

TSSB ORIGIN AND MISSION

WHAT IS THE TSSB?

The TSSB was established by the Texas Legislature in 1995 as an 11-member advisory board to the Governor and the Legislature.

The members, who are appointed by the Governor, consist of:

- ★ 7 business and industry representatives
- ★ 2 labor representatives
- ★ 1 secondary education representative
- ★ 1 postsecondary education representative

WHAT IS THE TSSB'S MISSION?

The TSSB is charged with the development of a statewide system of industry-defined and industry-recognized skill standards for all major skilled, sub-baccalaureate occupations with strong employment and earnings opportunities.

WHAT ARE THE TSSB'S MAJOR FUNCTIONS?

Skill Standards Development and Recognition

- ★ Convenes industry groups to develop new skill standards and validates existing, nationally-established industry standards.
- ★ Recognizes skill standards based on TSSB-established validity and reliability criteria.

Skill Standards Awareness and Usage

- ★ Promotes the use of standards and credentials.
- ★ Assists education and training providers to use skill standards in their workforce programs.

Skill Attainment: Certification and Credentialing

- ★ Facilitates the portability of skills by recognizing standards and credentials from other states and nations.

This report lists the TSSB's accomplishments and progress in each of these areas in fiscal year (FY) 2009, followed by a list of challenges for the future.

Texas Skill Standards Board
P.O. Box 2241
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ANNUAL REPORT

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A MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

On behalf of the Texas Skill Standards Board (TSSB), I am pleased to present this annual report of progress in fulfilling our mission to the Governor and the Legislature. A few highlights deserve mention. It has been another banner year for skill standards use in community and technical colleges (CTC). The TSSB recognized 12 CTC programs, exceeding last year's record number by one third. I attribute this gain in momentum to two initiatives.

The Skill Standards-Based Curriculum Development Incentive Projects, which for several years have provided a small monetary award to integrate skill standards into curriculum, continue to be a boon to program recognition by drawing attention to the value of that designation. At the same time, certificates of recognition from the Governor of Texas acknowledged the efforts of the CTC program faculty that are behind the success of skill standards-based curricula.

Neither of these initiatives would be possible without our dedicated partners. Once again, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board provided funding in fiscal year 2009 for the competitive incentive projects, and Del Mar College stepped forward to administer them. In addition, the Texas Council of College Instructional Leaders presented the Governor's certificates at the public forum of its fall 2008 conference where the faculty members were honored among their CTC peers.

The incentive projects were influential in another way. They provided motivation to develop skill standards in the emerging and evolving occupational areas of nanotechnology and solar energy technology, both of which are important to the Texas economy. And finally, more colleges took advantage of the option to affix the gold, embossed "TSSB-recognized" seal to their graduates' credentials. I am confident that this visible symbol of program recognition, coupled with implementation of the TSSB's employer outreach strategy, will continue to grow the Texas skill standards system in the future.

Thank you for your attention and interest in skill standards.


Wayne Oswald

Texas Skill Standards Board

SKILL STANDARDS DEVELOPMENT AND RECOGNITION

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Recognized Two New Texas Skill Standards

- ★ Nanotechnology Technician
- ★ Distributed Renewable Solar Energy Technician

Translated from job analyses into skill standards and validated by industry subject matter experts from Texas, these standards development processes were facilitated by Texas State Technical College Waco, with TSSB technical assistance, under Type 2 incentive projects, which granted \$20,000 upon completion of the deliverables. The deliverables included development and TSSB recognition of the skill standards, integration of the standards into the curriculum of the related Associate of Applied Science Degree programs, and TSSB program recognition.

Recognized Two Existing Industry-Defined Skill Standards

- ★ Power Generation
- ★ Photonics

Developed by industry experts and facilitated, respectively, by Washington State's Centralia College Center of Excellence and OP-TEC, the National Center for Optics and Photonics Education, these standards were endorsed for TSSB recognition by Texas industry representatives.

Extended Recognition for 12 Skill Standards

- ★ Electronic Game Content Development
- ★ Highly Automated [Manufacturing] Systems Technician
- ★ Information Technology specialties: Cybersecurity, Database Development and Administration, Digital Media, Enterprise Systems Analysis and Integration, Network Design and Administration, Programming/Software Engineering, Technical Support, Technical Writing, and Web Development and Administration
- ★ Telecommunications Maintenance Technician

The TSSB requires standards to be reviewed at least once every five years to maintain their currency and relevance.

SKILL STANDARDS AWARENESS AND USAGE

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Improved Functionality of TSSB Website

The TSSB's website, as a primary communication vehicle for its mission, was comprehensively reviewed for user navigability. As a result, format and structural modifications were implemented and the content was streamlined and updated, as needed.

Collaborated on Successful Incentive Projects

The TSSB collaborated with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), which provided funding, and Del Mar College, which served as administrator, on another round of competitive incentive projects. Nine colleges took advantage of the opportunity to earn an incentive award, ranging from \$1,500 to \$20,000 depending on deliverables, including integrating skill standards into curriculum and applying for TSSB program recognition. All the colleges were successful in achieving the project deliverables and receiving the award.

Revised User's Guide for Skill Standards Use

The TSSB's primary guidance document on integrating skill standards into CTC curriculum was updated. The improvements reflected modifications to the process resulting from experience gained and lessons learned from the first renewals of program recognition.

SYSTEM PROGRESS

Began Implementation of Employer Outreach Strategy

In FY 2008, the TSSB developed a strategy to meet its legislative mandate to promote the use of standards and credentials among employers. The strategy involves educating industry advisory committee members (IAC) of CTC workforce education programs about the value of skill standards and program recognition. In FY 2009, TSSB began implementation of the strategy by identifying an initial list of CTC IACs to approach that met specific selection criteria, and developing related support materials.

Conducted Skill Standards Usage Workshops

The TSSB provided technical assistance sessions on-site to five colleges that were incentive project recipients, including suggested steps on how to integrate skill standards into curriculum and what program recognition requires.

SKILL ATTAINMENT: CERTIFICATION AND CREDENTIALING

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Recognized 12 Community/Technical College Programs

The TSSB continued to recognize CTC programs that integrated skill standards into curriculum, including:

- ★ Process Technology Associate of Applied Science (AAS) Degree at Alvin Community College
- ★ Visual Communications-Communication Design AAS Degree and Web Design and Development Level 2 Certificate at Brookhaven College
- ★ Geographic Information Systems (GIS) AAS Degree at Lee College
- ★ Logistics Management AAS Degree at Lone Star College-Cy-Fair
- ★ Visual Communications-Multimedia AAS Degrees at Lone Star Colleges Cy-Fair, Kingwood, and North Harris
- ★ Biotechnology AAS Degree at Temple College
- ★ Nanotechnology and Solar Energy Technology AAS Degrees at Texas State Technical College Waco
- ★ Computer Programming AAS Degree at Wharton County Junior College

Six of these institutions applied for program recognition under the TSSB's replication policy, increasing the number of colleges with common, skill standards-based curricula, in the following program areas: Process Technology at four colleges, Biotechnology (4), GIS (3), and two Visual Communications specialties (4 and 3).

Developed Program Recognition Procedures Manual

The standard operating procedures behind the program recognition process, from application and renewal to credentialing option, were documented, with associated forms and templates.

SYSTEM PROGRESS

Increased College Participation in Credentialing Strategy

Five additional colleges opted to participate in the TSSB credentialing strategy which allows them to affix a gold embossed seal to the credentials of every TSSB-recognized program graduate. These seals signal to employers that the program's graduates have been taught to industry-defined standards. In total, seals were affixed to the credentials of 165 graduates in FY 2009.

CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE

RECOGNITION AND MAINTENANCE OF SKILL STANDARDS

In FY 2010, the TSSB will look for occupational areas in emerging and evolving technologies that are important to the Texas economy, such as Wind Energy Technicians, for which to facilitate development of new skill standards, in accordance with its second legislative mandate. In addition, convening a Texas industry group to enhance the existing Power Generation skill standards so that they address fossil fuel, as well as hydro-electric, plant operators will be explored.

PROMOTION OF STANDARDS TO EMPLOYERS

As in previous years, the TSSB's fourth legislative mandate to promote the use of standards and credentials among employers is an ongoing challenge. Because the Texas skill standards system is voluntary, employer support is crucial to its success. In FY 2010, the TSSB will implement its strategy to educate employers on CTC industry advisory committees about TSSB-recognized programs that incorporate industry-defined standards into their curricula and which is symbolized by the "TSSB-recognized" credential seal. Engaging employers that are already committed to quality workforce education will hopefully lead to them hiring more from recognized programs and in turn, an increase in recognized programs.

FACILITATION OF SKILL STANDARDS USAGE

The need to ensure that CTC curricula align with employer skill requirements is a primary TSSB focus. To meet that need, the TSSB will continue to implement targeted strategies to increase the numbers of recognized programs that meet industry-defined standards. In FY 2010, those strategies will again include an awards ceremony at the Texas Council of College Instructional Leaders conference to honor and highlight, among their peers, the value of TSSB-recognized programs. Also, the TSSB will take advantage of monetary incentives, such as the competitive projects funded by the THECB through Perkins state leadership funds in the past, to encourage CTC pursuit of program recognition.