Overview of the Texas Workforce Investment Council and its Middle-Skill STEM Industry-Based Certification Initiative

Presentation to the Texas Association of Workforce Boards

August 2, 2017
Today’s Presentation and Discussion … 45 minutes

Overview of the Texas Workforce Investment Council
- Purpose
- Scope
- Role
- Members
- Functions
- Strategic planning
- Key publications

Summarize the Council’s industry-based certification initiative
- System objective in the current strategic plan
- Research basis
- Task group and recommendations
- Feedback from local boards after May 8 EDC presentation
- Process to Date and Timeline Discussion
Overview of the Texas Workforce Investment Council
Purpose

The Council is mandated to:

• Assist the Governor and the legislature with strategic planning for and evaluation of the Texas workforce system

• Promote the development of a well-educated, highly skilled workforce

• Advocate for an integrated workforce system that provides quality, relevant services to address the needs of business and workers
Council’s Scope – Texas Government Code

- Council’s scope is “workforce development”

- Workforce development includes:

  ✓ Workforce Education –
    Articulated career-path programs and the constituent courses of those programs that lead to initial or continuing licensing or certification or associate degree-level accreditation

  ✓ Workforce Training and Services
    Training and services programs that are not workforce education
The Council also serves as the State Workforce Investment Board under the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act. Under WIOA, the Council is charged with:

- Identifying workforce needs
- Reviewing services and the use of funds
- Conducting broad-based planning
- Developing standards and measures to evaluate workforce programs
- Considering workforce-related plans for endorsement and recommending to the Governor for approval
Council’s Role

• “Bookends” of the workforce system
  ▪ Facilitates connections between system partners and elements through strategic planning

• System perspective
  ▪ Focuses on intersections between various parts of the system
  ▪ Determines how outcomes affect the entire system

• Advocates for and supports a systemic approach through:
  ▪ Development and dissemination of Council products
  ▪ Recommendations to the Governor
  ▪ System initiatives and demonstration projects
Members

14 members appointed by the Governor (six-year staggered terms):
- 5 representing business (Chair)
- 5 representing organized labor
- 3 representing education
- 1 representing community-based organizations

5 ex officio members representing statutory agencies:
- Executive Director of Economic Development and Tourism
- Commissioner of Texas Education Agency
- Executive Commissioner of the Health and Human Services Commission
- Commissioner of Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Executive Director of the Texas Workforce Commission
Workforce System Partner Agencies

- Economic Development and Tourism, Office of the Governor
- Health and Human Services Commission
- Texas Department of Criminal Justice
  - Windham School District
- Texas Education Agency
- Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
- Texas Juvenile Justice Department
- Texas Veterans Commission
- Texas Workforce Commission

**bold = member agency**
Council Statutory Functions

- System strategic planning and capacity building
- Evaluation and performance measurement
- Research and continuous improvement
- Review of state and local plans
Strategic Planning

- Develop and recommend to the Governor and report to the legislature a single strategic plan that establishes the framework for the budgeting and operation of the workforce development system.

- Include in the strategic plan goals, objectives, and performance measures for the workforce development system that involve programs of all state agencies that administer workforce programs:
  - Identify each agency responsible
  - Include a time frame for the implementation
  - Include performance measures
THE TEXAS WORKFORCE SYSTEM
STRATEGIC PLAN
FY 2016–FY 2023

Texas Workforce Investment Council
The Texas Workforce Investment Council is charged with recommending the state WIOA plan, local workforce board plans, and state and local plan modifications to the governor for approval.

In considering a recommendation for approval, the Council reviews:

- the state plan to ensure the plan both addresses the planning requirements set by the Department of Labor and aligns with statewide goals and objectives articulated in the Texas workforce system strategic plan.

- each board plan to ensure that local goals and objectives are consistent with the statewide goals and objectives in the system strategic plan.

*Texas Government Code 2308.101(5), 2308.302(a), and 2308.304(a)(b)(4)*

*The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act 101(d)(1) and 102(c)(3)(A)*
Examples of Products

Veterans in Texas: A Demographic Study

Careers: Career Technical Education and Outcomes in Texas High Schools: A Monograph

Mature Workers in Texas: A Demographic Study

Texas Workforce System Program Directory

The Gig Economy in the U.S.
Summary of the Council’s Industry-Based Certification Initiative and Proposed Timeline
Foundation of the Strategic System Initiative

The Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan FY 2016-FY 2023

Goal Area 1: Focus on Employers

System Objective: Expand Licensure and Industry Certification

System Strategy: Use third-party, industry-based certifications where relevant as an education or training outcome to connect graduate competencies to job skill requirements.

Five Partner Agencies with Actions and Performance Measures:
• Texas Education Agency
• Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
• Texas Veterans Commission
• Texas Workforce Commission
• The Windham School District (Texas Criminal Justice Department)
Overview of the Research

Summary of Council Research
Industry-Based Certifications for Middle-Skill STEM Occupations in Texas

**Report 1:**
Defining and Capturing Information and Data for Industry-Based Certifications

**Report 2:**
Defining Middle-Skill STEM Occupations in Texas

**Report 3:**
Linking Middle-Skill STEM Occupations and Related Industry-Based Certifications
Industry-Based Certification - Working Definition

An industry-based certification is the result of a voluntary process, through which an individual is assessed by an independent, third-party certifying entity using predetermined standards for knowledge, skills, and competencies, resulting in a time-limited award that is nationally recognized and applicable to a specific occupation.

Defining Characteristics
- Recognized by industry
- National scope
- Third-party assessed
- Independent of any education provider
Classifying STEM occupations
• 9 organizations, 11 STEM-defining sources
• 257 total identified STEM occupations

Classifying middle-skill STEM occupations
• 257 STEM occupations + DOL education/training assignments
• 84 middle-skill STEM occupations

Identifying Texas middle-skill STEM occupations
• 84 middle-skill STEM + 13 additional middle-skill STEM-related
• 97 Texas middle-skill STEM occupations
Certification Identification Results

• About 1,500 unique certifications from over 300 national certifying organizations identified for the 97 middle-skill STEM occupations

• Approximately 500 certifications unique to IT, reduces to approximately 84 occupations if excluded

• List of certifications requires further examination to identify which third-party, industry-based certifications are key in Texas

➢ Requirement articulated by the Council: reduce based on value to employers.
System Strategic Initiative Task Group (July 2016)

Employer Representatives (2)
Tom Halbouty, Retired, Pioneer Natural Resources (task group chair)
Steve Boecking, Hillwood Properties

Agency Representatives (6)
Doyle Fuchs, Labor Market and Career Information, Texas Workforce Commission
Quentin Suffren, Texas Education Agency
Dr. Garry Tomerlin, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
Connie Simon, Texas Juvenile Justice Department
Tim Shatto, Texas Veterans Commission
Dr. Clint Carpenter, Windham School District, Texas Department of Criminal Justice

External Stakeholder Representatives (4)
Pat Bubb, Rio Grande Valley Linking Economic and Academic Development
Robin Painovich, Career and Technology Association of Texas
Jacob Fraire, Texas Association of Community Colleges
Mike Sandroussi, Craft Training Center of the Coastal Bend
Charge to the Task Group

Recommend process to reduce research results through regional employer feedback on value of industry-based certification.
Goal of Employer Feedback = Value Proposition

“Value” Question

All things being equal, if two job applicants possess the same educational credentials and job experience, but one applicant has earned a third-party, industry-based certification that is relevant to the position, would the certification provide evidence for preference in hiring?
Preliminary Analysis and Preparation Steps (4) by the Council staff:

1. Identify demand and target middle-skill STEM occupations (MSSO) by local workforce development areas from board plans.

2. Assign relevant MSSOs to multiple LWDAs for feedback.
   - Goal: minimum 4; not to exceed 15 MSSOs for any single area

3. For those MSSOs with “0” LWDAs, identify projected openings (BLS LMI 2024) in descending order for use in assignment decision. Growth ≥ 10 percent

4. Based on 2 and 3, prepare regional profiles by LWDA, including:
   - Assigned occupations, with industry-based certifications and certifying entity information
   - Suggested process considerations: rural and urban, number of employers and time consideration, and output specification (Excel) for final documentation for transmittal to the Council
TG Recommendation: Regional Employer Feedback

Final steps at the regional level post-receipt of regional profile from previous step 4:

5. Implement regional employer feedback process.
   • LWDB determines all aspects of regional process based on regional profile and process considerations.
   • LWDB “shortcuts” feedback on specific certifications where their value to regional employers has already been verified.

6. Based on results of previous board work and new input from employers, prepare MSSO and valued industry-based certification list and forward to Council in specified format.
1. Interest in assisting the Council?

2. Incorporation of LWDB work on industry-based certifications to ensure non-duplication?

3. Thoughts on regional feedback with regard to flexibility and effectiveness?

4. Other opportunities or barriers the Council needs to consider?

5. Timing:
   - Of the amount of time for feedback from employers?
   - Of the potential implementation of a regional feedback process?

6. Desirability of biennial refresh?
27 local boards responded

27 volunteered to assist
Interest in assisting the Council?

We definitely will assist in this important project. We haven’t done as much work as we would like in this area and would like to do more.

We are very interested in participating and have an employer led consortium that would be happy to provide feedback.

You can count us in. We look forward to the opportunity to work with you and the other partners.

We are absolutely interested in participating. Please count us in.
Interest in assisting the Council?

We support the Council’s initiative and stand ready to assist in getting you feedback from employers.

We realize there will be work involved, but this is definitely worth it. We are certainly interested in participating in this effort. Please count us in!

We are a small Board, so our input is important, but larger Boards will have more impact. Willing to help if needed.

This is a solid initiative focused on meeting a real need of our “workforce system”. We are in.
Incorporation of LWDB work on industry-based certifications to ensure non-duplication?

• We will be happy to supply the work we did on industry-based certifications based on our demand list last year.

• Yes, yes….

• Good idea.

• We’d be happy to share the programs/projects we are developing.
Thoughts on regional feedback with regard to flexibility and effectiveness?

• We think the regional employer feedback is an excellent pursuit for the state followed by marketing of those resulting credentials to employers within the industry(ies) for those occupations.

• Many employers, especially small employers, are too busy working on their businesses to know that some of these credentials exist. Yet, finding individuals with credentials specific to their business could be invaluable.

• Must be flexible in gathering employer feedback.

• Most initiative (intentionally and mostly unintentionally) favor the I-35 corridor. Many times, there are good ideas but we cannot find the employer base or meet size requirements to qualify.

• To the extent regions can have flexibility is greatly appreciated.
Feedback Received from Local Boards

Other opportunities or barriers the Council needs to consider?

• None at this time.

• Nothing comes to mind at the moment.
Timing:

Of the amount of time for feedback from employers/implementation of process?

- We would like two months for this process especially if we get the higher number of MSSOs.
- 3-to 4 weeks
- Our board meets every other month, so would need several months to get organized feedback.
- We can commit to providing feedback within 30-45 days.
- Depends on the number of occupations to be validated and the industries involved but we estimate 4 to 6 weeks to fully vet 8-10 occupations.
- We can work fairly quickly on both because we have a mechanism in place.
- 60 days
Desirability of biennial refresh?

• I think this is a must.

• This would keep the information fresh.

• Yes, yes…

• We currently refresh our demand occupations biennially; so we could incorporate this process also.

• (D)epending on effort and initial result, it may have to change based on emerging trends or very 3-4 years…not sure if the trends change quick enough to warrant every two years.

• At a maximum
Consultation and Input

✓ Step 1 – May TAWB meeting
TWIC provides research background and process information to the EDs. Frames questions that will assist TWIC to refine the proposed process.

✓ Step 2 – June and July
TWIC revisits and modifies process, based on EDs input. TWIC sends revisions to EDs for review and comment. (Note: no process changes recommended)

✓ Step 3 – August TAWB meeting
TWIC briefs TAWB EDs and Chairs. TWIC seeks input on possible implementation timeline.

➢ Step 4 – September 8
Based on outcomes of step 3 and discussion at the Sept TWIC meeting, TWIC provides final process timeline to the 27 local boards participating in the initiative.
Proposed Timeline for Discussion

➢ Step 5 – By Late September
Council staff forwards regional profiles to the 27 local boards.

➢ Step 6 – October, November, December
Boards plan, implement, and finalize process for feedback from regional employers.

➢ Step 7 – December-January
Boards consolidate findings and forward to the Council in original profile Excel spreadsheet.

➢ Step 8 – January-February
Council staff aggregate 27 finalized profile results for presentation to the Council at its March quarterly meeting. Following the meeting, results will be published for system stakeholders.
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