# AT THE FOREFRONT OF HIGHER EDUCATION

TEXAS ASSOCIATION OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



# WHO WE ARE

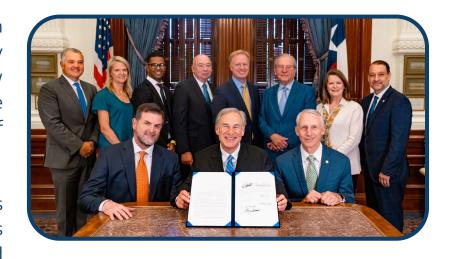
For over seven decades, the Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC) has focused its primary mission on improving statewide educational opportunities at community colleges through advocacy and policy change. Over time, TACC has built effective coalitions and partnerships across a myriad of stakeholders, including chambers of commerce, businesses, employers, industries, and key state agencies. Likewise, TACC has enhanced its visibility and credibility with state leadership officials as well as key lawmakers at the Texas Capitol. The 88th Legislative Session was no exception.

The FY 2023 TACC Annual Report provides a synopsis of accomplishments and milestones reached by the entire association, including the Texas Success Center and Community College Association of Texas Trustees. The report also previews the work ahead as we continue to grow and serve not only our 48 membership colleges, but most importantly the students of Texas.

# **ADVOCACY**

The 88th Texas Legislative Session was historic in many ways, particularly for community colleges, as we saw years of work and advocacy come to fruition with the passage of House Bill 8.

In a political era defined by fissures and polarization, community colleges emerged as an issue everyone could



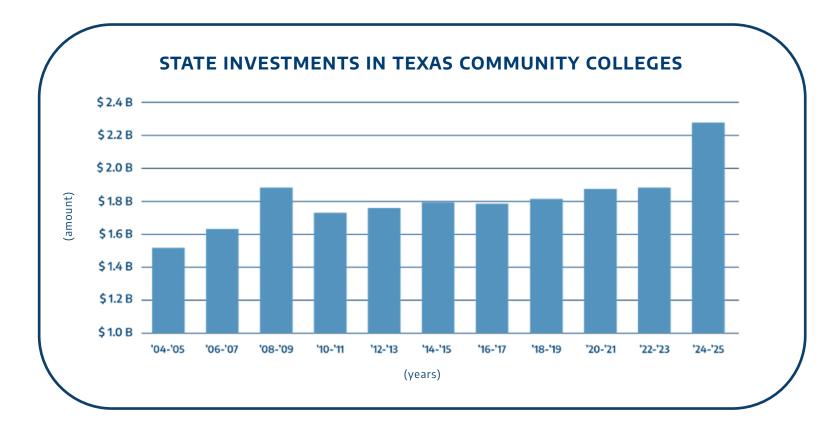
support - a testament to our colleges, the communities we represent, and the students we serve. Though House Bill 8 underwent some changes during the legislative process, it consistently had one mission: to provide community colleges with sufficient funding to sustain academic, workforce, and continuing education course and program offerings that would improve student outcomes and ensure better alignment with the state's long term postsecondary objectives as articulated in *Building a Talent Strong Texas*.

The Texas Commission on Community College Finance (TXCCCF) included legislators, community college leaders, and experts in policy and workforce issues. Through a year of public hearings and work group meetings, and based on research, data analysis, and stakeholder feedback, the TXCCCF began to coalesce around a bold new funding model. This new system would shift from static funding based primarily on enrollment to a dynamic model primarily based on outcomes



aligned with state academic and workforce goals. This model would also increase affordability for students by including additional funding in need-based financial aid and would invest in college capacity and shared services. The TXCCCF approved its final recommendations in October 2022 and submitted its final report to the Texas Legislature in November 2022.

From there, two TXCCCF members, State Representative Gary VanDeaver and State Senator Brandon Creighton, filed House Bill 8 and Senate Bill 2539 respectively to put the TXCCCF's recommendations into law. The initial positive support for the TXCCCF recommendations were evidenced in both the Texas House and Senate by the inclusion of contingency funding in the state's base budget bill – an amount totaling \$650 million for community colleges above our current funding level. This support broadened as the legislative session progressed and concluded with the unanimous passage of HB 8 in both the Texas House of Representatives and the Texas Senate. Final funding was also adjusted upward for the FY 2024-25 biennium to \$683 million above the current funding level.



Aside from HB 8, TACC also pursued other legislative priories as directed by the TACC Membership.

TEXAS EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY GRANT: PASSED (INCLUDED IN HB 8)

CYBERSECURITY & IT MODERNIZATION: PASSED (HOUSE BILL 584)

TEXAS TRANSFER FRAMEWORK: PASSED (SENATE BILL 1887)

**CLINICAL NURSING SITES: FAILED** (TACC IS EXPLORING AS POTENTIAL INTERIM CHARGE AND A PRIORITY FOR 2025 TEXAS LEGISLATURE.)

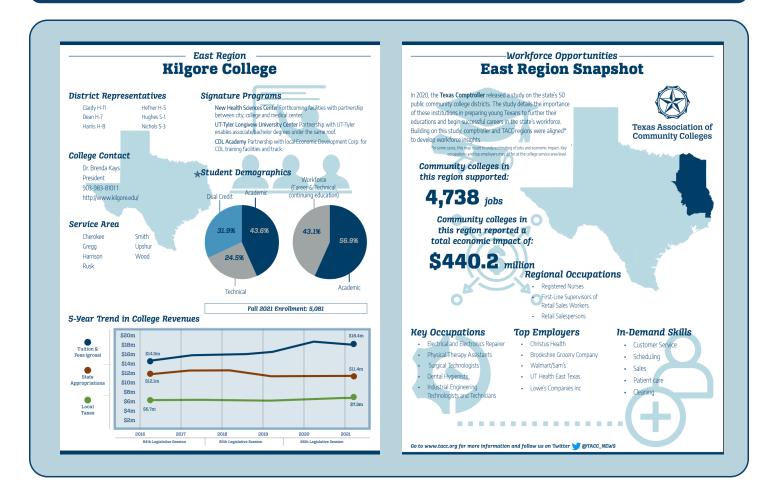
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# WHAT THE DATA TELLS US

This fiscal year, TACC produced various reports and resources for member colleges to make data-informed decisions that would enhance the community college story. More specifically, as an effective legislative resource, TACC decided to highlight the intersection between postsecondary education/training, and workforce demands by creating a brand-new resource called *College Profiles*.

This resource was specific to each college and highlighted student demographics, signature programs offered at the college, state revenue trends, legislative representation, and a designated college contact. The *College Profiles* also provided a regional overview, and how the community college contributed to the overall economic growth of the area. This resource was well received by members and staff at the Texas Legislature, as it amplified the value of Texas community colleges across the state, and our contributions to the state and regional economy.

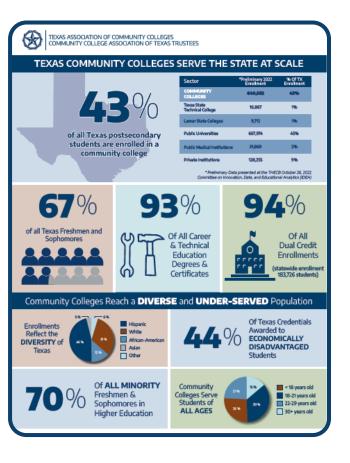
## **COLLEGE PROFILES**



Throughout the 88th Texas Legislative Session, providing data-informed collateral that highlighted the recommendations made by the TXCCCF was a high priority. For example, to amplify the importance of affordability for all students, TACC collected data on dual credit tuition and fees at each college. This informative report illustrated the impact of the new financial aid program for economically disadvantaged students in dual credit on our colleges and provided the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board a better visual of our sector's contribution in the dual credit arena. This information now lives in the *Dual Credit Tuition and Fees Report* were data was verified through college websites and personnel to ensure accuracy. We hope to build on this report moving forward.

Our annual resources and reports were enhanced to provide comparative data to our member institutions. These reports include the *TACC Fact Sheet, Fall Preliminary Enrollment Report*, the *Local Revenues Report*, and the *Administrative Salaries Report*.

- The <u>Fall Preliminary Enrollment Report</u> provides a statewide snapshot of enrollment, including information on peer groups, regional groups, student demographics, and student types.
- The <u>Local Revenues Report</u> provides a summary of key data related to college financials including tuition and fee rates, dual credit waivers, grants and scholarships, and property and branch taxes.
- The Administrative Salaries Report provides a summary of compensations for college wide administrative positions including presidents, chief financial officers, chief academic officers, chief enrollment officers, chief information officers, and others.



# A UNIFIED VOICE

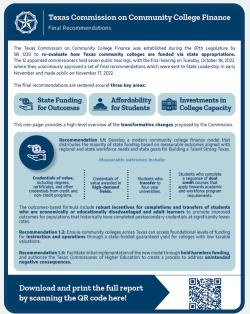
Throughout the fiscal year - especially during the 88th Texas Legislative Session - having clear and concise messaging about the transformative impact of House Bill 8 and the statewide economic contributions of Texas community colleges was essential. To achieve a uniform voice, TACC produced communication collateral that presented complex topics in a consumable way for a variety of stakeholders. By streamlining communications, TACC ensured the community college stories resonated with legislators, key stakeholders, and education partners. Below are some examples of the one-pagers, talking points, PowerPoints, scripted testimonies, op-eds, and membership newsletters that were produced with one goal in mind — unity.

## **ONE-PAGERS**



#### **Policy Priorities**

One-pager issued at the beginning of session to outline TACC and CCATT Joint Policy Priorities for the 88th Legislative Session.



#### **Final TXCCCF Recommendations**

One-pager built based on the TXCCCF Final Report and illustrating the Commission's recommendations to the Texas Legislature.



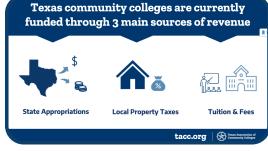
#### **House Bill 8**

One-pager outlining the major components of House Bill 8 as signed by Governor Abbott.

## **SLIDES**

Presentations created to tell our sector's story and why the time was right to reevaluate community college finance.





## **NEWSLETTER**

Established a weekly TACC newsletter to maintain the membership informed about policy updates and higher education news.







stimony from higher education institutions. Public and Junior Communit Colleges were on the agenda vesterday, and TACC Vice Chair, Dr. Brend Cavs, delivered testimony on behalf of the association

or. Kays testimony was well-received by the Article III Subcommitte embers, as she focused on a strong message of transformational chang the recommendations by all 50 community college districts. He stimony prompted informed and important questions from variou ere unable to view yesterday's testimony, a direct link is posted below cluding a copy of the written materials submitted to the subcommittee.

nank you to those TACC Presidents/Chancellors who Joined us in-perso it the Capitol, as well as many who viewed the testimony virtually through the live-stream. The Article III Subcommittee will begin more detailed eliberations next week, and we will monitor these meetings closely and p everyone fully informed of developments.



fered," says Ray Martinez III, president and CEO of the Texas Association of Com-

ers have come together to ask, "What do we need to do as a



#### A Step Toward Outcomes-Based Funding for **Texas 2-Year Colleges**

del would focus more on rewarding community colleges for transfer and

#### Texas community college investment will pay off

egislature ensures more students from all backgrounds will have

ver the last decade. Texas has grown more than any other state with more than 30 million res ling our state home. As the ninth largest economy in the world, our state has led the nation in jo ation over the past year, with nearly 15 million Texans at work.

his growth is expected to continue, and with all eyes on Texas, people worldwide are watching ha state's long-term competitiveness depends not only on our ability to generate a large numb

ns. This requires an educated workforce prepared to meet the demands of tomorrow. e most recent projections from Georgetown's Center for Education and the Workforce estimate

t by 2030, more than 62% of all jobs in Texas will require education beyond high school

ently, only 48% of working-age Texans have certificates or degrees beyond high school mas. Short-term workforce credentials may add another 6% to this estimate, which sti

s community colleges are uniquely positioned to play a key role in addressing the skills gap enge by helping more Texans earn the credentials required for high-demand, well-paying jo state policymakers have approved a new funding model for community colleges that aligns or 's emerging workforce needs with strategic funding, resources and postsecondary opportuni

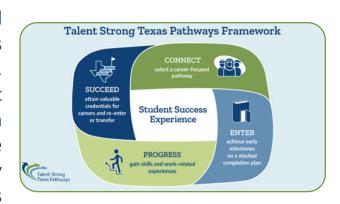
## MEDIA

A small sample of news articles and op-eds that ran stories on Texas community colleges. Media outlets included the Dallas Morning News, Texas Tribune, Inside Higher Ed and other local Texas newsrooms.

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# A NEW PATHWAYS STRATEGY

Beginning in 2016, the Texas Success Center launched Texas Pathways, the largest collective student success effort of its kind rooted in our socioeconomic mission. This year, we launched the next evolution, Talent Strong Texas Pathways (2023-2027). Forty-seven colleges committed to this statewide whole-college reform strategy that continues to be fundamentally grounded in solving systemic educational problems caused by misaligned structures that have resulted in far too few Texans prepared for meaningful careers.





Guided by the strategy, colleges are addressing students' basic and psychological needs of belonging and wellness as a healthy foundation for learning and for achieving academic success, program completion, and post-completion career success. The Talent Strong Texas Pathways Framework outlines the essential practices all colleges are scaling for students from various entry points (dual credit, economic and educational disadvantage, under employment) as they connect

to a career-focused pathway, enter stacked completion plans, progress in gaining work-based skills and experiences, and succeed in attaining credentials of value in continuing education and credit industry-based certifications, certificates, and degrees.

## **Texas Pathways Laid the Foundation for HB 8 Success**

Significant progress scaling guided pathways led to dramatic improvements in student success.

Colleges have made significant progress scaling the Texas Pathways essential practices in each of the four pillars. In dark blue bars, the following graphs show the number of colleges "at scale" or "scaling in progress" for each of the essential practices of the strategy. In 2019, the Center met its goal of having half of colleges scaling or at scale in 16% of the essential practices of the strategy. By 2023, the goal was met for 96% of the essential practices, resulting in dramatic improvements in the student experience and student outcomes across the state.



# Colleges Continued to Engage in Success Center Services with Philanthropy Funding in FY 2023-24

10 Yrs. of Funding

- Over \$25 million in philanthropic investment in the strategy.
- Funding provided by 24 different foundations.
- 54 total awards to serve all Texas community colleges.

No College Fees

- No fees required for college participation.
- Each college recieves over \$65,000 annually in Success Center services.
- \$3M Success Center annual budget funded by grant awards.

Services Provided

- HB 8 implementation support to maximize new performance-based funding.
- 2 annual Texas Pathways Institutes for college leadership teams.
- 1 annual Board of Trustees Institute for CEOs and two trustees.
- Year-round professional coaching at institutes and campus site visits.
- Mid-level leadership training expanding Texas' talent pathways to community college leadership.
- Employer engagement building credentials of value and work-ready talent.
- Action-oriented research, KPI data dashboards, and suport for data-informed action planning.

# THE TRUSTEE PERSPECTIVE

This year the Community College Association of Texas Trustees (CCATT) achieved key milestones related to the Focus Forward strategic plan adopted in summer of 2020. In September, CCATT received its first grant, a two-year award from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation to support professional development offerings focused on building data competencies for community college board members. Thanks to the ongoing support from TACC and countless volunteer hours from trustees across the state, CCATT celebrates the following accomplishments.





#### **Trustee Education**

Data-informed governance has been a central theme for professional development, along with keeping members informed on the Texas Commission on Community College Finance and the 88th Legislature. CCATT hosted its first annual New Trustee Orientation in a hybrid format and relaunched the Trustee Leadership Seminars, convening members at Amarillo College, Tyler Junior College, and South Texas College.

## **Trustee Engagement**

CCATT strives to maintain updated membership records and publishes regular newsletters about professional development offerings. The six board members who serve on the CCATT Engagement Committee have made great strides in building relationships with fellow trustees across the state. Both event attendance and participation in CCATT's various committees have increased compared to prior years. CCATT leadership has





taken an active role in building a Texas community at national conferences hosted by the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT). We partnered with them in October for the reception honoring Trustee Rose Benavidez from South Texas College as the incoming Chair of the ACCT Board of Directors and distributed yellow rose lapel pins in her honor.

## **Advocacy**

At the ACCT National Legislative Summit, CCATT hosted the annual Texas Delegation Breakfast &

Briefing and coordinated group meetings with Senator John Cornyn and Senator Ted Cruz. Prior to the 88th Legislative Session in Texas, CCATT partnered with TACC to develop a unified policy agenda and support the interim work of the Texas Commission on Community College Finance (TXCCCF).

Based on feedback gathered in a meeting of the Chairs Council, trustees presented public testimony responding to the draft recommendations from the TXCCCF. After final recommendations were published, the CCATT Board voted unanimously in support and later disseminated a template resolution for adoption by local college boards. A total of 45 Texas community college boards passed motions or resolutions in support of the final recommendations from the TXCCCF. The Immediate Past Chair of the CCATT Board, Carol Scott from Del Mar College, served as a member of the TXCCCF and delivered public testimony at the House Higher Education Committee hearing on House Bill 8.

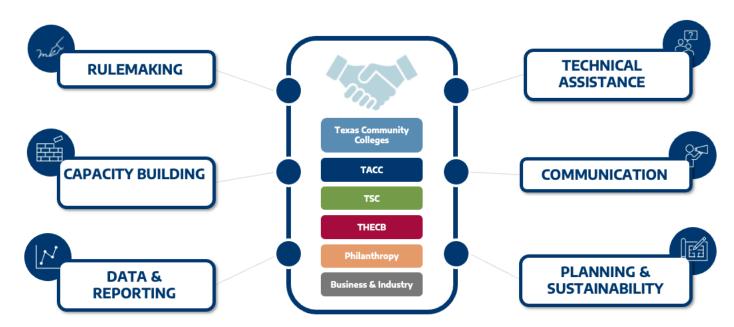
The CCATT Board is excited to continue the focus on data-informed governance and looks forward to partnering more with TACC on the implementation of House Bill 8.



# THE ROAD AHEAD: 2025

The historic and transformational impact of HB 8 accentuates the need for TACC to be responsive to the needs of community colleges as they implement a new and innovative funding model. TACC recognizes an acute demand to specifically expand our association's capacity by leveraging external experts and resources to support statewide (1) rulemaking efforts, (2) capacity building, (3) data collection and reporting, (4) technical assistance, (5) strategic communications, and (6) institutional planning and sustainability. Moreover, as was done throughout the work of the TXCCCF and the HB 8 legislative process, TACC's implementation efforts will be done in close partnership with Commissioner Harrison Keller and staff at the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

## **TACC House Bill 8 Implementation Efforts**

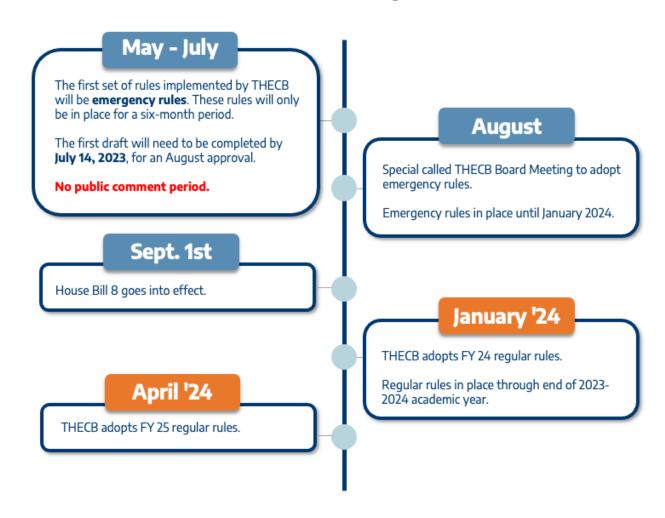


With HB 8 now signed into law, the Coordinating Board has begun the important rulemaking process and related policy development. This next phase – particularly now through the end of August – will be critical to the overall success of HB 8. These initial rules and agency policies will provide direction as to how the institutions will interpret and implement the now-codified outcomes-based funding formulas.

The implementation of HB 8 will necessitate the need for additional resources – both financial and personnel – as it is critical that every step of this implementation process be monitored closely. It is equally important to ensure that these initial decisions regarding rulemaking and policy

development by the Coordinating Board are communicated clearly and timely to all community colleges across the state, as well as to key internal and external stakeholders.

## **House Bill 8 Rulemaking Timeline**



To achieve these deliverables, TACC has already begun seeking support from the philanthropic community to fund an HB 8 implementation plan. Successful policy execution further demonstrates the value of a community college education for students, and the significant impact of our institutions on the Texas economy.

Throughout the interim period, TACC will provide the membership with a variety of support services and tools to pioneer the successful implementation of this transformative new funding model. Concurrently, we will archive success stories and prepare to tell our story at the State Capitol during the 89th Texas Legislative Session, in 2025. This will allow us to show, once again, that **Texas community colleges truly are the economic engine that drives our state economy!** 

