

# Texas Workforce Investment Council

## Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2014

September 1, 2013–August 31, 2014



### *About the Council's Role in the Texas Workforce System*

The Texas Workforce Investment Council (Council) was created in 1993 by the Governor and the Texas Legislature to promote the development of a well-educated and highly skilled workforce in Texas. The Council assists the Governor and the legislature with strategic planning, research, and evaluation to support continuous improvement of the Texas workforce system. In addition to its responsibilities in state law, the Council functions as the State Workforce Investment Board under the federal Workforce Investment Act of 1998. The Council does not operate programs but works to foster collaboration and a systems perspective among its partners and their programs. Its impact is demonstrated through initiatives that improve outcomes for workforce customers—employers and current and future workers of Texas—every one of whom is critical to Texas' economic success.

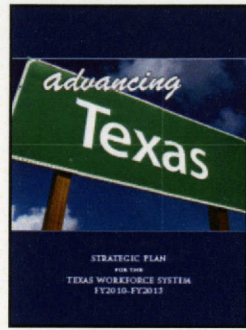
The Texas workforce system delivers programs, services, and initiatives administered by eight agencies, local workforce development boards, school districts, community and technical colleges, and local adult education providers. The Council's eight partner agencies are: Economic Development and Tourism within the Office of the Governor, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, the Texas Education Agency (TEA), the Texas Health and Human Services Commission and its Department of Rehabilitative Services (HHSC-DARS), the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, the Texas Veterans Commission, and the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).

There are 19 members on the Council. The Governor appoints 14 members representing business, organized labor, education, and community-based organizations. The remaining five members are ex officio representatives of the Council's member state agencies.

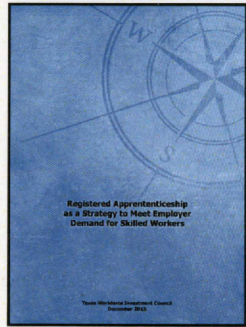
The Council produces this annual report, which offers highlights of the Council's work during the past fiscal year (FY). Included in this year's report is information on the implementation of *Advancing Texas*, the workforce system strategic plan, as well as evaluations of system programs.

*Advancing Texas* and other Council products referenced in this report are posted on the Council's website at <http://governor.state.tx.us/twic/>.

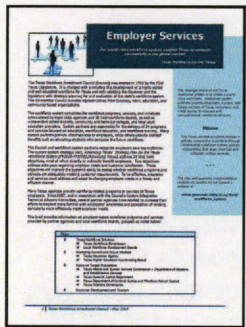
## Implementing Advancing Texas



FY 2014 was the fifth year of the six-year plan period for *Advancing Texas: Strategic Plan for the Texas Workforce System (FY2010-FY2015) (Advancing Texas)*. Development and implementation of an integrated strategic plan for Texas' workforce system, a complex system of interrelated programs and numerous agencies, is one of the Council's chief responsibilities. The plan outlines 14 long term objectives and a series of action plans for workforce system partners to ensure effective implementation and achievement of outcomes in the plan.



*Advancing Texas* contains a long term objective focused on **Registered Apprenticeship as a Strategy to Meet Employer Demand for Skilled Workers**. Between September of 2010 and March of 2011, the Executive Committee approved six projects—four in which partnerships formed to develop a registered apprenticeship program in an occupational area that has not traditionally used apprenticeship to meet industry demand, and two that adapted an existing registered apprenticeship program. The assessment in this December 2013 publication documents the power of collaboration and partnerships in meeting employers' need for skilled workers revealed by these projects. Other lessons learned included building on prior success, focusing on flexibility, integrating online distance learning, and targeting customer outreach.

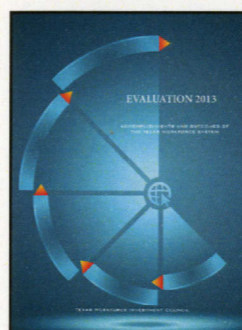


The workforce system strategy is to provide workforce customers—employers, current workers, and future workers of Texas—with programs and services that are relevant and responsive to their evolving needs. **Employer Services** focuses on the employer as a customer of the Texas workforce system and provides information on the workforce programs and services provided by system partners that directly and indirectly benefits employers. Data gaps in employment needs and customer satisfaction hinder efforts to assess whether workforce programs and services are adequately meeting customer requirements. Employer data are used to measure satisfaction, identify training needs and possible modifications to update current programs, and to serve as a resource for agency strategic plan development and in preparations for legislative sessions.

Senate Bill 307, filed during the 83rd Texas Legislature, saw the **Transfer of Adult Education from the Texas Education Agency to the Texas Workforce Commission**. The bill coincided with a recommendation of the Sunset Advisory Commission. The bill passed and the transfer went into effect on September 1, 2013.

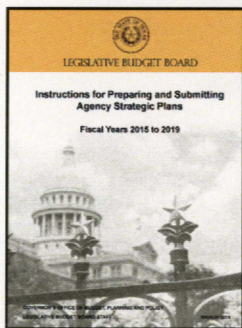
The Council's **System Integration Technical Advisory Committee (SITAC)** fosters collaboration and engages executive-level representatives from the eight partner agencies, the Texas Association of Workforce Boards, and the Council's Executive Committee in developing, implementing, and monitoring the action plans, and reporting to the Council. FY 2014 progress on these action plans highlights the effectiveness of interagency collaboration.

## Evaluating System Progress



The Council is required by Texas Government Code, Chapter 2308, to monitor the state's workforce system. Annually, the Council reports to the Governor and legislature on the degree to which the system is achieving the state and local workforce goals and objectives of Texas' workforce system strategic plan, *Advancing Texas*. **Evaluation 2013** was the fourth comprehensive workforce system report under this strategic plan. Significant accomplishments and performance data for 19 workforce programs, as well as five secondary and postsecondary academic education programs, are included. When published in early 2015, **Evaluation 2014** will be the fifth evaluation for the *Advancing Texas* strategic plan period. Some of the Council's FY 2014 accomplishments are highlighted below.

As the State Workforce Investment Board, the Council is charged with approval of **Texas' Strategic State Workforce Investment Plan for Title I of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) of 1998, the Wagner-Peyser Act, and the Wagner-Peyser Agricultural Outreach Plan (Program Years 2012 to 2016)**, which make receipt of WIA formula funding possible. The Council endorsed and recommended to the Governor for approval the State Strategic Workforce Investment Plan on September 7, 2012. Contained in the plan was the Agricultural Outreach Plan. During FY 2014, the Agricultural Outreach Plan for Program Year 2014 was updated by the TWC, which necessitated review and endorsement by the Council, with subsequent recommendation to the Governor for approval. The Council approved the Agricultural Outreach Plan as a modification to the state plan on June 6, 2014, and the Governor approved the plan on June 12, 2014.



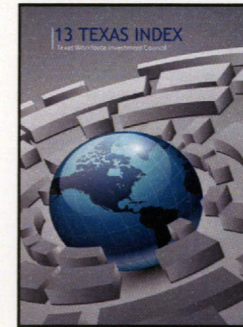
On a biennial basis, each state agency is required to submit a strategic plan to the Governor's Office and the Legislative Budget Board. Statute requires workforce partner agencies to align their plans with Texas' workforce system strategic plan. The Council is responsible for the **Agency Strategic Plan Review** process—an examination of each agency's plan to determine how the agency is carrying out its activities to achieve the action plans in *Advancing Texas*, and to validate the challenges and opportunities presented during the listening sessions. Agencies submitted their plans between June and August of FY 2014.

The Council is responsible for making **Apprenticeship Funding Formula Recommendations** related to the distribution of available funds in the next fiscal year and administrative procedures for requesting state funds for the apprenticeship programs funded under Chapter 133 of the Texas Education Code. The Council considers the rate of reimbursement for contact hours made to training providers in apprenticeship programs; funding for new and existing apprenticeship programs that have not yet received Chapter 133 funds; and for apprenticeship instructor training. In March 2014, the Council approved and transmitted to the TWC for action the recommendations of the Apprenticeship and Training Advisory Committee.

## Conducting Research

The Council supports system planning and evaluation functions through a suite of research products and news updates that are distributed to members, system partners, and workforce stakeholders, and which are available on the Council's website.

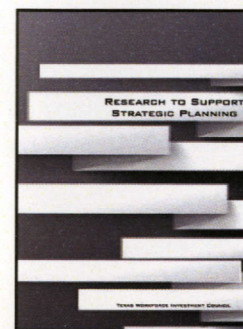
The Council's primary products include the strategic plan for the workforce system, evaluation reports and resource publications, reports on critical emerging issues, and recommendations to the Governor. In addition, a series of communication pieces that supports the work of workforce system partners is published quarterly.



**Texas Index 2013**, the ninth edition of this research report, provides trend data for a series of indicators that show the state's general workforce, education, and economic health. A skilled and well-educated workforce drives innovation, which drives economic expansion and creates an improved standard of living for all Texas residents. Thirty-eight indicators are organized into four domains: Training and Education, Research and Development, Market Composition and Characteristics, and Participant Access and Contribution.



**Policy News Highlights** is a quarterly review of selected reports relevant to the policy and research functions of the Council. Federal and state agency websites, in addition to numerous public policy and educational databases, are scanned monthly for relevant and emerging issues. Through abbreviated summaries of recent publications, the newsletter provides a quick overview of current topics, trends, and issues affecting the workforce and the workforce system.

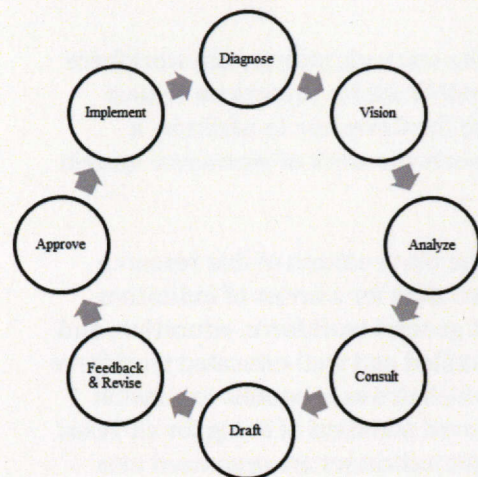


Texas Government Code mandates the Council with the development of a single strategic plan for the workforce system. In anticipation of the development of the next plan, which will cover FYs 2016–2020, the Council focused on better understanding workforce-related issues identified by workforce partners. **Research to Support Strategic Planning** is a compilation of briefs prepared to provide workforce and education information and data to guide members as they consider the objectives for the next strategic plan.

Identifying tools that determine supply and demand for workforce skills was deemed a priority of the Council in FY 2013. In 2014, the Council contracted with the **Ray Marshall Center at the University of Texas** to undertake a research study to identify and analyze the tools and data of this type being used in Texas. Findings show that many stakeholders find such data useful to their organizations, but few reported that the tools to which they currently have access provide satisfactory supply/demand information. Significant demand for better *gap analysis* reports was also expressed. Nearly all respondents indicated that provision of such data and reports by region would be beneficial to their work.

## Strategic Planning for the Texas Workforce System

Texas Government Code, Section 2308.104, specifies that the Council develop a single strategic plan for the state's workforce system. Development of the fifth strategic plan, covering FYs 2016–2020, began in September 2014.



However, preparation began much earlier. Plan development follows an eight-phase process. The first phase consists of consultation and issue discovery. At its December 2012 meeting, the Council decided to devote several quarterly meetings to hearing from its partner agencies. The **Council Listening Sessions** helped members to better understand agency issues, challenges, and aspirations so the foundation of the strategic plan could be based on direct agency input.

The Council asked partners to report on the issues that would be of critical significance in the next five to eight years. The TWC made the first member agency presentation to the Council (March 2013), followed by the THECB (June 2013). In September of 2013, the TEA presented its issues and challenges; focus then shifted to consider the national perspective of employers in December 2013 when the Council heard from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation. In early 2014, Council representatives attended local board regional strategic meetings held by the TWC in North Texas (January) and the Brazos Valley and Upper Rio Grande (February). DARS presented in March 2014, the Governor's Office of Economic Development and Tourism in June 2014, and the final session was with a panel of Texas employers (June 2014). In August 2014, Council representatives also worked with system partners, the Texas Juvenile Justice Department, the Department of Criminal Justice-Windham School District, the Texas Veterans Commission, and the Texas Association of Workforce Boards to identify issues.

SITAC's role in the development of the strategic plan is pivotal. SITAC members discussed, clarified, and refined key issues identified by partner agencies (June and September 2014). In September of 2014, the committee further refined the issues and identified common themes across agencies, as well as opportunities for collaboration. Common themes included alignment, partnerships, best practices, employers, data and information, transitions, professional development, certification, and middle-skill occupations.

Using the cross-agency issues generated by SITAC, the Council and invited members of Texas' workforce community developed both a vision and a mission statement at an extended meeting of the Council in September 2014. The Executive Committee considered the issues and identified strategic plan goal areas by which to structure the plan. In December, the committee will review the list of issues and develop goal statements to guide the implementation of the strategic plan.

In March of 2015, the Council and SITAC will meet to consider the plan's goal statements and agency strategies to accomplish objectives of the plan. A draft strategic plan will be reviewed by the Council in June and posted to the *Texas Register* for a 30-day public comment period prior to the formal consideration of approval in September 2015. Upon Council endorsement, the plan will be submitted to the Governor for approval.

## Texas Workforce System Partners and Programs

Texas workforce system partners collaborate to better align, leverage, and integrate system services to develop a world-class workforce and ensure a higher quality of life for all Texans through educational, employment, and economic success. Eight state agencies, local workforce development boards, community and technical colleges, local adult education providers, and independent school districts actively contribute to statewide programs and those highlighted in this report.

The table below shows the partners and primary and supporting programs that comprise the FY 2014 Texas workforce system:

FY 2014 Texas Workforce System Partners and Programs	
<p><b>Texas Department of Criminal Justice</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Postsecondary Academic and Technical Education</li> <li>Windham School District Secondary Academic Education Secondary Technical Education</li> </ul>	<p><b>Texas Juvenile Justice Department</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secondary Academic Education</li> <li>Secondary Technical Education</li> </ul>
<p><b>Texas Education Agency</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Secondary Schools Academic Education Career and Technical Education</li> </ul>	<p><b>Texas Veterans Commission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Veterans Employment and Training</li> </ul>
<p><b>Texas Health and Human Services Commission and its Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Temporary Assistance for Needy Families</li> <li>Rehabilitation Services</li> <li>Services for the Blind or Visually Impaired</li> </ul>	<p><b>Texas Workforce Commission</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adult Education and Literacy</li> <li>Apprenticeship Training, Chapter 133</li> <li>Choices Program for TANF Adults</li> <li>Employment Services</li> <li>Self-Sufficiency Fund</li> <li>Senior Community Service Employment Program</li> <li>Skills Development Fund</li> <li>Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Employment and Training</li> <li>Trade Adjustment Assistance/NAFTA</li> <li>Workforce Investment Act, Title I-B, Employment and Training Adult Dislocated Workers Youth</li> </ul>
<p><b>Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community and Technical Colleges Academic Education Technical Education</li> </ul>	



**Texas Workforce System Program Directory: A Guide to Funding and Programs Related to the Texas Workforce System (Directory)** catalogues into one publication the many programs comprising the Texas workforce system. A companion document to the system strategic plan and the annual evaluation report, it details workforce development programs and related academic programs administered by the state's workforce system partner agencies. A concise reference for policy makers and stakeholders, the *Directory* is distributed to system partners and stakeholders, and is posted on the Council's website.

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