

TSSB Origin and Mission

What is the TSSB?

The TSSB was established by the Texas Legislature in 1995 as an 11-member advisory board to the Governor and the Legislature. The members, who are appointed by the Governor, consist of:

- 7 business and industry representatives
- 2 labor representatives
- 1 secondary education representative
- 1 postsecondary education representative

What is the TSSB's mission?

The TSSB is charged with the development of a statewide system of industry-defined and industry-recognized skill standards for all major skilled, sub-baccalaureate occupations with strong employment and earnings opportunities.

What are the TSSB's major functions?

Skill Standards Development and Recognition

- Convenes industry groups to develop new skill standards and validates existing, nationally-established industry standards.
- Recognizes skill standards based on TSSB-established validity and reliability criteria.

Skill Standards Awareness and Usage

- Promotes the use of standards and credentials.
- Assists education and training providers to use skill standards in their workforce programs.

Skill Attainment: Certification and Credentialing

- Facilitates the portability of skills by recognizing standards and credentials from other states and nations.

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A Message from the Chair

Fiscal year (FY) 2012 has been another year of hard work, reflecting the Texas Skill Standards Board's (TSSB) mission to build a strong and skilled workforce to support Texas employers. I am pleased to present this report of our many successes in FY 2012.

In this report you will read about newly developed skill standards, as well as skill standards whose TSSB recognitions have been extended based on ongoing relevance for industry and educators. TSSB program recognition was granted to six new community college programs and renewed by five others. The TSSB's promotion of the use of common technical core curriculum among colleges that teach the same skill standards-based workforce education programs continued in FY 2012. The use of the TSSB credential seal increased from 20 colleges and 37 programs in FY 2011 to 26 colleges and 47 programs in FY 2012.

The TSSB's effort to facilitate the development of common assessment tools to certify workforce skills attained by graduates of TSSB-recognized biotechnology Associate of Applied Science (AAS) programs across the state is also described in this report. With the cooperation of five of the TSSB-recognized biotechnology AAS programs, this effort was completed successfully.

The TSSB is fortunate to collaborate with statewide educator groups such as those involved in the biotechnology project, state agencies such as the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, national educator groups, and national industry groups such as the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council and the National Institute for Metalworking Skills (NIMS). All of these groups are critical to the TSSB's continued success in the pursuit of its mandates. Thus, it is with sadness that we note the recent passing of Steve Mandes, NIMS' executive director, and gratefully acknowledge the support and guidance that he and his organization have provided to the TSSB for many years.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wayne Oswald

Skill Standards Development and Recognition

Biomedical Equipment Technician Skill Standards

Federal Perkins State Leadership discretionary grant funding provided by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in FY 2012 made the development and TSSB recognition of new occupational skill standards possible. With the help of a statewide panel of industry subject matter experts convened by Texas State Technical College Marshall, the Biomedical Equipment Technician skill standards were developed as a vehicle to help guide curriculum development for this growing occupational area. The skill standards describe the work functions, activities, and skills expected of biomedical equipment technicians.

Recognition of National Skill Standards

The TSSB recognized the Oceanographic Instrumentation Technician skill standards, developed by a national panel of marine industry subject matter experts in an effort coordinated by the Marine Advanced Technology Education Center. These standards describe the work functions, activities, and skills associated with the oceanographic instrumentation technician occupation. They were submitted for TSSB recognition consideration by two Houston area employers of oceanographic technicians.

TSSB policy ensures that recognized skill standards are current and relevant by requiring that they be reviewed by industry experts, and updated if necessary. Recently the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC), a long-time partner of the TSSB, conducted a major review and update of its suite of national skill standards for manufacturing production. The TSSB recognized the MSSC's Manufacturing Logistics skill standards, which are the basis for the MSSC's Certified Logistics Technician assessment and credentialing. In addition, the TSSB extended its recognition of the following skill standards based on their ongoing relevance and use by industry and educators: Geographic Information Systems Technician, Homeland Security Support Specialist, Customer Service and Sales, and Metalworking.

Skill Standards Awareness and Usage

Program Recognition Awards

The TSSB continued to implement strategies to increase the numbers of community and technical college programs that incorporate skill standards into curriculum. For the fourth year, the TSSB participated in an awards ceremony at the Texas Community College Instructional Leaders conference to honor seven colleges that achieved TSSB recognition for ten programs in FY 2011.

Program Recognition Renewal

TSSB policy requires that TSSB-recognized community and technical college programs seek formal renewal of their TSSB program recognition every three years. The focus of the renewal process is to ensure that assessments evaluate student mastery of all competencies in the skill standards on which the program is based. The following colleges met all of the requirements for renewal of their TSSB program recognition for another three years:

College	Program
Brazosport College	Chemical Technology: Process Operations Associate of Applied Science (AAS)
Lone Star College - CyFair	Visual Communication-Graphic Design AAS
Lone Star College –Kingwood	Visual Communication-Graphic Design AAS
Lone Star College – Montgomery	Biotechnology AAS
Lone Star College - North Harris	Visual Communication-Graphic Design AAS

Information Dissemination

The TSSB actively communicates with its partners and interested parties in an effort to encourage mutual recognition of standards and credentials to enhance portability of skills. In addition to maintaining an information-rich website at www.tssb.org, the TSSB sends regular notifications to state agencies, local workforce development boards, community and technical colleges, and national skill standards-related groups to announce newly recognized skill standards and TSSB-recognized programs.

Skill Attainment: Certification & Credentialing

Newly Recognized Programs

Promotion of the use of skill standards to guide curriculum development in community and technical colleges continued this past year. To date, 54 workforce education programs at 28 colleges have incorporated skill standards into their curricula and earned TSSB recognition. The following colleges took advantage of FY2012 Perkins leadership funds:

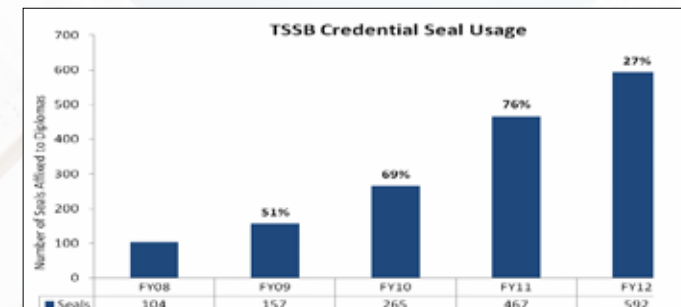
College	Program
Brookhaven College	Computer Information Technology – Web Production and Design AAS
El Centro College	Biological Technician AAS
Texas State Technical College Harlingen	Machining Technology-Mold, Tool and Die Making AAS
Texas State Technical College Marshall	Biomedical Equipment Technology AAS Electric Utility Construction and Maintenance AAS Process Operations Technology AAS

Common Technical Core Curriculum

The TSSB seeks to ensure consistent learning outcomes by promoting the use of common technical core courses among recognized programs in given occupational areas. Ten colleges now offer the common process technology core curriculum, and biotechnology programs at six colleges are based on a common technical core curriculum.

Increased Credential Seal Participation

The TSSB credential seal is an indication to employers that a student has graduated from a program that teaches to industry-defined skills and knowledge.



Challenges for the Future

Common Assessments

One of FY 2012's major achievements was made possible through Perkins State Leadership discretionary grant funding to encourage the development of skill standards and promote the use of skill standards-based curriculum. This grant facilitated the establishment of student assessments and a comprehensive faculty handbook based on the common technical core curriculum adopted and taught by the six TSSB-recognized biotechnology Associate of Applied Science (AAS) programs.

The outcome of this collaborative effort is a model that will benefit students, faculty, and Texas employers. By ensuring that students are work ready, employers will know that any student hired from a participating college in the state has been trained and assessed in the skills and knowledge defined by industry as critical to job success. Biotechnology AAS programs at community and technical colleges around the state can take advantage of these tools—the common technical core curriculum, the assessments, and the instructor handbook.

The common assessments model can and should be replicated across other occupational areas that also have common technical core curriculum, such as Process Technology, Geographic Information Systems Technology, and Wind Turbine Technology. This would address two needs articulated by industry. Colleges must teach a core of essential technical competencies to prepare students for the workplace and similar programs at different colleges should impart similar outcomes for students.

Employer Engagement

Employers continue to be central to the TSSB's mission to provide a skilled and educated workforce. Employers can participate by initiating skill standards development projects for in-demand occupations, participating in reviews of existing skill standards to ensure ongoing accuracy, and recruiting from TSSB-recognized community and technical college programs.