TRUE

Texas Reskilling & Upskilling through Education

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Texas Community Colleges’ Response to COVID-19
TRUE: Texas Reskilling & Upskilling through Education

Adult Students & Displaced Workers → Community Colleges → Career Pathways & Credentials → Texas Employer

STRONGER TEXAS ECONOMY
EXPANDING THE 60X30TX PLAN
Texas colleges have a proven record of delivering for our workforce and employers in times of need. Texas colleges play a critical role in our state’s economy delivering workforce development central to job creation. In fact, community colleges provide over 90 percent of career and technical education enrollments and certificates in Texas. Texas colleges exist to meet the education needs of all learners through accessible, high quality, and low-cost (4th most affordable in country) programs. Texas colleges deliver a broad range of education and training services through partnerships with businesses to meet regional workforce needs critical to success. Texas colleges are best positioned to build an enduring education infrastructure to support a thriving Texas economy throughout the diverse regions of the state. Texas colleges have also been adversely impacted by the pandemic and their strength is paramount to a more prosperous Texas future.

TRUE is a proposed $50 million investment in Texas community colleges to reskill and upskill the Texas workforce, put Texans back to work in high demand occupations, and accelerate the Texas economic recovery. The program would be administered by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

An investment in the TRUE initiative and our colleges is an investment in a stronger Texas economy.
TRUE Components

Employer engagement to highlight areas of future job growth, define high-demand skills and inform credential development and training.

- Texas Community Colleges have formed a statewide Business Advisory Council to advise on changes in the economy and job market, highlight areas of future job growth and advise on skills most critical to business and industry. The Council will advise on the TRUE initiative.
- Our colleges engage with employers to strengthen the Texas workforce. As an example, San Jacinto College, through the Chancellor’s Business Advisory Council, works directly with business leaders with a particular focus on Maritime, Petrochem, and Aerospace programs.

Data infrastructure (local, regional & state) to inform skills-based education and training program development and delivery that meets employer workforce needs.

- Dallas College aligns in-demand skills, as reflected in near real-time labor market data along with employer engagement, to build workforce development programs that meet employer needs.
- Austin Community College launched Fast Track Careers in fall of 2020 to offer quick-turnaround workforce certificates at half price to help people who lost jobs during the pandemic gain a certification in a high-demand field. The college began with about a dozen programs and expanded to more than 25 programs in the spring of 2021.

Community College capacity-building to expand new and redesigned workforce training leading to jobs in the Texas economy. In legislation, TRUE funds will be invested to:

- Provide training in new or redesigned accelerated programs that teach high-demand skills and confer certifications or credentials valued in growing, living-wage occupations,
- Develop new industry-aligned, high-demand certification programs, or
- Build institutional capacity to provide high-demand credentials as identified by regional or statewide targeted occupations lists.
Business Advisory Council

Texas Association of Community Colleges
Business Advisory Council Goals

• **Goal 1: Advise on changes in the economy and job market.** Highlight areas of future job growth and advise on skills most critical to business and industry.

• **Goal 2: Champion Texas Reskilling and Upskilling through Education (TRUE).** Provide support, strategic guidance, and advocacy in establishing and advancing the components of the TRUE Initiative.

• **Goal 3: Inform legislative strategies.** Provide strategic guidance in advancing the components of the TACC legislative agenda in support of a stronger Texas economy.
Goal 1: Advise on changes in the economy and job market. Highlight areas of future job growth and advise on skills most critical to business and industry.

Suggested Roles:

- Advise on economic and workforce trends shaping the future of work.
- Analyze the market and inform market driven education and workforce innovations and policy.
- Support the development of the data, technological, and educational infrastructure necessary to meet future workforce requirements and equipping workers with needed skills.
- Offer data insights and inform efforts to define, develop, and promote credentials aligned with high-demand occupations across industries.
- Data analytics to raise awareness of relevant issues necessary to advance education and workforce development priorities.
Goal 2: Champion Texas Reskilling and Upskilling through Education (TRUE). Provide support, strategic guidance, and advocacy in establishing and advancing the components of the TRUE Initiative.

**Suggested Roles:**

- Make recommendations to expand employer engagement, build partnerships, and advance workforce development innovations.
- Inform education innovation and incubation possibilities while advancing sector-based replication strategies.
- Offer insights to advance the campaign, inclusive of communications strategy, to upskill and reskill Texans and close skills gaps.
  - Offer guidance to expand employer-informed, high demand certifications and micro-credentials providing accelerated completion serving all learners.
  - Advise efforts to accelerate the return of dislocated workers to reemployment by building multiple, high-demand pathways to careers (TRUE Pathways).
- Inform strategies to build workforce development capacity in rural Texas.
- Advise on work-based learning integration and expansion strategies.
TRUE Outcomes

Work and coordinate with state (TWC, THECB, others) and local partners (LWDBs, Chambers, EDCs, others) to put Texans back to work.

- Workforce reskilling and upskilling through educational opportunities aligned with good careers.
  - New accelerated employment training leading to credentials of value that can be completed in weeks or less than six months.
  - Certificates may be stacked leading to additional skills and credential attainment aligned to current COVID-impacted workforce needs.
  - Sustainable talent pipelines to meet local and regional workforce needs of the future.

Short term credentials increased and recognized under 60x30TX plan to meet the goals of Texas higher education plan.
- New credentials identified under this initiative used to inform funding formula recommendations related to institutional appropriations of funds for public junior colleges.
TRUE will deliver high-quality credentials aligned with labor market demand that can be stacked.

Texas Pathways provides a critical framework for leveraging the investment made through the TRUE legislative and appropriations request.

Colleges’ success and momentum scaling Texas Pathways provides the foundation needed to build sustainable talent pipelines.

Texas Pathways: A critical framework for scaling TRUE statewide
TRUE Labor Market Impact: A Stronger Texas Economy

• Texas workers benefit from attaining more and relevant skills.
  • For every $50 million in investment, more than 30,000 Texans receive job training in high demand fields during the biennium building a stronger Texas workforce.
  • Earn certificates or micro-credentials representing high-demand marketable skills acquisition.
  • Dislocated workers more efficiently transition back to careers.
  • Programs developed also benefit incumbent workers and other students.
  • Reskilled and upskilled workforce earn higher wages.
    • According to a recent Comptroller report, workers with college or an associate degree earn an average of $8,393 more annually than high school graduates.

• Texas Employers benefit from a more skilled workforce.
  • Address immediate workforce needs while strengthening future workforce and market alignment.
  • Labor market skills gaps reduced in high-demand occupations.
  • Productivity gains realized as workers equipped with needed skills increase.
  • State and local tax benefits, including in unemployment Insurance Trust fund. (As of December 2020, more than $5.8 B. has been borrowed from the federal accounts for the UI Trust fund to respond to pandemic demand.)
Communication Efforts

Landing Page

Texas Reskilling & Upskilling through Education (TRUE)

Texas community college leaders have worked tirelessly to support the state’s response to the COVID-19 national crisis, during which millions of Texas have filed for unemployment and the mismatch between workforce needs and skilled workers has deepened. A majority of these displaced workers lack the skills and education needed to successfully and quickly return to the workforce. Texas community colleges currently provide more than 90% of credit-bearing career technical education and are best positioned to close these skills gaps to keep growing jobs.

TRUE is a collaboration between colleges and business partners across Texas to quickly provide well-designed short-term credentials allowing displaced and underemployed workers to build fulfilling and economically self-sufficient lives by getting them back to work in as little as a few weeks to six months.

- Design sustainable talent pipelines to fill critical regional workforce needs and provide ongoing support to Texas businesses and the state’s economic recovery.
- Equip employer-inspired micro-credentials and short-term certifications that will enable displaced and underemployed workers to find fulfilling and economically self-sufficient lives by getting them back to work in as little as a few weeks to six months.
- Identify high-demand, short-term credentials to be recognized as a part of the $50M state plan for higher education.

Texas community colleges seek a state investment of $50M to support implementation of the initiative across all regions of the state.
TRUE Explainer Video
Thank you!

Carlton Schwab

CEO, Texas Economic Development Council