
Data Sources and Methodology

Primary Data Sources

- Texas Education Agency (TEA), Texas Academy Performance Reports, Available at: tea.texas.gov/school-and-district-leaders/accountability/academic-accountability/performance-reporting/texas-academic-performance-reports
(Increase in number of postsecondary credentials earned since 2018 on Page 1)
- Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), Community College Finance (CCF) Close-Out Funding Model, FY2024, “Outcomes” tab — Credentials of Value awarded by community colleges. Available at: highered.texas.gov/community-college-finance/funding-models-tools-and-resources/
(Credentials of Value Metrics on Page 1)
- Texas Public Education Information Resource (TPEIR), Employment and Earnings by Education, joint TEA/THECB/TWC Tri-Agency data — median quarterly wages by education level. Available at: texaseducationinfo.org/Home/Topic/employment_and_earnings_by_education
(College Experience Wage Premium on Page 1)
- Texas Higher Education Data (THECB), Dual Credit and Total Enrollments, Fall Semesters 1999–2024. Available at: txhighereddata.org/other-topics/dual-credit-data/
(Increase in Dual Credit on Page 1)
- TEA, PEIMS (Public Education Information Management System) Standard Reports — statewide K-12 enrollment, demographic, and graduate counts. Available at: tea.texas.gov/reports-and-data/student-data/standard-reports/peims-standard-reports
(Texas Sized School System Metrics on Page 2)
- Texas Education Agency (TEA), *Annual Report 2023*. Available at: tea.texas.gov/about-tea/newsroom/annual-reports/annual-report-2023
(Number of PTECH and ECHS Campuses on Page 2)
- Texas Education Agency (TEA), *Rural Pathway Excellence Partnership Program (R-PEP)* — program allowing rural school districts to form multi-district college and career pathway partnerships. Available at: tea.texas.gov/school-and-district-information/district-initiatives/rural-pathway-excellence-partnership-program-r-pep
(Number of Rural Pathway Partnerships on Page 2)
- Forthcoming peer-reviewed research, J. Jacob Kirksey and colleagues (Texas Tech University, University of North Texas, Texas A&M University, and UT San Antonio).
(CCMR Wage and Completion Outcomes on Page 2)
- Kirksey, J. J., Freeman, J. A., Edwards, W., Holzman, B., & Lee, H. B. (2026). *The Uneven Promise of Readiness: Which College and Career Readiness Indicators Actually Predict Success After High School?* Texas Tech University, Center for

Innovative Research in Change, Leadership, and Education Available at: ttu-ir.tdl.org

(CCMR Completion Outcomes on Page 3)

- THECB Accountability System — community college and university enrollment and credential completions. Available at: txhigheredaccountability.org/AcctPublic

(Texas Higher Education Landscape Metrics on Page 4)

- Texas Workforce Commission, Labor Market and Career Information Department, *Texas Self-Sufficient Wage*, based on data from the Center for Women's Welfare, University of Washington School of Social Work, and U.S. Census Bureau population estimates. Available at: lmi.twc.texas.gov/txsswage/texasselfsufficientwage.asp

(Texans Living in County with SSW higher than \$30,000 on Page 5)

- Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), Labor Market Information / monthly employment news releases — statewide nonfarm employment and labor force totals. Available at: twc.texas.gov/news

(Texas Workforce Metrics on Page 6)

- TWC, Local Workforce Development Board directory — count and structure of the state's 28 local workforce boards. Available at: twc.texas.gov/agency/workforce-development-boards

(Texas Workforce Metrics on Page 6)

- Texas Legislative Budget Board (LBB), Fiscal Size-up, 2026-27 Biennium — federal workforce funding for the biennium. Available at: lbb.texas.gov/Documents/Publications/Fiscal_SizeUp/9046_Fiscal_Size-up_26-27_Biennium.pdf

(Texas Workforce Metrics on Page 6)

- Texas Workforce Investment Council (TWIC), Evaluation 2025 — Texans served annually through the state's workforce programs. Available at: gov.texas.gov/organization/twic/work

(Texas Workforce Metrics on Page 6)

All sources accessed in March 2026.

Calculations

Postsecondary credentials earned in high school (532% increase). Compares total credentials earned by high school students — industry-based certifications, Level I/II certificates, and associate degrees combined — in 2018 (23,610) and 2024 (149,297): $(149,297 - 23,610) \div 23,610 = 532\%$.

Credentials of Value (140,000 awarded; 37% in high-demand fields). THECB's FY2024 Close-Out Funding Model reports six Credential of Value categories, each with a "Not High Demand" and "High Demand" count. Summing both columns across all six categories (excluding "licensure/no credential") yields 139,307 total credentials (rounded to 140,000); the 51,080 awarded in high-demand fields represent 36.7% of that total (rounded to 37%).

Wage premium for college experience (7.2% to 85.3% higher wages). Compares median 4th-quarter-2023 wages for Texans aged 25–30 across postsecondary attainment levels — from some college through an advanced degree — against wages for high school graduates with no postsecondary experience. The range reflects the lowest and highest premiums observed across those attainment levels.

Increase in dual credit enrollment (35% since 2018). Compares total dual credit enrollment at Texas higher education institutions in Fall 2018 (185,255) and Fall 2024 (249,328): $(249,328 - 185,255) \div 185,255 = 34.6\%$, rounded to 35%.

Self-sufficiency wage threshold (89% of Texans in counties where the standard exceeds \$30,000). Each Texas county's Individual (single adult, no dependents) Hourly Self-Sufficient Wage was compared to \$14.42/hour — the hourly equivalent of the Credential of Value formula's \$30,000 annual threshold at 2,080 full-time hours/year. In 104 of 254 counties the self-sufficient wage exceeds this rate. Weighted by 2023 Census county population estimates, those counties are home to 27,009,817 of Texas's 30,503,301 residents (88.5%, rounded to 89%) — meaning the \$30,000 threshold falls below the local self-sufficiency standard for roughly 89% of Texans. The individual standard is the most conservative comparison; family configurations yield higher self-sufficiency wages.