



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PREPARING OUR WORKFORCE TO MEET THE NEEDS OF TEXAS EMPLOYERS

The Texas Association of Workforce Boards (TAWB) believes that alignment of education and workforce development must occur in order to meet the talent needs of Texas employers. Properly educating and equipping our present and future workforce to meet employer needs is essential to Texas' ability to compete in the global economy and vital to our continued growth and prosperity as a state. TAWB recommends implementing and/or strengthening the following initiatives so our K-12 education and post-secondary education systems produce employees who are in demand:

**Business-Driven Education System.** Form regional partnerships between the education and business communities to develop and implement master plans that create more efficient and effective talent pipelines for industry clusters that are relevant to a region.

**Career & Technology Education (CTE).** Increase the integration and availability of Career & Technology Education (CTE) in public schools and promote the opportunities that can result from CTE.

**Dual Credits and Certifications.** Increase Dual Course Study programs at both high school and middle school levels so that students graduate from high school with an associates' degree, or substantial credits toward one, and increase the number of industry recognized certificate programs so that students graduate from high school with a certificate or substantial credit toward one.

**Apprenticeships and Internships.** Increase the number of apprenticeships and internships for high school and post-secondary students and incentivize and/or remove barriers for businesses, especially those in Texas' primary industry clusters, who participate in apprenticeship/internship programs.

**Pre-K.** Ensure that full-day pre-K is available to all 3 and 4 year olds, particularly those from lower income families.

**Basic Skills.** Ensure that elementary school students can read English and have basic math skills before their exit to middle/intermediate schools.

**STEM.** Increase Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) curriculum in elementary and middle schools across the state and ensure that proficient teachers are delivering the curriculum.

**Career Exploration.** Increase career education and exploration opportunities *beginning at the elementary school level* and stop focusing on high school graduation as the start and end point for the training of our emerging workforce. Increase the number of counselors at every level of the education continuum.

**Post-Secondary.** Align degree and certificate programs to better meet the needs of students and employers, and align research and investments with job creation and economic development. Align high school exit standards with university and college entrance standards to promote efficiency and eliminate and/or reduce the need for remedial education.

**Adult Education.** Increase state funding for Adult Basic Education beyond the minimum amount required for Texas to receive federal funding for the programs.

**Teacher Quality.** Implement and expand Teacher Quality Initiative programs to improve outcomes and efficiencies at every level of the education continuum.

*The Texas Association of Workforce Boards (TAWB) is an association of Texas' 28 local workforce development boards. The workforce boards are required by law to have a majority of private business representatives serving on them. As such, these board members represent various industries driving the Texas economy: manufacturing, banking, health care, transportation, finance, construction and other sectors. TAWB, in conjunction with local workforce development boards, seeks to identify future workforce needs and trends affecting Texas employers, and to provide strategic direction to meet those needs. In addition to issues impacting the workforce today, a primary focus of TAWB is the development of strategic policy for workforce education and training to ensure that the state's future workforce will meet the needs of industry.*

*Recommendations are extracted from TAWB 2014 Education Paper, **The Workforce in Texas: Aligning Education to Meet the Needs of Texas Employers**. For more information about TAWB or this paper, please contact Executive Director Greg Vaughn at 214-290-1019 or [greg.vaughn@tawb.org](mailto:greg.vaughn@tawb.org).*