, and assigned instructors. As of late August, plans were being finalized for online curriculum training for the instructors.

KPA: Programs, Products and Services

The six LTOs included in this KPA address issues ranging from the need for middle-skilled workers to increased employer satisfaction with system products and services.

LTO P1 – Community and technical colleges will plan and execute education and training programs to address workforce skills gaps in their regions, as identified by local needs assessments or the biennial supply-demand report produced by the THECB and TWC.

... integrate and expand middle skills training to meet current and future employer demand.

Middle-skill jobs require education and/or training beyond high school, but less than a four-year degree. Such jobs currently account for nearly half the jobs in the U.S. and in Texas, with that number projected to grow over the next decade. However, Texas is facing an increasing shortage of workers with appropriate middle skills, thus creating a skills gap that may be exacerbated by future workforce retirements.

Texas' CTCs serve a vital role in training individuals for middle-skill jobs. Better aligning customer needs with program development and delivery will help ensure the availability of a population with the skills needed to meet current and future employer needs.

The tasks outlined for LTO P1 are dependent on delivery of the new biennial supply-demand report required under LTO S1. Last year, TWC and THECB proposed a modified approach for LTO S1 that centered around development of a web-based tool to allow customers such as CTCs to access their own local data and produce customized reports. TWC has completed a draft user's guide and plans to develop and pilot test an interactive guide with selected CTCs next year.

It is anticipated these new tools will be a key reference for determining how closely aligned CTC programs are to local workforce needs and identifying areas of significant skill gaps in order to adjust program offerings.

LTO P2 – By 2012, design, develop, and implement a pilot program to demonstrate flexibility of the 'earn while you learn' model of traditional apprenticeship programs. Where appropriate, expand and replicate into new occupational areas by 2015.

... expand the earn while you learn model for deployment into middle skills areas.

Under the Council's leadership, LTO P2 requires expansion of the earn while you learn model to address employer demand for skilled workers. The Council Chair assigned the Executive Committee the responsibility of overseeing implementation and reporting to the full Council. A project leadership team, including members from system partners THECB, TVC and TWC, was created in 2010 and charged with identifying and recommending potential projects.

The team selected projects in the following target industries: allied healthcare, health information technology, energy, aviation, and logistics and distribution. The team recommended and the Executive Committee approved several projects which are active and on schedule, including:

- ▶ *Pilots – defined as a partnership formed to develop a registered apprenticeship program in an occupational area that has not traditionally used apprenticeship as a means to train its workforce:*
 - Community Health Worker – Coastal Area Health Education Center
 - Health Information Technology – Dallas-Fort Worth Hospital Council Education and Research Foundation
 - Information Technology – New Horizons Computer Learning Centers

- ▶ *Demonstrations – defined as a partnership formed to adapt an existing registered apprenticeship program to meet emerging industry demand:*
 - Comprehensive-National Electrician Solar Training – Austin Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee, ImagineSolar and the Workforce Solutions – Capital Area local board
 - Pre-Apprenticeship, Distance Learning and Outreach to Underserved Populations – Independent Electrical Contractors of Texas

The Council worked with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) and pilot project staff to develop action plans with major tasks and timelines for development and implementation of the new programs. With project selection and planning complete, the leadership team is now providing support and technical assistance, helping to identify funding and other resources, and monitoring progress through quarterly written and verbal reports.

LTO P3 – Annually, the Council will produce a data set whereby system stakeholders can ascertain Texas' position relative to key indicators of competitiveness.

... data are required to ensure that system initiatives will be developed and executed to strategically position Texas in the global marketplace.

Data must be available to benchmark Texas against other states and countries in the most significant and strategic educational, workforce and market outcomes. Since 2005, the Council has published the *Texas Index (Index)*.

The *Index* research report provides data for 42 indicators organized into four domains: Training and Education; Research and Development; Market Composition and Characteristics; and Participant Access and Contribution.

Data in the four domains are indicative of:

- ▶ intellectual capital and the availability of a well-educated population to support innovation and commercialization;
- ▶ human capital and the availability of a well-trained labor supply to support the business needs of employers and increase productivity;

- ▶ financial capital and the availability of funds to support both basic and applied research, as well as product commercialization and increased competitiveness in the global marketplace; and
- ▶ the standard of living for Texas citizens.

In 2010 and 2011 several data sets from national sources, including the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Federal Communications Commission, the National Science Foundation and the National Center for Educational Statistics, were either not available or had not been updated.

The 2010 publication was delayed due to unavailable data. Published in early 2011, the *2010 Texas Index* contained 10 indicators with data sets identical to those in the 2009 report due to the lack of new data sets.

Due to similar data unavailability, the *2011 Texas Index* will not be published.

LTO P4 – Local boards will align with and support the workforce system strategic plan through their planning processes and related initiatives. This will be documented in board plans and plan modifications, which are submitted to the Council for approval.

... as the system's front line partners, local boards must understand and meet the needs of their local communities by offering relevant workforce programs and services.

As the system's front line partners, local boards must continue to enhance planning and collaborative efforts across various workforce system components in order to meet employer and community needs. LTO P4 addresses their local planning requirements and their relationship to the Council and the system strategic plan.

Title 1, Section 118 of the federal Workforce Investment Act (WIA) requires that each local board develop and submit to the Governor a comprehensive five-year local plan. Texas Government Code §2308.304(b) also requires them to develop a local plan that must have goals and objectives that are consistent with statewide goals, objectives and performance standards.

Both state and federal law require the Council to review local plans and modifications and make recommendations to the Governor for approval. Planning guidelines issued by TWC typically include an appendix that specifies the Council's request for information and data that will demonstrate alignment with the system strategic plan. While boards develop new local plans approximately every five years, plan modifications are generally required annually to update information and implement new state and local initiatives.

In recognition of the increased demand on the local delivery system due to the recession and the influx of federal stimulus funding, last year TWC determined that new plans or modifications would not be required for fiscal year (FY) 2011. The existing, approved board plans were extended through September 2011.

Given the continued potential for reauthorization of WIA in the coming year and the U.S. Department of Labor Employment and Training Administration's (DOLETA) intention to revise State Planning Guidance for Program Year 2012 (PY, July 1 – June 30) and beyond, DOLETA provided states with two options for PY 2011 state planning: (1) DOLETA approves an extension of the current WIA State Plan for an additional year, through PY 2011, or (2) DOLETA reviews and approves the WIA State Plan modification submitted by a state for PY 2011.

DOLETA approved TWC's request under Option 1, extending the state plan to 2012. Because of this extension, TWC extended the local board plans for another program year. In July, TWC received two board submissions with substantive changes that were determined to be modifications and, therefore, subject to review by the Council. The **Local Board Alignment** section includes results of (1) review of the two modifications and (2) submission by all 28 boards of information related to the implementation of *Advancing Texas*.

LTO P5 – Partner agencies will gather data from employer customers at appropriate intervals to determine employer needs and satisfaction.

... employer needs and satisfaction.

The Council and system partners recognize employers as a primary customer of the state's workforce system. Data gaps regarding employers' needs and satisfaction hinder the ability to assess whether existing programs and services adequately meet customer requirements. To be effective, programs and services must address and adapt to changing employer needs. During the previous strategic plan period, several partner agencies increased their efforts to become more familiar with employers' awareness and perception of existing services.

Agencies use employer data and information collected through web-based, telephone and in-person surveys to (1) measure satisfaction; (2) identify training and service needs; (3) identify modifications to current programs and services to better suit workforce requirements; and (4) serve as a resource for agency strategic plan development and in preparation for future legislative sessions. Five agencies continued projects under LTO P5:

- ▶ *HHSC-DARS* – DARS is working on two employer-related projects under LTOs P5 and P6. An online survey was developed to collect employer feedback for each service or interaction. The initial pilot, completed in September 2010, resulted in overall high levels of satisfaction.

The survey has been modified in an effort to address the low response rate and issues identified by respondents. The Divisions for Blind and Rehabilitation Services (DBS and DRS) are piloting similar versions of the revised survey, with information to be evaluated by November 2011. Data are used to assess employer satisfaction and to identify opportunities for program and service improvements.

- ▶ *THECB* – After developing an online survey system, THECB worked with TWC to notify employers of its availability, also informing the Texas Association of Community Colleges and local workforce boards in an effort to increase awareness and participation. Survey responses were not sufficient to result in statistical analysis of the programs or employers' satisfaction.

THECB considered new options to meet the plan's intent, and in 2011 partnered with the Council to survey CTCs. A two-phase survey process was used to collect information on CTC strategies for determining employer satisfaction and using that information in institutional planning processes to improve program delivery. Blinn College and Lone Star College System were selected as models of promising practices and will be formally recognized by the Council in December 2011.

The project plan will be reviewed and revised as part of the 2012 update to *Advancing Texas*. Sharing and possible replication of promising practices should result in opportunities for institutions to improve workforce training and employer satisfaction.

- ▶ *TVC* – TVC previously conducted an employer survey by fax and email, receiving a high response rate and a very high satisfaction level among employers who used the agency's employment services. A review of both the process and data received was completed, with data used for planning purposes and in preparation for the 2011 legislative session.

In late 2009, TVC launched a new statewide initiative by hiring a dedicated Business Outreach Coordinator. The successful effort was expanded in July 2011 when TVC instituted the VBR initiative. The VBRs are working to establish partnerships with regional employers and to directly market TVC employment services. A new web-based survey has been created to evaluate services. Data collection is scheduled to begin in early 2012, allowing time for employers to effectively evaluate the new services. TVC regional managers will collect and analyze data for their region to evaluate the VBR initiative and employers' needs related to hiring qualified veterans candidates.

- ▶ *Texas Youth Commission (TYC)* – In prior years, TYC has administered an annual survey during the state assessment process for Prison Industry Enhancement (PIE) programs, a process instituted under the previous system strategic plan. No data will be collected this year as there are currently no PIE programs in operation.

An additional survey was developed and piloted for employers that work with youth on parole, with plans to implement on a larger scale in June 2011. Due to an agency-wide reduction in force, implementation of this annual survey was deferred until October. The agency plans to shift from paper-based to electronic format next year.

- ▶ *Windham School District (Windham)* – Oversight for Project RIO was transferred from Windham to the Texas Department of Criminal Justice in September 2009, requiring Windham to adapt methods for collecting employer input including new data collection strategies with TWC.

Windham utilized an electronic survey in 2011 but continued to encounter low response rates and data issues such as: contact information derived from UI wage data was used, with many contacts being unfamiliar with the program; and employers were unaware employees were ex-offenders, resulting in incomplete responses.

Windham reported that additional effort is needed to match ex-offenders with respective employers, also noting that more investigation is required to determine how federal confidentiality statutes apply to providing additional individual detail to potential respondents. Current plans are to develop an alternative instrument and methodology by August 2012. Annual surveys will continue, with data reviewed to determine employer satisfaction and for use in a variety of program planning and management initiatives.

LTO P6 – Partner agencies will use the employment data/outcomes of their programs to understand and improve those programs.

... use of employment data and outcomes to assist with program improvement efforts.

Partner agencies utilize data from employer surveys, employment performance data and local board and workforce center feedback to support a range of initiatives such as improvement of program and service offerings. Three agency projects were continued under LTO P6:

- ▶ *HHSC-DARS* – Under the previous system strategic plan, DARS created an Inventory of Services that documented four categories of vocational rehabilitation services available for businesses and determined the parameters under which services are provided (e.g., number of contacts, employers who hired multiple consumers). Data from the LTO P5 survey effort is used in conjunction with employment outcome data to evaluate business services and develop recommended improvements.

As noted under LTO P5 above, the initial data collection pilot had a low response rate but resulted in overall high levels of satisfaction. Modified surveys are being piloted by DBS and DRS with information scheduled to be evaluated by November 2011. In addition, DARS is exploring the purchase of cloud based subscriptions for business relations management software that would enable businesses to screen applicants online and also provide DARS with options for tracking business contacts, services offered and provided to businesses, and the number and frequency of hires.

- ▶ *TVC* – Staff review performance reports and conduct trend analyses in order to evaluate service delivery models and

make adjustments where appropriate. This year, a trend analysis was conducted for Veterans Employment Services staff throughout the state. Using data from monthly performance reports provided by TWC, TVC reviewed veteran traffic over the last year. Based on the trends for recently separated veterans and disabled veterans, staffing was adjusted to meet their needs.

The trend analysis was also used to forecast staffing needs for PY 2012 and to update the Jobs for Veterans State Grant state plan that was submitted to DOL's Veterans' Employment and Training Service for approval. In addition, TVC's review of employment-related performance data facilitates communication of best practices to state, regional and local staff and to other stakeholders.

- ▶ *Windham* – During the last system strategic plan period, Windham created and refined tools for collecting data from local boards and workforce centers. Information obtained during local board visits and from surveys is used to assess the appropriateness of offender training programs and determine if changes are needed.

The tools and site visits have proven to be highly successful. Analysis from the most recent review cycle confirmed the validity of current training programs and the need for continuing annual evaluations. In addition, through the termination of Project RIO earlier this year, boards with high demand occupations for ex-offenders were identified and information shared with unit-level Project RIO staff.

Featured Action Plan: Increase Veteran Employment

Veterans are one of four populations targeted by *Advancing Texas*. Despite the wide range of disabilities that may affect veterans, through training, referral and placement services they can return to the civilian workforce. LTO C2 specifies that the Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) will work to ensure state and leveraged federal services provide veterans with the programs, products and services necessary to accommodate their needs and to enable them to enter the workforce successfully.



TVC offers employment services to Texas veterans and helps employers find qualified veteran job applicants. Through the Veterans Employment Services (VES) program, veterans receive assistance with finding employment through job matching, resume preparation and intensive services. The program transferred to TVC from the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) in 2006 and has over

190 VES staff located statewide in workforce centers supported through Texas Workforce Solutions, the partnership of TWC and the 28 local workforce boards. Workforce Solutions offices provide veterans with ready access to other employment, training and support services. Intensive services are available for veterans who are disabled, economically or educationally disadvantaged, homeless or facing other barriers to employment.

Employers and VES staff utilize TWC's WorkInTexas online job search resources, which allows job postings to be designated as "veterans only". Employers – or staff on their behalf – can also browse for job seekers or link a non-veteran to a job posted as "veterans only".

Historically, performance targets have been negotiated by each state with the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) annually, taking prior performance and economic conditions into consideration. In light of the recession, the entered employment rate was renegotiated to a lower rate of 56%. TVC is currently exceeding the target and the employment retention rate has not changed significantly. TVC notes once veterans obtain employment they tend to stay employed.

HIRE A HERO

10 Reasons to Hire Veterans

- ★ Dependability
- ★ Commitment to results
- ★ Accelerated learning
- ★ Leadership
- ★ Teamwork
- ★ Performance under pressure
- ★ Respect for procedures
- ★ Integrity
- ★ Triumph over adversity

Although the entered employment rate has declined from recent years, the most recent data provided by DOL indicates that TVC has helped more veterans get jobs than any other state. In addition, progress has been made for major tasks related to LTO C2, including ongoing efforts such as:

- ▶ *Transition Assistance Program (TAP)* – In coordination with the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD), TVC facilitates multi-day TAP seminars designed to provide job search and related services to military personnel within 180 days of separation or retirement. Efforts to increase the number of seminars have been successful; during the year ending July 2011, 16,033 participated in 360 TAP workshops.
- ▶ *REALifelines* – Working with the DOD and the Veterans Administration, TVC continues to increase outreach, awareness and participation in this program which helps injured veterans return to civilian life.

In addition, TVC has focused on enhancing employer outreach activities. In late 2009, the agency launched a statewide initiative by hiring a dedicated Business Outreach Coordinator (BOC). The establishment of this position provided TVC the opportunity to work more closely with employers, TWC and the local boards to better leverage successful training and placement services for veterans. The coordinator has worked directly with employers – helping them to understand the value of hiring qualified veterans with unique abilities gained through military service.

Goals for the initiative are two-fold: (1) to establish TVC as a trusted source of veteran job candidates and (2) to provide veterans with better options for higher paying jobs, thus creating advocates for the agency and its services and leading to more veteran-only employment opportunities. Initially, the coordinator focused on streamlining processes and developing a consistent approach for working with veterans and employers, serving as a central point of contact for companies and handling the final

Business Outreach Initiative	
11/5/09-6/30/11	
Job Openings	619
Employers	108
Resumes Submitted	771
Hires	54
Average Salary	\$52,925

screening of job applicants. For the remainder of 2010, the focus changed to working with TVC's regional staff to provide training on use of the WorkInTexas website and in assisting veterans with customizing resumes for specific job applications. This year, the coordinator has continued to work with participating companies and also targeted new employers in the oil and gas, government, and medical fields.

Given the success of the BOC initiative, TVC expanded the program in July by designating three additional coordinators, or Veterans Business Representatives (VBR). VBRs are now strategically located in Killeen, the Dallas/Ft. Worth area, San Antonio and Houston. Duties include: (1) targeting large employers to promote the hiring of veterans and match specific job openings with qualified veterans; (2) establishing contacts with employer organizations and chambers of commerce; and (3) conducting seminars for recently separated veterans to address resume writing (skills translation), interviewing techniques, and the use of social media outlets in relation to employment opportunities.

TVC's On the Job Training (OJT) program allows newly-hired or promoted individuals, eligible for GI Bill educational benefits, to be in training while performing a new job and earning wages. Employers directly benefit through recruiting assistance, providing company-directed training, and increased employee retention. Employees receive a monthly subsistence benefit while learning work processes, equipment, company policies and skills under the direct supervision of a skilled trainer. TVC is the state agency that approves GI Bill OJT programs in Texas, with programs typically ranging from six months to two years in length.

Since September 2009, TVC has also provided employment services to spouses and caregivers of active duty service members. Family Employment Assistance Counselors based at Fort Hood, Fort Bliss and San Antonio's Brooke Army Medical Center offer the same services as those available to veterans.

TVC annually recognizes employers whose policies and achievements in hiring and retaining veterans are outstanding, designating national, large, medium, small and disabled veteran award winners. The Lowe's store in Granbury, Texas is TVC's Medium Employer winner for 2011. Lowe's is a FORTUNE® 50 company that is also consistently recognized as one of the "Top 100 Military Friendly Employers" by *G.I. Jobs* magazine. Founded by a veteran, the company is the second-largest home improvement retailer in the world. Lowe's veteran employees number over 14,000 companywide and include 64 of the 133 workers in Granbury, Texas. Last year, 91% of Granbury's new hires were veterans.

"The leadership, results-oriented focus, and adaptability in a fast-paced environment are second nature in the military and provide a great advantage in a high-volume retail environment."

- Shane Cornett, Former Paratrooper & Combat Veteran
Military Transition Recruiter – Lowe's Companies, Inc.

★ ★ ★

"Veterans have served our country so who better to serve our customers?"

- Clay Rush, Lowe's Granbury Store Manager
(TVC 2011 Medium Employer Award Winner)

Also recognized by *G.I. Jobs*, TVC's 2010 National Employer award winner J.B. Hunt Transport Services, Inc. was initially unfamiliar with TVC and the free services available to employers. J.B. Hunt human resources managers recognized the quality of services provided and are excited about their partnership with TVC and its business outreach efforts.



Veterans may also benefit from legislation enacted in 2011. Senate Bill 1736 (82nd Legislature) requires TWC to establish and administer the College Credit for Heroes demonstration program. The new

workforce development initiative is designed to recognize the knowledge and skills gained by military service members and award college credits for their military experience, thus facilitating their reentry to the workforce.

Seven community colleges that serve areas with high veteran populations were selected to participate in the \$3 million effort that is supported by Workforce Investment Act statewide initiative funds: Alamo Colleges, Central Texas College, Houston Community College, Lee College, Lone Star College System, San Jacinto College, and Temple College.

The projects will provide models for awarding college credit by evaluating military training, including testing and prior learning assessment, that other Texas colleges may replicate. Central Texas College received the largest contract of over \$1 million to develop a web-based application and database for veterans and service members to receive additional credit hours. The evaluation of military training and experience will be standardized to ensure that maximum credit hours are awarded across Texas institutions attended.

"The establishment of the College Credit for Heroes program ensures veterans with meaningful military experience have the opportunity to receive the academic and workforce education credits they deserve."

- State Sen. Leticia Van de Putte

Each of the seven participating colleges will develop curriculum models that streamline the award of college credits. For example, the Alamo Colleges will work with San Antonio's Military Education Training Center to develop an Associate in Applied Sciences degree in health professions. They will also develop a career mobility registered nursing program to enable veterans and service members who were combat medics or corpsmen to become qualified as registered nurses.

ADULT EDUCATION AND LITERACY

Mandate and Background

Under Texas Government Code (TGC) §2308.1016, the Council is responsible for facilitating the efficient delivery of integrated adult education and literacy services in Texas. The Council is also charged with evaluating the adult education and literacy programs administered by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to identify duplicative planning efforts, lack of adequate client information sharing or other problems that adversely affect program delivery.

In fulfillment of this mandate, the Council published *A First Look at Critical Issues Surrounding Adult Education and Literacy in Texas* in 2003. Throughout 2004, the Council worked with TEA, TWC and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board to develop detailed strategies to address the report's recommendations. In December 2004, the Council approved an adult education action plan for inclusion in the 2005 update to the previous system strategic plan, *Destination 2010*. Through the end of fiscal year (FY) 2009, the three agencies worked individually and collectively to make significant progress in areas such as collaborative planning, increased service options, employer access, development of industry approaches and systems improvements.

The current system strategic plan, *Advancing Texas*, builds on the work begun under *Destination 2010*. Adult education is addressed by two of the plan's long term objectives (LTOs):

- ▶ LTO C3 targets English language learners, individuals who may have a high school diploma or degree in their native country, but for whom English is not their first language.
- ▶ LTO C4 focuses on individuals with low literacy skills who can be assisted through targeted literacy programs to gain or maintain employment.

In the first year of the implementation of *Advancing Texas*, the Council published three reports on adult education. *A Primer on Adult Education in Texas (Primer)* provided current information about adult education in Texas by detailing adult education legislation, funding, service delivery system, estimates of current and future populations in need of adult education services, and program reporting and accountability. The Council worked with the Office of the State Demographer to publish the *Primer's* first companion paper, *Identifying the Current and Future Population in Need of Adult Education*, to provide a detailed demographic analysis of this topic. The second companion paper, *Adult Education Providers: Instructional Approaches and Service Delivery Methods*, presented comparative information regarding approaches used by the different types of adult education providers in the state.

Key Outcomes

In 2011, the Council supported implementation of the two adult education LTOs and the work of the Texas Interagency Literacy Council (Interagency Literacy Council) created by House Bill 4328 (81st Legislature) through several activities:

- ▶ *Agency Strategic Plan Alignment* – TGC §2308.104 specifies that the Council will develop a single strategic plan for the workforce system that includes goals, objectives, and performance measures. It also states that agencies administering a workforce program will use the system strategic plan in developing their operational plans. In the summer of 2010, Council staff reviewed the alignment between the system strategic plan, *Advancing Texas*, and the strategic plans of partner agencies and reported the results to the Council in September 2010. The two agencies accountable for the adult education LTOs C3 (English language and workforce skills training) and C4 (workplace literacy for adults with low literacy), TEA and TWC, adequately detailed the key actions, strategies, and anticipated outcomes.

- ▶ *Local Board Alignment* – TGC §2308.304 requires local workforce boards to develop local plans with goals and objectives that are consistent with the statewide goals, objectives, and performance standards detailed in *Advancing Texas*. Both state and federal law require the Council to review local plans and make recommendations to the Governor for approval. Boards develop new plans approximately every five years, but plan modifications are generally required annually to update information and implement new state and local initiatives.

The Council did not review local plans this year since the U.S. Department of Labor approved an extension of Texas' Workforce Investment Act State Plan and TWC extended the local board plans to 2012. Given the plan extensions, in June 2011 the Council requested information and data from local boards to determine alignment with *Advancing Texas*. Texas' 28 local boards were asked to: (1) describe the board's most successful strategy or initiative for designing and implementing targeted adult basic education programs to increase employment outcomes for populations requiring workforce literacy skills; (2) include a discussion detailing the coordination and cooperation with local entities such as other boards, providers or school districts required for the strategy; and (3) provide data or summative information on the outcomes achieved by implementing the strategy.

Thirteen boards reported that their most successful strategy for targeted adult education programs involved offering on-site classes. Most of these boards described collaborating with local adult education and literacy providers to offer General Educational Development (GED) or English as a second language (ESL) classes at the workforce centers. Eight boards stated that they refer clients in need to local adult education providers for the appropriate classes. Finally, six boards reported that they partner with a provider to offer programs that teach a combination of basic academic and job skills. These classes combine ESL or GED preparation with skills training for a specific career. Two of these boards mentioned programs based on the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training and Texas Industry Specific English as a Second Language curriculum.

- ▶ *Council Recommendations* – The *Fiscal Year 2010 Council Annual Report*, published in January 2011, included several recommendations regarding the workforce system to highlight the most critical priorities in *Advancing Texas*. Approved by the Council in December 2010, the recommendations encompassed adult education and literacy; high school completion; college and career readiness; seamless educational transitions; and addressing the employment and skill needs of the current workforce. The recommendations highlighted specific actions and goals that require commitment and collaboration throughout the system over the six-year strategic plan period. The recommendation regarding adult education and literacy focused on collaboration at the regional level:

Increase the literacy, English language proficiency, and educational attainment of adult Texans. *A strong regional infrastructure will enable consistent collaboration and resource sharing among providers of adult education services in each region, and barriers to transitioning between education levels must be removed. The Council encourages initiatives that:*

- *Coordinate adult education services in their regions, with specific metrics to measure progress.*
 - *Remove the duplication between adult education and developmental education.*
- ▶ *Companion Paper Publication* – In January 2011, the Council published the third companion paper to the *Primer, Adult Education Regions and Local Collaboration (Regions)*. *Regions* builds on the recommendation from the *Fiscal Year 2010 Council Annual Report* and the suggested action from the second companion paper calling for collaboration and cooperation at the local level to improve Texas' adult education system. In the report, funding and coordination of adult education are examined from a regional perspective for those providers receiving funding through TEA. Regional boundaries for the allocation of adult education funds are explored and possible entities such as local boards, regional and local P-16 councils, Project GREAT (Getting Results Educating Adults in Texas) Centers, and regional education service centers are considered in promoting the coordination of adult education services.

An effective and efficient adult education system requires coordination, cooperation, and the leveraging of resources between adult education, postsecondary education, and workforce partners encompassing adult education providers that do and do not receive federal funding. This type of meaningful collaboration must occur at the local level to account for the regional differences within the state. The purpose of the report was not to recommend one regional configuration over another, but rather to provide information, data and analysis to assist workforce system partners as they consider and plan for the future of adult education in Texas.

Next Steps

The Council, its member agencies and the Interagency Literacy Council all have unique contributions to make as partners in the development and implementation of joint initiatives, sharing of resources, and development of strategies to promote collaboration. The Council will continue to monitor and report on the adult education-related activities of partner agencies. Additionally, the Council will work with the Interagency Literacy Council to assist it in fulfilling its mandated duties, including identifying the barriers to and the evidence-based best practices for improving literacy.

The Interagency Literacy Council has identified several issues regarding adult education including that the universe of adult education providers in Texas is currently unknown. A complete list of providers and information about the number of adults being served are necessary to determine the extent to which the need for adult education in Texas is being addressed. The Council has developed a methodology for creating a comprehensive list of adult education and literacy providers in Texas and will work with the Interagency Literacy Council in FY 2012 to implement the methodology.

Texas Local Workforce Board Alignment with *Advancing Texas*

Mandate and Background

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) is charged in both state and federal law with recommending to the Governor approval of local workforce development board plan modifications as required under Title I of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, the Wagner-Peyser Act and other applicable statutes. WIA, Section 118(a), requires that each board develop and submit to the Governor a comprehensive local plan consistent with the WIA State Plan. WIA, Section 111, states that the Council, as the designated State Workforce Investment Board, shall assist the Governor in review of board plans.

Texas Government Code §2308.101(a)(5) requires the Council to review local plans for workforce development and make recommendations to the Governor for approval. In addition, Chapter 2308.304(b)(4) specifies that local plans must include a strategic component that sets broad goals and objectives for local workforce programs, and that outcomes must be consistent with statewide goals, objectives, and performance standards. *Advancing Texas* established these statewide goals and objectives through fiscal year (FY) 2015. The plan contains 14 long term objectives (LTOs) with associated action plans (APs) to guide implementation. Each of the 28 local boards must develop a local plan with goals and objectives that align with *Advancing Texas*.

In years where local plans or modifications are not required, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) works with Council staff to obtain local board information documenting alignment with the system strategic plan.

Local Board Plan Modifications

The boards have experienced heavy demand for programs and services. In addition, the influx of stimulus funding required them to expand existing services for economically disadvantaged adults and dislocated workers, and to implement new programs, such as summer youth programs. In recognition of this demand on the local delivery system, TWC determined that boards would not be required to submit new board plans or modifications for FY 2011. Following extension of the WIA State Plan in 2011 by the U.S. Department of Labor, TWC again extended the existing, approved board plans through September 30, 2012. Related to the extension of the local board plans, TWC required boards to update their plans by:

- ▶ submitting amendments, as necessary;
- ▶ reviewing their Targeted Industries List and Statewide Target Occupation List; and
- ▶ submitting any changes to their Targeted Industries List and Statewide Target Occupation List, or providing a statement that the lists had been reviewed and no changes were needed.

The next local board plans to come before the Council for consideration and approval were anticipated to be in September 2012. However, in July when TWC received board submissions pertaining to the extension of their board plans two boards submitted changes that were deemed not to be amendments, but rather to be substantive changes related to the plan's goals and objectives. Given the nature of the changes, the Workforce Solutions Brazos Valley and Workforce Solutions Upper Rio Grande plans were considered modifications and, therefore, subject to review by the Council.

TWC and Council staff utilize a concurrent, two-step process to review board plans and modifications. TWC reviews the plans for compliance with agency instructions and statutory requirements. Council staff review each plan to ensure that the local goals and objectives align with *Advancing Texas* and to assess the board's progress in meeting those objectives. The two board plan modifications were approved by

TWC Commissioners at the August 30, 2011 docket. The Council endorsed both plans at its quarterly meeting on September 9, 2011 and recommended them to the Governor for final approval.

Assessing Alignment with *Advancing Texas*

TWC also assisted the Council with gathering information related to implementation of *Advancing Texas* from boards for this annual evaluation report. Because of this time lapse in information collection and evaluation, the Council requested information on strategies that boards have recently or are currently implementing, specifically between 2010 and 2011. The Council asked boards to describe their most successful strategies and provide summative data and information related to:

- ▶ increasing employment outcomes for veterans (LTO C2);
- ▶ designing and implementing targeted adult education programs to increase employment outcomes for populations requiring workforce literacy skills (LTO C4); and
- ▶ cooperative and collaborative efforts with another system partner to increase participant outcomes (LTO P4).

General Findings

Boards implemented numerous initiatives tailored to the needs of their regions that support the three referenced LTOs. They reported several strategies to increase the employment outcomes for veterans, with most discussing efforts to provide veterans with priority services and the importance of collaboration with Texas Veterans Commission (TVC) staff. Boards also continued to design and implement targeted adult education programs to increase employment outcomes for populations requiring workforce literacy skills. A majority of boards reported offering on-site adult education classes or referring clients in need to local adult education providers. Finally, boards cooperated and collaborated with other system partners to increase participant outcomes in various ways. Most boards described strategic collaborations with diverse partners such as economic development organizations, elected officials, employers, and training providers to address regional issues.

Responses to the Council's 2011 Request

Council staff analyzed the boards' responses and identified common themes and innovative examples of successful strategies. Responses to the Council's request are summarized below, with examples of specific, successful strategies highlighted and discussed in detail.

Veterans

Veterans compose a critical part of the pool of potential employees, but have unique needs for earning credit and credentials for prior military training, and gaining and maintaining employment. Boards were asked to describe their most successful strategy or initiative for increasing employment outcomes for veterans and to provide data on the outcomes achieved by implementing the strategy.

Fourteen boards reported that their most successful strategy for increasing employment outcomes for veterans was ensuring that veterans were provided priority services. Efforts to provide priority services included early identification of veterans, personal visitation with specially trained staff or specialized caseworkers, and placing a 48-hour hold on new job listings so that veterans can apply first. The second most frequently mentioned strategy involved TVC staff. Three boards reported that their most successful strategy was the collocation of TVC staff in workforce career centers, which allowed for easier cooperation. Some boards stated that collocated TVC supervisors trained center staff to provide specialized customer service to veterans. The importance of collocated TVC staff was also mentioned by 11 of the 14 boards that indicated priority of service as their most successful strategy. Three boards reported that their most successful strategy involved the outreach and involvement of TVC staff with local employers or veteran organizations. The third most frequently mentioned strategy was an event held just for veterans. Six boards stated that they provided veteran-specific job fairs, workshops or family days.

Examples of successful strategies highlight the various ways boards are working to increase employment outcomes for veterans:

- ▶ *Workforce Solutions Northeast Texas* houses three TVC representatives solely dedicated to providing services to veterans. These TVC staff members cooperate with workforce staff to ensure veterans receive priority of service, training, and access to subsidized employment programs. TVC staff locate veterans and disabled veterans using the WorkInTexas.com job seeker search page, ensure that veterans' resumes and applications are complete, and contact veterans to inform them of employment services. In 2010, veterans accounted for 12.96% of the individuals receiving assistance for vocational training services through the workforce center and 14.89% of those receiving on-the-job training services.
- ▶ *Workforce Solutions for Tarrant County* targeted human resource and front-line supervisors to explain the advantages of hiring veterans. The strategy addresses some of the preconceived ideas that deter the hiring of veterans and illustrates how to analyze a veteran's past skills against civilian job descriptions. Tarrant County partnered with the University of Texas at Arlington to develop a curriculum that provides a high level overview of human resource management concepts while conveying a specific focus on the employment of veterans. This curriculum is presented in a six-hour seminar through five modules. The curriculum has been beta tested with 116 human resource professionals from 58 companies, with feedback used to improve the curriculum. Copies of the curriculum have been requested by colleges, other boards and state agencies. It will be presented at the Society for Human Resource Managers, National Association of Workforce Development Professionals and TVC conferences.
- ▶ *Workforce Solutions Upper Rio Grande* has collaborated with Fort Bliss to address the specialized needs of military spouses displaced from their jobs due to the relocation of military service members. Upper Rio Grande held three military spouse hiring fairs in 2010 and 2011. The first was held in February 2010 with over 200 spouses and 150 military family members attending. Thirty-one hires were reported as a result of the event. The second fair in August 2010 had 372 military spouses attending and 24 hires reported. Finally, in February 2011, Upper Rio Grande assisted Army Career Services with a jointly sponsored military spouse hiring fair. Over 300 military spouses and 30 employers attended, with 25 hires reported.
- ▶ *Workforce Solutions of Central Texas'* strategy addressed the lack of labor market information regarding the knowledge, skills, and interests of veterans exiting the military at Fort Hood. When working with local employers to encourage veterans' employment, the board realized this information was needed and could also be used to improve the attractiveness of the local area in order to retain more veterans exiting military service. Central Texas entered into an agreement with Fort Hood and collected data quarterly through a voluntary survey administered during the Transition Assistance Program workshop or the Army Career and Alumni Program. Exiting veterans were asked about their education levels, desired post service employment, and characteristics of the Central Texas area they felt needed improvement. The July-September 2010 survey indicated that 370 (40%) of the respondents intended to stay in the region. Most respondents indicated they desired employment in management or business and a majority of individuals intending to stay had some college education. The complete survey results are published by the board through quarterly reports.

Adult Education

Adult education plays a critical role in the development of a well-educated, highly skilled workforce. Boards were asked to describe their most successful strategy or initiative for designing and implementing targeted adult education programs to increase employment outcomes for populations requiring workforce literacy skills. The information request also asked the boards to include a discussion detailing the coordination and cooperation with local entities required for this strategy and to provide data or summative information on outcomes achieved by implementing the strategy.

Thirteen boards reported that their most successful strategy for targeted adult education programs involved offering on-site classes. Most of these boards described collaborating with local adult education and literacy providers to offer General Educational Development (GED) or English as a second language (ESL) classes at the workforce centers. Eight boards stated that they refer clients in need to local adult education providers for the appropriate classes. Finally, six boards reported that they partner with a

provider to offer programs that teach a combination of basic academic and job skills. These classes combine ESL or GED preparation with skills training for a specific career. Two of these boards mentioned programs based on the Integrated Basic Education and Skills Training (I-BEST) and Texas Industry Specific English as a Second Language curriculum.

Examples of successful strategies that targeted adult education programs to increase employment outcomes for populations requiring workforce literacy skills include:

- ▶ *Workforce Solutions Rural Capital* and their partners received a Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board grant for a two-year innovation project designed to assist adult learners with transition to higher education or postsecondary training. Classroom instruction was based on the I-BEST model in which two instructors team teach basic academic and career-specific skills in four targeted industries: auto, electrical, construction, and health sciences. Of the 48 students who started the program in auto, electrical, and health, 12 transitioned to GED completion courses, eight transitioned to postsecondary technical training, six entered employment, and five completed their GED.
- ▶ *Workforce Solutions – Capital Area* identified a need for more specialized recruitment and training support assistance for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Choices clients who did not have a GED. Capital Area partnered with Austin Community College which provided a full-time staff member to assist with recruitment and placement. The TANF GED Coordinator was collocated in one of Capital Area’s career centers and worked side-by-side with the center staff who case manage Choices clients. When a client needed GED services, the TANF GED Coordinator assisted the client in enrolling in an appropriate course. More than 150 individuals were referred to training in 2010-2011.
- ▶ *Workforce Solutions Panhandle* partnered with Amarillo College and the Amarillo Independent School District (AISD) to recover high school dropouts and assist them with completing their high school diplomas and continuing with postsecondary training to earn certificates or degrees through the “Diplomas and Certificates” program. AISD selected dropouts or discouraged students who were within five credits of graduation or who did not pass the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test to participate. While enrolled in classes that would result in high school graduation, participants were also enrolled in workforce training at Amarillo College. Panhandle provided 18 eligible students with WIA-funded occupational and technical training. Twelve of the students earned high school diplomas, 15 earned some college credit and entered employment, two entered the Job Corps program, and two dropped out without earning any credential.
- ▶ *Workforce Solutions Greater Dallas* has been actively involved with the Literacy Coalition of Greater Dallas since the two organizations have similar goals: unify literacy stakeholders, coordinate resources, build awareness and promote literacy in order for residents of Greater Dallas to compete in the 21st century. The collaboration ensures a focus on literacy issues in the North Texas area and increases adult education alternatives for workforce center customers. In PY 2010, 182 customers enrolled in adult basic education with a 52.5% successful completion rate and 603 customers were in GED training with a 45.03% successful completion rate.

Collaboration with System Partners

Texas’ workforce system is a complex system of numerous, interrelated programs and agencies that either serve a common customer or are charged with achieving broad employment and education outcomes. Boards were asked to describe their most successful initiative involving cooperative and collaborative efforts with another system partner to increase participant outcomes. Data or summative information on the outcomes achieved by this initiative was also requested.

The boards collaborated with various system partners: 14 described collaborative efforts with multiple, diverse partners such as economic development organizations, elected officials, chambers of commerce, local education agencies, training providers, employers, and other boards; 10 reported cooperating with other boards; and three described collaborative efforts with local colleges or training providers.

Twelve boards stated that their most successful initiative was strategic in nature and addressed regional issues such as the need for literacy and workforce skills training, worker preparation for in-demand jobs, employer needs, and support of targeted industries. Of the 12, five collaboratively addressed regional issues through educational efforts, five prepared research and evaluation studies, and two produced regional plans.

Twelve other boards reported that their most successful initiative was related to specific education and training programs. These educational initiatives included training in soft skills; science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM); industry standards; and for specific jobs in targeted industries. Two boards stated that their most successful collaborative initiative involved issuing transit passes to qualified individuals for transportation to their jobs or to skills training.

Examples of initiatives involving cooperative and collaborative efforts with other system partners were detailed:

- ▶ *I-35 Life Sciences Consortium* – The consortium was established in March 2010 by eight boards: Alamo, Capital Area, Central Texas, Greater Dallas, Heart of Texas, North Central Texas, Rural Capital and Tarrant County. It is a public-private partnership with the goal of establishing a regional coordinated strategy for meeting the recruitment and skills training needs of businesses in the Life Sciences cluster, emphasizing health care and bioscience. The consortium includes 13 employers, 13 colleges, and 11 economic development agencies. The boards utilized focus groups, surveys, and one-on-one interviews with businesses, colleges and economic development agencies to produce research identifying key workforce gaps and economic challenges. A series of summits were then held for businesses and colleges to discuss recommendations to solve these challenges. Finally, the first annual I-35 Life Sciences Consortium Conference was held in February 2011, bringing together industry leaders to explore creative ways to bolster talent development and to supply the industry with qualified job candidates. Because the life science efforts were successful, TWC funded the consortium to: (1) evaluate the impact of emerging renewable energy and energy efficiency industries on projected employment and skills demand; (2) develop the necessary training at the community college level; and (3) support projected labor and skills demands for these industries.
- ▶ *Rural Workforce Network* – The network is a collaboration of five boards: Concho Valley, North Texas, Permian Basin, South Plains, and West Central Texas. It received grants from TWC to fund projects supporting employer needs in the region's targeted industries. In 2010 and 2011, the network received a regional cooperation grant to build workforce capacity in support of the Biotechnology and Life Sciences Medical Industry Consortium. The network partnered with Worldwide Interactive Network, Inc. to determine the demand and likely supply of labor to meet the skill needs of the Biomedical and Life Sciences Medical industry cluster. It achieved this through the use of the WIN Strategic Compass, a web-based tool that enables integration of education and workforce initiatives with economic development. The Strategic Compass, career pathway diagrams, and results of the regional analysis were made available to employers and training providers. The network also conducted a WorkKeys and National Career Readiness Certificate pilot project at Christoval High School.

The network received a second regional cooperation grant to support the Renewable Energy Industry Consortium and to prepare the West Texas Rural Workforce Network's region for the surge in jobs and economic opportunities in the renewable energy field. To accomplish the project's goals, the West Texas consortium (comprised of workforce boards, community colleges, universities, employers, training providers and economic development organizations) gathered information through surveys, regional meetings, focus groups and on-site visits. Five reports were developed focusing on renewable energy building codes, credential requirements, workforce needs, loan programs, financial incentives, educational capacity, city and county governmental training needs, and the perception of renewable energy. The reports have informed regional planning and selection of targeted industries and occupations.

- ▶ *Border Workforce Alliance* – In order to address findings indicating that the Texas/Mexico border region trails the rest of Texas in educational attainment, per capita income and basic prose skills, the Border Workforce Alliance was founded to provide a unified voice and to foster economic competitiveness in the region. Five boards comprise the alliance: Cameron, Lower Rio Grande Valley, Middle Rio Grande, South Texas, and Upper Rio Grande. It continues to form additional partnerships and secure additional resources and funding to increase literacy, skills development, and education initiatives and has received approximately \$1.2 million to focus on STEM careers.

Because the alliance is less than a year old, specific outcome data are not available; however, the group is working to identify mechanisms that can scale successful strategies and initiatives to serve larger and more diverse populations. Alliance board members meet quarterly to evaluate the success of training programs and initiatives by reviewing outcome measures and participant progress toward accomplishing the stated goals. The alliance is reviewing South Texas College's *Breaking Through*, a simultaneous GED preparation and Certified Nurse Assistant training program, which has reported perfect retention and certification attainment rates. The alliance has begun working with other community colleges in the region to replicate the model.

CONCLUDING COMMENTS

This report is the second evaluation for the six-year strategic plan, *Advancing Texas*. This year, progress was made in many areas due to the efforts of partner agencies, the Council and its System Integration Technical Advisory Committee (SITAC). SITAC plays a vital leadership role as partner representatives work individually and collectively to increase collaborative efforts on ongoing projects and new initiatives.

Data reported for all Formal measures are now showing the effects of the economic recession. This was true to some degree in *Evaluation 2009* for the Customers Served measure, and began to be evidenced in last year's report for the Entered Employment and Employment Retention measures due to the delay in receiving and analyzing unemployment insurance wage records for measuring performance. The system served fewer individuals this year, largely due to the phasing out of federal recovery relief funding. While the number entering employment was also down, retention figures were up. In addition, attainment of educational outcomes continued to rise. These trends will be monitored as recovery progresses.

This year, project teams completed planning for the design and implementation of pilots that address critical areas such as career technical education and apprenticeship training, as well as programs designed to meet the needs of English language learners and those with low literacy levels. Measures and definitions will be developed as implementation proceeds. If applicable, they will be included in the first update to *Advancing Texas*. Data for all Less Formal measures will be included in future evaluation reports as they become available.

The coming year will bring significant changes to the state's workforce system, including:

- ▶ *System Partners* – Senate Bill 653 (82nd Legislature) abolishes original system partner, the Texas Youth Commission (TYC), and the Texas Juvenile Probation Commission. Effective December 1, 2011, duties assigned to the two agencies will be transferred to the newly created Texas Juvenile Justice Department and to the functions of the independent ombudsman that serves the department.
- ▶ *Federal Funding* – Available federal funds received under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and other one-time supplemental appropriations will continue to phase out. In addition, Tech Prep education state grants were defunded in federal fiscal year (FY) 2011. This year, over 200,000 students were enrolled in this comprehensive, articulated program that offers the opportunity to study in a career program in high school and either gain credit or experience which will assist them in their transition to higher education.
- ▶ *State Funding* – At the state level, Project RIO was zero-funded for the FY 2012-13 biennium. Operated by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, the Texas Workforce Commission and TYC, Project RIO provided the link between pre- and post-release education, training, and employment. While the loss of funding eliminates Project RIO-specific services, ex-offenders will continue to be served as universal customers and, if appropriate, enrolled in SNAP E&T, WIA I-funded or other applicable programs.

Timely, effective service delivery remains critical as the state's economic recovery progresses. System partners must continue to adapt to these and other changes. The first review and update to *Advancing Texas* will be completed in 2012. All action plans and agency projects associated with Employer Needs/Satisfaction and Use of Employment Data for Program Improvement will be reviewed with the applicable system partner(s).

After consideration for approval by the Council at its March 2012 meeting, the *2012 Update* will be forwarded to the Governor for approval. The update will then be the foundation of system partner actions and will continue to guide implementation of *Advancing Texas*. Work underway and planned by partners should facilitate essential program and process changes, as well as implementation of new strategies designed to help to ensure the availability of a skilled workforce for Texas' changing economy.

DATA ADDENDUM TO *EVALUATION 2010*

In preparing data for the 2011 evaluation, two agencies identified the need to submit corrected data for the 2010 reporting cycle. The Texas Veterans Commission and Texas Workforce Commission reported that revisions were due to (1) data updates following further data entry by local boards, (2) clarifications in reporting specifications and/or (3) coding improvements. Percentage point differences published in the **Report Card Series** for Change 2010-2011 and all report narrative reflect the revised 2010 data submitted by the agencies.

Texas Veterans Commission Revised Data

Revised Formal measures data for the *Evaluation 2010* reporting cycle:

Program	Number Employed	Rate	Retained Employment	Rate	Number Served
Veterans E&T	47,035	69.72%	55,879	82.28%	76,882

Texas Workforce Commission Revised Data

Revised Formal measures data for the *Evaluation 2010* reporting cycle:

Program	Education Achieved	Rate	Number Employed	Rate	Retained Employment	Rate	Number Served
Adults WIA I	5,566	93.77%	10,744	77.76%	15,672	83.84%	33,123
Dislocated WIA I	1,584	91.77%	4,843	80.73%	4,168	87.62%	19,961
Employment Services	-	-	1,057,751	71.80%	819,235	79.00%	1,825,060
Project RIO	-	-	25,436	58.38%	12,858	59.31%	53,155
SCSEP	-	-	148	38.85%	-	-	1,744
Self-Sufficiency	-	-	386	77.67%	1,333	81.63%	237
Skills Development	-	-	1,502	85.73%	22,106	91.67%	33,797
SNAP E&T	-	-	-	-	8,164	81.00%	38,345
TANF Choices	-	-	19,690	80.84%	13,380	76.83%	47,600
Trade Adjustment	-	-	1,173	70.54%	1,066	85.21%	6,751
Youth WIA I	2,683	75.68%	14,122	59.39%	3,222	71.60%	18,171

Revised data for the *Evaluation 2010* reporting cycle was also submitted for Employer Customers Served (149,092).

Texas Workforce Investment Council

System Partners

*Economic Development and Tourism
Texas Department of Criminal Justice
Texas Education Agency
Texas Health and Human Services Commission*

*Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
Texas Veterans Commission
Texas Workforce Commission
Texas Youth Commission*

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The Mission of Texas Workforce Investment Council

*Assisting the Governor and the Legislature with strategic planning for
and evaluation of the Texas workforce development system to promote
the development of a well-educated, highly skilled workforce for Texas.*



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