

**21st Century Workforce Development Programs
Distinction Designation Committee**

November 2012- March 2013

House Bill (HB) 3 by the 81st Texas Legislature, 2009, added Subchapter G, Distinction Designation, to the Texas public school accountability system, in Chapter 39, Public Accountability. Under Texas Education Code (TEC) §39.203 and §39.204 of this subchapter, the commissioner of education was required to establish standards for considering campuses for distinction designations in five areas: academic achievement, fine arts, physical education, 21st century workforce development, and second language acquisition. The statute also required that the commissioner establish separate committees comprised of educators, professionals, and community members and leaders with subject matter expertise in relevant content areas to develop criteria for each distinction designation. Each committee was required to include

- individuals who practice as professionals in the content area relevant to the distinction designation, as applicable;
- individuals with subject matter expertise in the content area relevant to the distinction designation;
- educators with subject matter expertise in the content area relevant to the distinction designation; and
- community leaders, including leaders from the business community.

The 21st Century Workforce Development Programs Distinction Designation Committee was charged with the development of criteria for campus-level distinction designations to recognize achievement in 21st century workforce development programs. In developing criteria for the 21st century workforce development programs distinction designation, the committee was tasked with identifying a variety of indicators measuring excellence and with considering categories for the designation based on the campus level of the program (elementary, middle school, and high school) and student enrollment.

Between November 2012 and March 2013, the 21st Century Workforce Development Programs Distinction Designation Committee was convened for a total of three meetings held at the Texas Education Agency (TEA). Over the course of the meetings, the committee began the process of identifying indicators and measures for the designation and created a list of proposed indicators. Given the difference in structure between elementary and secondary schools, the committee determined that different criteria would likely need to be established to differentiate distinctions at the different campus levels. Challenges the committee faced for indicator development included identifying how to measure and incorporate a different inputs, such as teacher qualifications, student participation (in addition to or in lieu of performance), and the variety of opportunities that different districts provide to students in one framework. Data collection limitations, such as the availability of common statewide data sources, were also considered.

It was determined by the committee at the conclusion of the third meeting in March 2013, that the proposed indicators would require additional refinement and decision making from committee members prior to submitting the indicators to the commissioner for review and approval. Next steps were to include identifying data points and collection options and compiling preliminary collection outcomes to model the proposed indicators and evaluate their accuracy, validity, and feasibility as final criteria. It was also a recommendation that stakeholder feedback should be solicited from external stakeholders and professional organizations, such as Career and Technology Association of Texas (CTAT) and the Texas Computer Education Association (TCEA).

Prior to further committee action, the 83rd Texas Legislature, 2013, passed House Bill (HB) 5, eliminating the requirement that the commissioner award campus-level distinction designations and adding TEC, §39.0545, which requires school districts to evaluate a campus's performance overall and in individual performance categories. Districts are required to use criteria developed by local committees to evaluate their campuses in each of the performance categories identified in HB 5, which include 21st Century Workforce Development programs. In light of the changes resulting from HB 5, the work of the 21st Century Workforce Development Programs Distinction Designation Committee was discontinued.

Due to the change in statutory requirements, no final committee recommendations were made; however, to conclude the process, working notes from committee meetings were compiled. The following table reflects the final working notes of the 21st Century Workforce Development Programs Distinction Designation Committee.

Proposed Indicators	Comments
Course Based Participation/Performance Outcomes	
Student participation/performance in advanced level courses	<p>The committee identified types of courses that provide opportunities for the development of skills and knowledge necessary to enter the 21st century workforce. To address concerns that some schools may be motivated to steer students towards certain courses with the expectation of obtaining a distinction, the committee agreed that these indicators should either be limited to or at least incorporate student <i>performance</i> rather than to be based solely on <i>participation</i>.</p> <p>*Proposed as an indicator based on proposed legislation during the 83rd Legislature, HB 5, which would replace the Minimum High School Program (MHSP), Recommended High School Program (RHSP), and Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP) with the foundation program and allow students to pursue additional endorsements. The governor signed HB 5 in June 2013 and the commissioner of education is required to adopt a transition plan to implement the law beginning with the 2014-2015 school year.</p>
Student participation/performance in dual enrollment courses	
Student participation/performance in internships, practicums, and/or capstone courses	
Student participation/performance in one or more state endorsement*	
Student participation/performance in career and technical education (CTE) courses	
Student participation/performance in middle school in high school courses	
Student participation/performance in career explorations in middle school (Chapter 127, CTE)	
Career and Technical Education (CTE)	
CTE program quality	<p>The committee discussed the role of career and technical education (CTE) programs in developing the 21st century workforce, but determined that the designation should not be limited to indicators solely related to CTE and its programs of study. Advantages in incorporating CTE indicators include the availability of multiple data points from the USDE Perkins core indicators and the state performance measures in the Career and Technical Education Report (CTER).</p>
Certifications/licensures, end of program and industry recognized (TBD)	
CTE students statewide assessment instrument performance	
Campus/Student participation in career and technical student organizations (CTSO)	
Growth in of CTE concentrators	
Technology and Media Literacy	
Technology proficiency of grade 8 students	<p>Technology and media literacy were considered key milestones in progress toward 21st century workforce development and readiness; however the committee discussed various data limitations to these indicators. For example, although there is a reporting requirement for the percent of technology proficient grade 8 students for STaR chart, assessment instruments vary widely among school districts. The committee also discussed considering allocations of dedicated staff assigned to key areas and access to technology resources (anytime, anywhere for every student) as possible indicators for recognition.</p>
Computer access and resources	
Texas Virtual School Network access	
Ratio of staff roles (such as certified technology instructor, librarians, etc.) to number of students and/or full time equivalent values	
Campus performance	
Graduation rates	<p>Campus graduation and drop-out rates were identified as potential indicators of campus achievement in preparing students for the 21st century workforce.</p>
Drop-out rates	
Services provided	
Guidance and counseling programs/career counseling	<p>The committee expressed interest in recognizing innovative programs and services provided at the campus level. The difficulty in operationalizing such opportunities as criteria at the state level was also discussed.</p>
Personal graduation plans	
Leadership development	
Field and project-based and experiential learning opportunities	
Texas Performance Standards Project	

Community engagement	
Business advisory boards	The committee expressed an interest in articulation between campuses and the community workforce, universities, and community and junior colleges. Collaborations with local business and industry were considered, but the lack of common statewide data sources was also taken into account.
Program area based scholarships	
Vertical alignment with local postsecondary institutions	