

## **Industry-Based Certifications For Public School Accountability Evaluation Process**

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) understands that new developments in industry occur regularly. Therefore, the TEA will engage in a bi-annual review of the list of certifications. The TEA solicits feedback from industry councils and employers to determine certifications that are industry valued and recognized. The agency will ensure all proposed certifications meet the established criteria before providing an opportunity for stakeholder feedback during a public comment period. A finalized list will be available in early Spring of alternating years (beginning in Spring 2019). Please note that due to shutdowns caused by COVID-19, the 2020 evaluation and resulting list were postponed until 2021 and 2022, respectively.

House Bill 22 (85<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, 2017) requires the TEA to account for high school students who earn an industry-based certification (IBC) as one indicator within the state's public-school accountability system. While hundreds of unique certifications are earned by public school students, the public-school accountability system measures success in preparing students for in-demand careers, whether students enter the workforce directly or enroll in postsecondary education. IBCs represent industry valued skills and learning that lead to employment and act as a springboard for higher levels of achievement to ensure students' independence and success in life beyond high school; hence, industry-based certifications are one of the measures to demonstrate college and career readiness.

To help ensure that Texas students are prepared for in-demand, high-skill, high-wage careers, the Ray Marshall Center at the University of Texas at Austin, on behalf of TEA, is engaging with stakeholders to assist in identifying industry-based certifications that are recognized and valued within industry sectors.

The TEA accepted submissions of recommended IBCs for inclusion in the 2022-2023 Industry-Based Certifications List for Public School Accountability from December 1, 2020 - January 15, 2021 and March 22 - 29, 2021. Nearly 900 unique certifications were recommended by stakeholders to be included in the IBC review process. The IBC employer-recognized and valued survey was sent to a large sampling of industry personnel in July and remains open for one month. The industry stakeholder responses to the survey are critical to determine the skills, training, and career and technical education upon which the TEA and schools should focus. For the survey, industry personnel use the following criteria to determine industry value and recognition:

- (a) The IBC is included in job postings as required or highly recommended;
- (b) The IBC is used as a factor in selecting candidates for an interview and/or hire; and/or
- (c) The IBC is used as the basis for offering higher pay for those who possess the certification.

Upon receipt of the results, the TEA staff will evaluate the industry valued and recognized certifications with the remaining four criteria: attainable by a high school student, portable, provided through a third-party certification entity, and capstone or end-of-program. A draft list will be published for public review. At that time, applicants may submit clarifying documentation or documentation that demonstrates alignment to the criteria before the final list is released. The resulting list of IBCs for Texas high school accountability will be published in the spring of 2022 and take effect the 2022 – 2023 school year.