

Senate Finance Committee

Testimony of Public Community Colleges

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Texas Success

The Texas Association of Community Colleges

The community colleges of Texas understand that the most critical part of their mission is to focus on the success of the students who seek educational opportunity at our institutions. It is this overarching notion that drives our colleges, our faculty, and our staff around the state to make a difference in the lives of Texans.

The Texas Association of Community Colleges recognizes that colleges must have a partner in the State of Texas to ensure that the success of our students remains the priority. To accomplish this goal, TACC proposes a 5-Point Campaign that asks state leaders to join us in this critical effort.

I. Workforce and Skills Alignment

II. Measuring and Funding Success

III. College Readiness

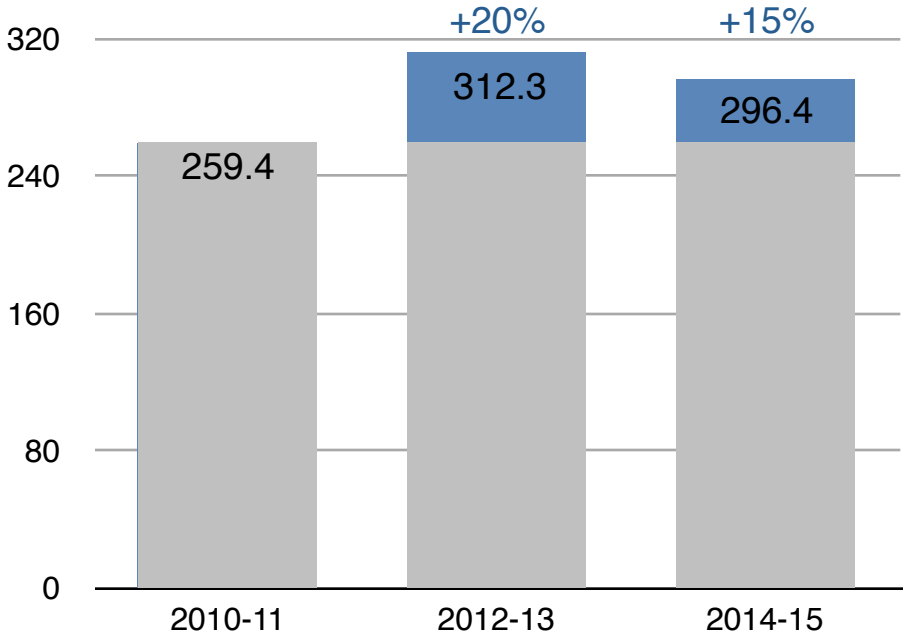
IV. Transfer and Articulation

V. Texans in Community Colleges

- *Student success is the highest priority of every community college in Texas.*
- *The state's community colleges are driving rapid and expansive improvements in public education to meet current and anticipated workforce needs.*
- *Community colleges are economic and cultural engines in every part of the state, vital to their communities and key to advancing the individual aspirations of students.*



2nd Largest Community College Enrollment



- Highest base year was last session (2012-13) with 312.3 million contact hours.
- The 2012-13 base year was 20% higher than the 2010-11 base year.
- Contact hours for the upcoming biennium (2014-15) are 296.4 million; the second highest base year for community colleges.
- Bottom line: 15% of contact hour growth is not funded in SB 1.

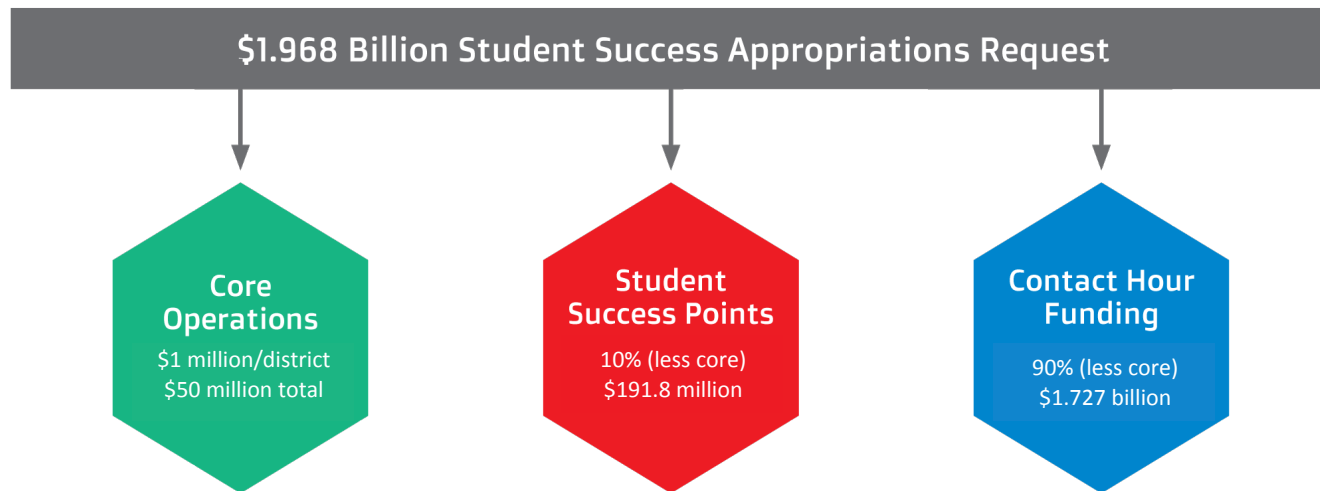


Measuring and Funding Success

State Funding

For colleges to be capable of effectively serving students, their communities, and the state they must be funded adequately. TACC believes there is a need to create a new way for the state to fund our institutions. To best accomplish the goal of student success, state funding should be broken down into three different components:

- Core college operations: All colleges have basic operating costs regardless of geographic location or institutional size. (This funding would be set aside before other two funding elements).
- Student Success Points: Ten percent of funding (less core operations) should be based on the metrics recommended in the Student Success Points.
- Contact hour: Ninety percent of state funding (less core operations) for colleges should be based on the number of instructional contact hours each college generates.

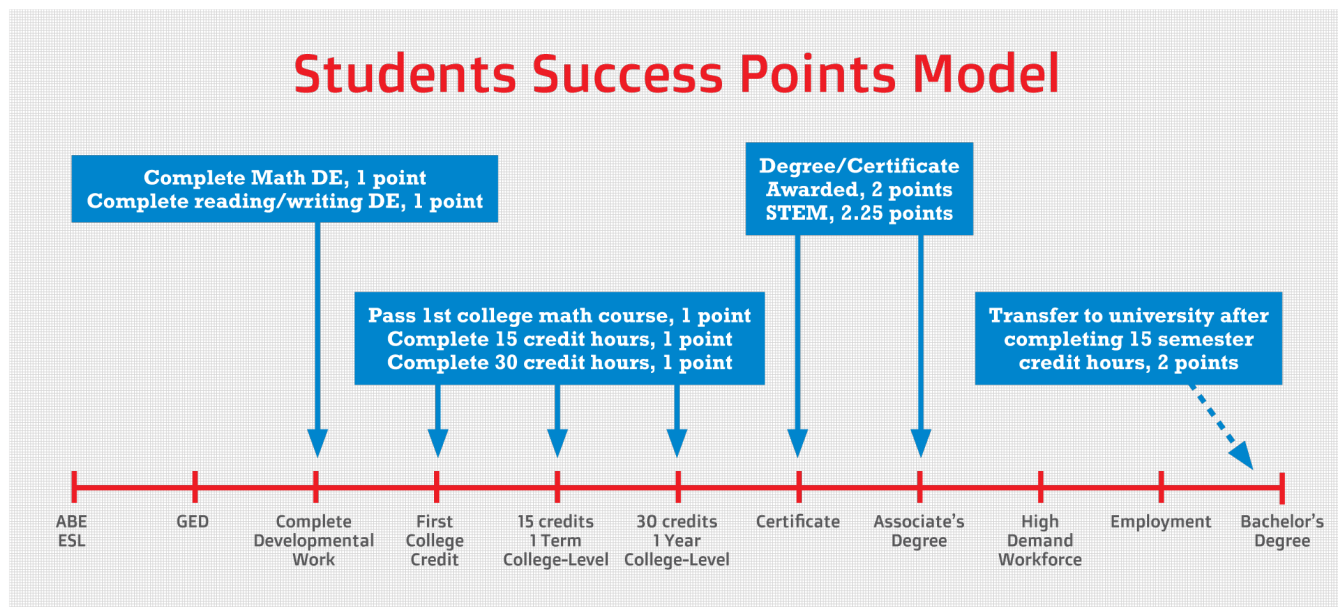


Measuring and Funding Success

Student Success Points

Student success in community colleges consists of effectively meeting the educational goals of students.

Community colleges are committed to increasing student success in Texas regardless of the student's starting point or his/her destination. Building on the Momentum Points work between the Coordinating Board and the community colleges, TACC recommends a Student Success Points system that recognizes student achievement along a continuum from successful completion of college readiness courses to intermediate success measures to successful outcome metrics. The model also pinpoints area where metrics need to be developed and then included in the measurement of student success (e.g., ABE and High Demand Workforce metrics).



Measuring and Funding Success

Restoration of Employee Benefits: Student success cannot be achieved without quality faculty and support staff. Colleges must be able to recruit and retain such talent, which requires providing excellent employee benefits. The state must remain our partners in providing these benefits to our employees in a way that is cost effective for the college and employees.

- TACC requests the restoration of state employee Health Insurance Funding to 60% of ERS costs, and a return to 84% of ERS costs in the 84th session.
- Funding for the state's employer share of Community College employees' retirement at the Teachers Retirement System should be based on constitutional requirements.

Mid-Biennium Funding Reallocation: Remove language in rider #1 of the Community College bill pattern in the Senate Bill 1, which was added last legislative session requiring a reallocation of state funding in the second year of the biennium.

1. Administration of Appropriated Funds. Funds appropriated above shall be administered by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

To ensure the efficient allocation of state appropriations, the Coordinating Board shall reallocate the formula funds appropriated in this bill pattern in the second year of the biennium using certified contact hour data from the previous academic year. The Higher Education Coordinating Board shall exclude contact hours related to physical education courses for students who are registered to receive both high school and college credit from the contact hours used to reallocate formula funds in the second year of the biennium.



Measuring and Funding Success

New Mathways Project

TACC supports the exceptional item funding request by the University of Texas at Austin to support the Charles A. Dana Center in developing and implementing the New Mathways Project in amount of \$2.4 million.

The Challenge

- Each year 60% of students entering Texas community colleges arrive unprepared for college-level coursework.
- Mathematics preparation is especially problematic.
- The current developmental mathematics courses designed to increase student readiness have not addressed this challenge.

The Solution

- The New Mathways Project (NMP) is a statewide approach to reforming developmental education. The project includes the development of a set of accelerated mathematics courses and support systems to help students more quickly learn—and earn college-level credits in—rigorous mathematics.
- Students need mathematics preparation aligned to their programs of study, majors and careers.
- The NMP accelerates students to and through college-level mathematics courses in one year. It saves students time and money because they gain the skills needed to move more quickly to college-level work. It saves state resources because students enroll in fewer developmental mathematics courses and are more likely to complete a certificate or degree.

A Commitment from—and to—all Texas Community Colleges

- The presidents from all 50 TACC community college districts voted unanimously to provide seed money for NMP development, demonstrating their commitment to statewide improvement.
- Math faculty throughout the state endorse the project's fundamental changes to course content.
- The NMP is an accessible solution for all Texas community colleges—rural or urban, large or small—serving students from all backgrounds.



Exceptional Item Requests/Special Item Requests

Since 1996, the special item policy of the Texas Association of Community Colleges has been to neither solicit nor accept new special item appropriations. TACC does support the existing special items: Southwest Collegiate Institute for the Deaf, the Virtual College of Texas, STARLINK, the Small Business Development Center, the Import/Export Training Center, and three museums (Star of the Republic, Heritage Museum/Genealogy Center, and American Airpower Heritage Museum). Before addressing specific items, it should be noted that special items are less than one percent of the General Revenue appropriation to community colleges.

- *STARLINK:* STARLINK is one of two community college programs that enhance distance learning opportunities funded by the state. The STARLINK Training Network is in its twentieth year of providing innovative ideas, cutting-edge experts, and state-of-the-art training to higher education professionals via DVD and the Internet. As an agency of the Texas Association of Community Colleges, STARLINK offers cost-effective, high quality and dynamic learning opportunities to educational institutions, governmental agencies, and other public entities. The STARLINK network currently provides over 100 hours of professional development programming annually. TACC supports Dallas County Community College District's exceptional item request in the amount of \$161,480, which will return the funding level for STARLINK to \$561,668 (FY2010-11 levels).
- *Virtual College of Texas:* The Virtual College of Texas (VCT) is the other state-wide distance learning program funded by the state. VCT maximizes student access to higher education with its seamless model of delivering distance education. VCT makes it possible for a student to enroll in his/her local college for a distance education courses provided by other community or technical colleges in the state. Leveraging funds provided by the Legislature, VCT obtained statewide collaborative licenses for web-based services that support improving student success and distance-learning course quality. Through FY 2010 there have been over 56,000 enrollments in courses offered through VCT. TACC supports Austin Community College's exceptional item request in the amount of \$287,500, which will return the funding level for VCT to \$1,000,000 (FY2010-11 levels).



Financial Aid

The ability to afford college opportunities is an issue that many students struggle to overcome. In Texas, less than ten percent of all grant aid to community college students comes from the state of Texas. But these dollars can be critical in allowing a student to pay for their education.

TACC endorses the recommendation of the Sunset Commission to remove all two-year institutions from participation in the B-On-Time loan program and transfer the funding for public two-year institutions to the Texas Educational Opportunity Grant program.

TACC recommends increased flexibility for community college financial aid directors to move funds between state financial aid programs thereby allowing them to direct funds in the most efficient manner.

Skills Development Fund

Texas community colleges are educating students and building their skills in the industries that are critical to sustaining Texas prosperity. Community colleges play an essential role in the health and prosperity of their local communities, regions, and the state. Providing offerings that link workforce demands to quality educational offerings that meet industry requirements. A key tool in achieving these goals is the Skills Development Fund (SDF).

TACC recommends reforming the Skills Development Fund to enhance the ability of community colleges to work with multiple employers to better serve students and workforce needs in their regions around the state.

The SDF allows a business or trade union to identify a training need, and then partner with a public community college to fill its specific needs. Businesses work with their college partners to submit proposals, develop curricula and conduct training. The SDF pays for the training, the college administers the grant, and businesses create new jobs and improve the skills of their current workers.



Adult Basic Education

Community colleges are a primary provider of ABE opportunities across Texas. This is part of the state directed mandate for our colleges in Sec. 130.0011 of the Education code, which requires community colleges in Texas to be open enrollment institutions. We recognize the need to serve these students but suggest several key recommendations to make ABE more efficient and effective.

TACC recommends the State provide sufficient funding for ABE. Texas currently serves slightly more than 100,000 students through ABE providers across the state. However, that is a small fraction of the more than 3 million eligible for ABE. This can be traced directly to the low level of state funding for this critical opportunity for so many Texans.

TACC recommends the state oversight of ABE be moved from the Texas Education Agency to the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board Texas needs better alignment with Developmental Education, Continuing Education, and Credit programs of study. When ABE is offered on college campus, there is a powerful “place” effect for students to learn about college and see themselves as college students.

Bachelor of Applied Technology

Implied in our earlier discussion of the community college funding is that the state should continue to provide funds for the Bachelor of Applied Technology (BAT). BATs are meeting the workforce needs of the local business community. The presidents of Brazosport College, Midland College, and South Texas College are here today and can expand on the benefits of funding BAT.



Community College Summary Data - Enrollment, Tuition/Fees, & Property Taxes

Texas Community College District	Fall 2012 Enrollment	Tuition/Fees Per SCH, Spring 2013			Local Property Taxes - FY 2013		
		In-District	Out-District	Out-State	Total Valuation	Est. Levy	Total Rate
Alamo	59,640	70	186	359	99,742,634,716	148,541,205	0.149
Alvin	5,195	56	95	137	6,048,212,091	12,035,942	0.199
Amarillo	11,414	77	116	177	10,536,907,742	22,196,411	0.200
Angelina	5,478	59	89	129	3,758,259,828	6,414,598	0.171
Austin	40,152	78	240	324	117,011,647,602	111,278,077	0.095
Blinn	17,495	76	123	201	2,264,399,954	1,283,915	0.057
Brazosport	4,095	77	111	158	6,367,649,344	16,519,975	0.259
Central Texas	13,548	63	82	185	7,655,741,136	10,718,038	0.140
Cisco	3,838	84	107	143	533,191,894	575,314	0.108
Clarendon	1,257	91	114	145	197,955,794	1,398,128	0.222
Coastal Bend	3,885	74	136	151	1,165,998,330	1,990,009	0.171
College of the Mainland	4,007	62	102	132	9,341,098,849	20,976,940	0.232
Collin	27,205	37	73	128	73,591,792,695	63,509,717	0.086
Dallas	78,415	52	97	153	164,751,737,568	196,672,387	0.119
Del Mar	11,022	92	154	179	17,986,670,894	46,406,151	0.258
El Paso	29,980	81	81	151	37,278,985,235	42,530,103	0.114
Frank Phillips	1,182	87	110	117	658,712,220	1,929,287	0.220
Galveston	2,194	65	77	140	5,188,154,835	9,826,365	0.189
Grayson	4,909	60	110	144	7,173,336,283	13,041,125	0.182
Hill	4,389	70	93	110	1,642,664,500	4,660,171	0.089
Houston	47,784	68	140	156	129,149,639,570	125,498,579	0.097
Howard	4,555	78	113	164	3,568,329,168	6,302,240	0.177
Kilgore	6,237	57	124	172	3,985,200,840	6,137,209	0.154
Laredo	9,170	113	163	215	10,608,924,028	27,345,987	0.258
Lee	6,216	63	93	146	8,596,157,464	20,716,739	0.241
Lone Star	78,023	67	137	152	121,040,000,000	145,005,920	0.120
McLennan	9,310	115	133	190	12,471,277,910	18,897,727	0.152
Midland	5,554	72	115	154	15,571,679,385	23,453,290	0.144
Navarro	10,150	58	92	136	2,774,259,367	3,301,369	0.119
North Central Texas	10,175	51	93	150	3,259,324,331	2,553,636	0.066
Northeast Texas	3,357	72	118	164	4,338,826,024	4,338,826	0.100
Odessa	5,036	80	119	157	11,988,311,035	22,438,522	0.187
Panola	2,633	67	107	135	4,085,200,390	5,931,302	0.145
Paris	5,514	57	88	135	1,545,046,451	2,889,237	0.187
Ranger	1,907	76	112	144	90,107,560	250,328	0.278
San Jacinto	33,106	55	96	146	37,280,070,614	69,192,557	0.186
South Plains	9,697	83	105	121	5,079,138,155	12,593,723	0.248
South Texas	30,825	103	112	238	29,645,534,071	44,675,820	0.151
Southwest Texas	5,935	82	131	147	1,973,625,094	2,565,713	0.130
Tarrant	65,955	55	86	205	123,803,891,671	184,430,657	0.149
Temple	5,492	88	154	234	2,988,258,214	6,836,359	0.204
Texarkana	4,045	76	116	162	1,280,964,397	1,348,433	0.105
Texas Southmost	6,130	213	213	564	10,902,983,558	17,764,776	0.163
Trinity Valley	7,170	70	118	146	7,920,701,069	8,454,172	0.089
Tyler	9,819	77	123	143	9,478,886,252	18,950,758	0.200
Vernon	3,137	86	128	198	986,475,610	2,198,400	0.223
Victoria	4,420	80	127	137	5,230,505,956	8,400,193	0.161
Weatherford	5,632	71	107	162	9,019,221,818	13,542,373	0.113
Western Texas	2,192	79	104	135	3,351,529,048	6,227,141	0.186
Wharton	7,408	86	137	169	3,657,562,724	5,055,117	0.138
Total	735,884	76	118	173	1,158,567,383,284	1,549,800,962	0.163
		State Averages					State Avg

