

From Credentials to Careers

How the 2025 Texas Legislature Advanced a Career-Ready Workforce



Texas Is Expanding Access to Workforce-Aligned Credentials and Career Opportunity

The 89th Legislature made significant progress toward preparing Texans for high-demand careers. Lawmakers advanced reforms to modernize community college finance, expand access to affordable bachelor's degrees, and better align education more directly with workforce needs. The Legislature built on prior reforms (notably HB 8 from 2023) with data-driven, future-focused investments. Every legislative win highlighted here reflects legislation championed or supported by Texas 2036 — from improving education-to-employment pipelines to expanding access to affordable, flexible credentials of value.

A Multi-Faceted Policy Approach Provides Opportunity for All

Key legislative reforms support Texans at every stage of the credential-to-career journey – from college access and flexible degree pathways to workforce mobility and advancement.

Refined Community College Funding to Focus on Student Return on Investment SB 1786 by Sen. Creighton & Rep. VanDeaver

Texas further refined its outcomes-based funding model to ensure that community colleges are rewarded for helping students earn credentials that lead to high-value careers.

Long-Term Investment in Technical Education SJR 59 by Sen. Birdwell & Rep. Lambert

This constitutional amendment proposes a permanent endowment to support the capital needs of the Texas State Technical College system, allowing the expansion of critical technical education programs and credentials.

Better Aligned Community College Programming with Local Labor Markets SB 1786 (cont.)

Community colleges will receive locally-tailored labor market projections and higher quality workforce data, allowing them to better adapt programs to meet the needs of their regions.

Improving High School Career Education HB 120 by Rep. K. Bell & Sen. Schwertner HB 2 by Rep. Buckley & Sen. Creighton

These two bills set bold new career-readiness goals for Texas high schools, scale high quality high school models, and better align the high school experience to the workforce needs of the future.

Skills-Based Hiring in State Government HB 3923 by Rep. K. Bell & Sen. Parker

Texas is advancing skills-based hiring by directing state agencies to remove bachelor's degree requirements for positions where a degree is not essential.

Easier Licensing for Skilled Workers HB 11 by Rep. Phelan & Sen. Middleton

To make it easier for skilled professionals to enter the Texas workforce, the state is streamlining license recognition in fields such as HVAC technicians, electricians, and plumbers across state lines.

Simplified College Navigation Tools SB 2314 by Sen. Creighton & Rep. Wilson

Texas invested in tools to help students better understand their options after high school and navigate the college application process more easily, particularly through enhanced digital platforms that reduce complexity and expand reach.

Affordable, Flexible Bachelor's Degrees HB 4848 by Rep. Harris-Davila & Sen. A. Hinojosa

Expands access to low-cost, competency-based bachelor's degrees in high-demand fields by requiring every public higher education system to offer at least one program that's flexible, career-aligned, and priced at no more than half the average cost of a traditional degree.

For questions,
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