

## II. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

### A. Statutory Requirements

- (i) *How funds will be used to improve or develop new career and technical education courses—*
- i. *At the secondary level that are aligned with rigorous and challenging academic content standards and student academic achievement standards adopted by the State under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended;*
  - ii. *At the postsecondary level that are relevant and challenging; and*
  - iii. *That leads to employment in high-skill, high-wage, or high-demand occupations;*

The State Board of Education (SBOE) has begun the process for reviewing the career and technical education (CTE) curriculum standards (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills/TEKS). Committees of secondary and postsecondary educators, business and industry representatives, parents and other stakeholders will meet to review the current CTE TEKS and draft any recommended revisions and updates. This process typically requires three multi-day face-to-face meetings. The SBOE will then consider adoption of those recommended changes. The revised CTE TEKS would likely be available to LEAs in the fall of 2015 with implementation expected to take place in the 2016-2017 school year.

- (l) *How Texas will report on the integration of coherent and rigorous content aligned with challenging academic standards in career and technical education programs in order to adequately evaluate the extent of such integration. [Sec. 122 (c) (1) (A)-(L)]*

Effective in 2013-2014, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) conducted a desk review of the 16 community and technical colleges with the highest scores when analyzed using risk assessment factors. In 2014-2015, THECB will conduct site visits for the five institutions with the highest risk scores, to ensure compliance and to provide technical assistance. This is a change from the prior year when all of the 15 institutions with the highest scores had a site visit. The THECB will consider an onsite visit based on any concerns arising from the desk review materials that colleges submit electronically.

The 83rd Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 215, which removed the THECB's authority to order the closure or consolidation of low producing programs at institutions of higher education. Instead, the THECB may issue recommendations for closure or consolidation to the institution and its governing board. The institution's governing board must provide to the Legislative Budget Board a response to the THECB's recommendations.

7. *Describe efforts that your agency and eligible recipients will make to—*
- (a) *Improve the academic and technical skills of students participating in career and technical education programs, including by strengthening the academic and*

*career and technical components of career and technical education programs through the **integration of academics** with career and technical education to ensure learning in--*

- i. The core academic subjects (as defined in section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended); and*
- ii. Career and technical education subjects;*

In 2013, the 83<sup>rd</sup> Texas Legislature added the Foundation High School Program to student graduation choices through passage of House Bill (HB) 5. Students who entered ninth grade before the 2014-2015 school year will have the option to choose among the three existing graduation programs and the Foundation High School Program. Students who enter ninth grade beginning in 2014-2015 will be required to meet the requirements of the Foundation High School Program; they must complete at least one endorsement area unless – after their sophomore year – they meet specific opt-out requirements. Students may enhance the Foundation High School Program in three ways:

- they may add one to five endorsements to the Foundation High School Program by pursuing specific coherent sequences of courses and completing additional credit requirements that align with the five areas;
- they may add performance acknowledgments by meeting specific benchmarks; and/or
- they may earn a distinguished level of achievement by completing at least one endorsement and Algebra II as one of the math credits.

*(c) Ensure that students who participate in career and technical education programs are taught to the same challenging academic proficiencies as taught to all other students. [Sec. 122(c)(7)(A)-(C)]*

As described in section 7.(a), the 83<sup>rd</sup> Texas Legislature passed HB 5, establishing the Foundation High School Program, which will be available for all high school students beginning in 2014-2015 and required for all students entering ninth grade beginning with the 2014-2015 school year.

Texas is phasing out the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) tests and implementing the State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR) end-of-course (EOC) assessments. Students who entered the ninth grade in the 2011-2012 school year are the first cohort of secondary students who took the STAAR EOCs instead of the TAKS. House Bill 5 also reduced from 15 to 5 the number of EOCs students must complete in order to graduate. The five remaining STAAR EOCs are English I, English II, Algebra I, U.S. History, and Biology. Since Texas reports accountability data on a one-year lag, this change will affect Texas 1S1 and 1S2 reporting beginning with the 2016 Perkins consolidated annual report (CAR).

These graduation and assessment requirements apply to all secondary students (CTE and non-CTE students).

**B. Other Department Requirements**

4. *Describe the competitive basis or formula to be used to award reserve funds under section 112(c) of the Act.*

Under Public Law 109-270, Title I, Career and Technical Education Assistance to the States, Part A, Allotment and Allocation, Section 112 (c), the THECB may award up to 10 percent of the Basic formula funding for career and technical activities as "Perkins Reserve Grants." The THECB may distribute reserve funds to eligible recipients in an alternative manner determined by state for projects for CTE activities in rural areas, areas with high percentages of CTE students, or areas with high numbers of CTE students.

For 2013-2014, the THECB published a request for applications (RFA) to invite public post-secondary institutions to submit a proposal under this RFA to receive a Carl D. Perkins Reserve grant for the development and implementation of a Career and Technical Education (CTE) Early College High School (ECHS). The CTE ECHS would allow a student to enter high-skill, high demand workforce fields by earning a high school diploma and a post-secondary credential simultaneously. A student would be able to earn a stackable credential that includes Level II certificates, at least 60 semester credit hours toward an Associate of Applied Science (AAS) degree, or an AAS degree. Collaboration among independent school districts, community colleges, and local workforce boards is a requirement of the grant.

The THECB will award grants to community colleges located in different geographical regions of the state to maximize opportunities for students to attend ECHSs that are designed specifically for CTE programs. ECHSs blend high school and college curricula into a concurrent educational experience that gives traditionally underserved students the chance to earn college credit while in high school.