

## **TSSB Origin and Mission**

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### **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.

**Texas Skill Standards Board**  
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## **A Message from the Chair**

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On behalf of the Texas Skill Standards Board (TSSB) I am pleased to present this report of our progress during fiscal year (FY) 2011. Over the course of the year our partnerships with community and technical college entities such as the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, Del Mar College, and the Texas Community College Instructional Leaders (TCCIL) have been lucrative. Perkins funding for skill standards-based curriculum projects has provided monetary incentive to new colleges to become involved. And, participating as an awards presenter at the annual TCCIL conference increased TSSB visibility to a wide audience of potential new community college partners. It all resulted in the development of a new set of TSSB-recognized skill standards, ten newly recognized workforce education programs, and recognition of the efforts by faculty from seven different colleges.

I am gratified and pleased to see colleges renew program recognition because it is a confirmation that colleges are testing students' mastery of skill standards competencies. It is what makes program recognition – indeed, the whole system – meaningful to employers. I am glad to see TSSB outreach leading to more geographic diversity in recognized programs throughout the state including rural areas. This year we expanded recognized programs to the northernmost, easternmost and southernmost colleges in the state. Clarendon College, Lamar State College-Orange, and the University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College, respectively, all became involved in our mission to continue to build a strong and skilled workforce to support Texas employers.

This is a report of the TSSB's accomplishments over the past year. Included are achievements by Texas colleges which deserve credit and recognition. Texas colleges are the engines of this state's economy as they strive to meet employers' need for a skilled workforce.

Respectfully Submitted,

Wayne Oswald

## Skill Standards Development and Recognition

### **Medical Office Manager Skill Standards**

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) again provided federal Perkins State Leadership discretionary grant funding to two-year colleges to facilitate the development of occupational skill standards as the vehicle to guide curriculum development. The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost College leveraged Perkins leadership funds, industry expertise, and TSSB technical assistance to develop occupational skill standards for Medical Office Managers. These skill standards describe the work functions, activities, and skills expected of medical office managers in a small medical practice environment.

### **Recognition of Two National Skill Standards**

The TSSB recognized the Lineman Skill Standards, developed in a collaborative effort between Washington State's Walla Walla Community College and industry experts, and endorsed by the Pacific Northwest Center of Excellence for Clean Energy. These standards describe the work functions, activities, and skills associated with the utility lineman occupation. They were submitted by Texas State Technical College Marshall's lineman program industry advisory committee for TSSB recognition consideration.

TSSB policy ensures that recognized skill standards are current and relevant by requiring that they be reviewed by industry experts at least every five years, and updated if necessary. In FY 2011 the Manufacturing Skill Standards Council (MSSC), a long-time partner of the TSSB, conducted a major review and update of its suite of national skill standards for the manufacturing production occupational area. The TSSB recognized the MSSC's Certified Production Technician (CPT) Skill Standards, which are the basis for the MSSC's CPT assessment and credentialing process. The CPT skill standards include four critical work functions: Safety; Quality Practices and Measurement; Manufacturing Processes and Production; and Maintenance Awareness.

## Skill Standards Awareness and Usage

### **Program Recognition Awards**

The TSSB continued to implement strategies to increase the numbers of community and technical college programs that incorporate skill standards into curriculum. For the third year in a row, the TSSB facilitated and participated in an awards ceremony at the Texas Community College Instructional Leaders conference to honor seven colleges that achieved TSSB recognition for 12 programs in FY 2010.

### **Program Recognition Renewal**

TSSB policy requires that TSSB-recognized community and technical college programs seek formal renewal of their TSSB recognition every three years. TSSB program recognition is valid for three years, at which time it may be renewed. The point of renewal is to ensure that assessments evaluate student mastery of all competencies in the skill standards. The following colleges met all of the requirements for renewal of their TSSB program recognition for another three years:

College	Program
Austin Community College	Biotechnology Associate of Applied Science (AAS) Degree
College of the Mainland	Petrochemical Process Technology AAS Degree
Del Mar College	Geographic Information Systems AAS Degree and Level 2 Certificate
Lamar Institute of Technology	Homeland Security AAS Degree
San Jacinto College, Central Campus	Process Technology AAS Degree
Texas State Technical College, Waco	Telecommunications Technology AAS Degree

### **TSSB Website Redesign**

The TSSB has long maintained an information-rich website that is an important source of information regarding skill standards in general, and the Texas Skill Standards Board in particular. The website was redesigned to include graphics, navigation changes, and compliance with disability accessibility requirements. All of the content was preserved. Please visit the website at [www.tssb.org](http://www.tssb.org).

## Skill Attainment: Certification & Credentialing

### **Newly Recognized Programs**

Achievements in the past year include continued promotion of the use of skill standards to guide curriculum development in community and technical colleges. To date, 49 workforce education programs at 27 colleges have incorporated skill standards into their curriculum and earned TSSB recognition. The following colleges took advantage of Perkins leadership funds in FY 2011 to earn this recognition:

College	Program
Clarendon	Wind Energy Associate of Applied Science (AAS) Degree Wind Technician Level 2 Certificate
Houston Community Northeast Campus	Instrumentation and Controls Engineering Technology AAS Degree Biotechnology AAS Degree
Kilgore	Process Technology – Petroleum Specialty AAS Degree
Lamar State-Orange	Process Operating Technology AAS Degree
Northwest Vista	Game Production AAS Degree 3D Animation AAS Degree
The University of Texas at Brownsville and Texas Southmost	Medical Office Management AAS Degree
Victoria	Process Technology AAS Degree

### **Common Technical Core Curriculum**

Two more colleges with process technology (P-Tech) programs adopted a common technical core of courses. A total of nine colleges now offer the common P-Tech core curriculum. In addition, two more wind technology programs now offer common technical core curriculum.

### **Increased Credential Seal Participation**

Participation in the TSSB credential seal option continued to increase. Of the 49 TSSB-recognized programs, 36 now affix this seal to their graduates' diplomas. This year a total of 487 seals were affixed to diplomas of graduates of TSSB-recognized programs. This seal signals to employers that the student has graduated from a program that teaches to industry-defined skills and knowledge.

## Challenges for the Future

### **Employer Engagement**

Employers are central to the TSSB's mission to develop and expand the Texas skill standards system. The TSSB's greatest challenge continues to be employer engagement in a system developed specifically to address their need for a skilled workforce. Employer involvement makes the system more responsive through awareness of skill standards and recruitment from recognized programs so that more colleges will use skill standards-based curriculum. Employers can initiate skill standards development projects for in-demand occupations, participate in reviews of existing skill standards to ensure ongoing accuracy, and recruit from TSSB recognized community and technical college programs.

### **Outreach for Recognized Programs**

With encouragement from this year's successes, the TSSB will continue to expand the geographic diversity of colleges with recognized programs. The TSSB will recruit and invite colleges to apply for program recognition in skill standards occupational areas where there are currently no recognized programs.

### **Common Technical Core Curriculum**

The TSSB will continue to promote common technical core courses between recognized programs in given occupational areas in order to ensure consistent learning outcomes. The goal is for employers to be confident that graduates of TSSB-recognized programs are work-ready, with skills and knowledge identified by industry as critical for workplace success.

### **Skill Standards Development**

The TSSB will continue to seek community college-associated industry advisory groups interested in participating in the development of skill standards for the occupations they represent. The TSSB will also conduct research into the development of skill standards in other areas of the country, and assess whether these standards could be of benefit to Texas employers.