



Gulf Coast Regional Data Convening Agenda:

Labor Market Data, HB 8 Outcomes, and Implementation Planning

Audience:

Up to 6-person teams from each of the 9 Gulf Coast community colleges, with at least one senior leader (VP or above). Teams are encouraged to include leaders from workforce programs, and institutional research or planning.

Purpose:

This convening is designed to help colleges identify where regional labor market opportunity intersects with credentials of value, student completion, and House Bill 8 outcomes, and to begin narrowing focus toward high-impact opportunities that can inform Houston Endowment implementation grant proposals.

Location: San Jacinto College

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 2026

10:00 AM – 10:20 AM

Welcome & Setting the Stage

Kimberly Lowry

Executive Director, Texas Success Center; and Vice President, Texas Association of Community Colleges

Welcome and Objectives

Framing this convening within:

- Houston Endowment's Postsecondary Success Strategy
- House Bill 8 outcomes-based funding
- The transition from planning to implementation

What success looks like by the end of today:

- Clearer understanding of where labor market demand aligns with institutional opportunity
- Initial identification of 2–3 priority areas to explore more deeply through follow-up support



10:20 AM – 10:45 AM

Understanding the Opportunity: HB 8, Credentials of Value, and College Profiles

Chris Fernandez

Senior Director, Strategy & Policy, Texas Association of Community Colleges

Overview of House Bill 8 Outcomes and why they matter for long-term scale and sustainability

Walkthrough of the college-specific HB 8 and Credentials of Value profiles, including:

- Current performance on key HB 8 metrics
- Credentials of value overall and in high-demand fields
- Program-level signals and opportunities

How colleges should use these profiles today and after the convening:

- To inform problem statements
- To guide prioritization
- To prepare for implementation planning

10:45 AM – 11:00 AM

Break

11:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Regional Labor Market Context & NCII Framework

Rob Johnstone

Founder & President, National Center for Inquiry & Improvement

Overview of NCII's labor market framework and lenses

Regional labor market trends across the 16-county Gulf Coast region (Lenses 1-3)

Identifying “good jobs”:

- High demand
- Family-sustaining wages
- Implications for community colleges

Framing labor market data as a diagnostic tool to support student success and completion, not just workforce alignment



12:00 PM – 12:45 PM

Lunch & College Table Discussions

(Working lunch)

Guided reflection using prompts that connect:

- Labor market demand
- Credentials of value
- Current student success outcomes

Initial reactions:

- Where do you see strong alignment?
- Where do you see gaps or missed opportunity?

12:45 PM – 1:45 PM

College-Specific Labor Market Exploration

Facilitated by NCII

Breakout/table work using college-specific labor market decks

Focus on: Lenses 1 & 2: Good jobs and regional demand

- Lens 3: Career field and occupational progressions

Guided discussion questions to help colleges identify:

- Fields where demand is strong and credentials already exist
- Areas where improved completion or access could meaningfully impact HB 8 outcomes

1:45 PM – 2:00 PM

Break

2:00 PM – 2:40 PM

From Data to Direction: Narrowing to Priority Opportunities

Facilitated by NCII

Large-group discussion focused on synthesis, not reporting out

Key questions:

- Where do labor market opportunity, credentials of value, and student success outcomes most clearly intersect?
- Which 2–3 areas feel most promising for focused investment?
- What barriers might need to be addressed to scale impact?

Framing these reflections as inputs to:

- 1:1 follow-up conversation
- Implementation Grant Development



2:40 PM – 3:00 PM

Closing & Next Steps

Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC)

Overview of post-convening support:

- Individual college follow-up conversations with NCII
- Monthly TACC check-ins

Post-session task:

- Each college identifies up to 6–8 occupational or career progressions they would like to explore more deeply in advance of the April convening
- Preview of April convening:
- Deeper dives into selected progressions