

Texas Education Today

News from the Texas Education Agency

Texas Teacher of the Year is 2015 National Teacher of the Year



Shanna Peeples of Amarillo ISD

Governor Greg Abbott, Commissioner of Education Michael Williams and Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) Executive Director Johnny Veselka congratulated Amarillo teacher Shanna Peeples, who has been named 2015 National Teacher of the Year. Peeples, an English teacher at Palo Duro High School in the Amarillo Independent School District, is the first educator from the state of Texas to earn the national honor since 1957.

Read complete story on [page 2](#).

78 percent pass STAAR reading

More than three-quarters of the state's fifth and eighth graders successfully passed the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) reading tests. [[complete story on page 4](#)]

Graduation rates outpace peers

Numbers compiled by National Center for Education Statistics showed the Texas Class of 2013 set a high school graduation rate of 88.0 percent, topping the national average of 81.4 percent. [[complete story on page 6](#)]

Bond guarantee program in good health

As the 2014 fiscal year ended on Aug. 31, the Permanent School Fund's (PSF) Bond Guarantee Program was within the capacity limits set by law and the Internal Revenue Service. [[complete story on page 7](#)]

Grades 3-8 math tests

The 2015 State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) in mathematics for grades 3-8 will be excluded from the 2015 state accountability system, Commissioner of Education Michael Williams announced April 8. [[complete story on page 9](#)]

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TEA

Amarillo ISD teacher named National Teacher of the Year

Governor Greg Abbott, Commissioner of Education Michael Williams and Texas Association of School Administrators (TASA) Executive Director Johnny Veselka congratulated Amarillo teacher Shanna Peeples, who has been named 2015 National Teacher of the Year. Peeples, an English teacher at Palo Duro High School in the Amarillo Independent School District, is the first educator from the state of Texas to earn the national honor since 1957.

The National Teacher of the Year program identifies exceptional teachers in the country, recognizes their effective work in the classroom and empowers them to participate in policy discussions at the state and national levels. The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), which oversees the National Teacher of the Year program, announced Peeples as this year's winner on April 27.

"I want to congratulate Shanna Peeples on this extraordinary honor and express my sincerest gratitude for her dedication to improving the lives of so many young Texans," said Governor Abbott. "The future success of our children is dependent on educators like Shanna, and with their invaluable dedication, Texas will continue to inspire a culture of excellence that will keep our state the shining beacon of educational growth and opportunity."

Commissioner Williams said, "Shanna Peeples brings a combination of knowledge, energy and enthusiasm to her classroom and her students are the beneficiaries. It is wonderful to see a Texas educator claim this national honor, someone who represents the very best of what you will see on campuses throughout our state."

"Shanna Peeples is an outstanding educator who truly connects with her students, showing them that the possibilities for their future are limitless," said TASA's Veselka, whose organization administers the Texas Teacher of the Year program and serves as Texas' state coordinator for the National Teacher of the Year program. "She cultivates a collaborative, engaging learning environment, serving as a model for her colleagues throughout the teaching profession. She will be a great ambassador for public education and the teaching profession."

Peeples worked as a disc jockey, medical assistant, pet sitter and journalist prior to becoming a teacher – a profession she says eventually chose her. She

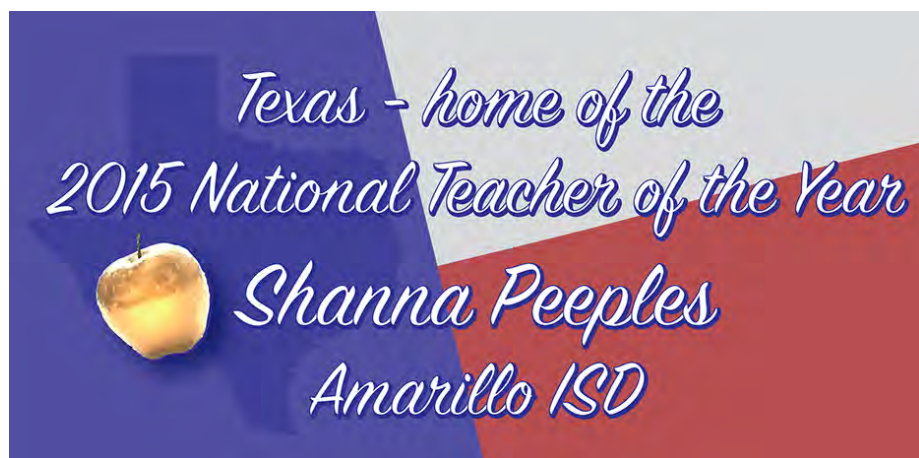
taught seventh grade English Language Arts for about six years before moving to high school. Peeples teaches AP English and English III. She serves as the English department chair as well as an instructional coach for other teachers.

At Palo Duro High

School, many of Peeples' students are immigrants who come from as many as 18 different countries in some school years.

"My students, survivors of deep and debilitating trauma, have shaped the kind of teacher I am," said Peeples. "They have taught me to never make a promise I can't keep, because so many already have learned to see the world through suspicious eyes. To be the best teacher to them, I have to remember this and honor their background. I remember so I can gain their trust because I want them to read and write their way out of where they are."

Peeples will be formally recognized by President Barack Obama in a White House ceremony on



♦ See TOY, page 3



TOY continued

Wednesday, April 29. Commissioner Williams, Veselka, State Board of Education (SBOE) Member Marty Rowley and Amarillo ISD Superintendent Rod Schroder will be in Washington D.C. to attend the event.

"Shanna's selection for this award is perfectly fitting," said SBOE member Rowley, whose district includes Amarillo. "Not only will she represent the Amarillo area well, she is also an excellent representative of the teaching profession nationally. Shanna is caring, articulate, innovative and dedicated to the well-being of her students and fellow teachers. Public education will be well-served with Shanna as National Teacher of the Year."

Peeples was named the 2015 Texas Secondary Teacher of the Year last fall as part of the Texas Teacher of the Year program. To achieve recognition in that program, a teacher must first be chosen as a campus and a district Teacher of

the Year, then be selected as one of 40 regional Teachers of the Year — one elementary and one secondary teacher from each of the 20 Education Service Center regions. Six finalists are then chosen, and following an interview process, the Texas Elementary Teacher of the Year and Texas Secondary Teacher of the Year are named. One is selected to represent the state in the National Teacher of the Year program.



The National Teacher of the Year Program is run by the Council Chief State School Officers and is presented by Voya Financial. Every year, exemplary teachers from each state, the U.S. extra-state territories, the District of Columbia, and the Department of Defense Education Activity are selected as State Teachers of the Year. From that group, the National Teacher of the Year is then selected by a panel representing 15 renowned education organizations, which collectively represent more than 7 million educators.



For more information on the Texas Teacher of the Year program, visit www.tasanet.org/txtoy.

For information on the National Teacher of the Year program, visit www.ccsso.org/ntoy.html.

SBOE**SBOE adjust grade 6 fine arts requirement**

At its April meeting, the State Board of Education (SBOE) approved amendments on first reading and filing authorization that affect sixth grade and middle school fine arts instruction.

Among the proposed amendments to 19 TAC Chapter 74 (Curriculum Requirements) is a change to the required elementary curriculum. The amendment would require a school district that provides sixth-grade fine arts instruction in an elementary school setting to provide instruction in all of the essential knowledge and skills in art, dance, music and theatre.

For students in grades 6 through 8 that receive instruction at a middle school campus, an additional amendment to the required secondary curriculum would require students to demonstrate proficiency in the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for at least one of the four fine

arts disciplines instead of all four, as is currently required by administrative rule. TEA staff says the amendments offer districts greater flexibility.

A third amendment would require districts to offer at least three of the four fine arts disciplines for students to choose from. Districts with a total middle school enrollment of fewer than 250 students could apply for a waiver to reduce the number of disciplines offered to two.

State law requires students to take at least one TEKS-based fine arts class during grades 6, 7 or 8.

The public has the opportunity to provide comment before the Committee on Instruction takes up the item on second reading and final authorization in July.

If given final approval, the proposed amendments would go into effect Aug. 24, 2015.



TEA

78 percent of grade 3-8 students pass STAAR reading

More than three-quarters of the state's fifth and eighth graders successfully passed the State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) reading tests, according to preliminary results released April 23 by the Texas Education Agency. The results reflect passing rates for the spring 2015 administration of STAAR in March.

Seventy-eight percent of fifth and eighth-grade students passed the STAAR reading test on their first attempt. The percentage of fifth graders passing STAAR reading on their first attempt has remained relatively stable over the past four years. In eighth grade, the percentage of students passing STAAR reading on their first attempt has seen a slight decline over the past four years.

Under state law, Texas students in grades 5 and 8 must pass the STAAR reading test to be promoted to the next grade. Those students who did not pass these exams have the opportunity to retake the tests in mid-May and will have a third opportunity in June. State law requires students who do not pass these tests to be retained in their current grade – unless a parent appeals the retention and a local, campus-based grade placement committee unanimously agrees to promote them.



To review STAAR state-level reports for all grades, visit the Texas Education Agency website at tea.texas.gov/staar/rpt/sum/.

2015 Administration of STAAR Reading				
GRADE	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15
5	77%	77%	76%	78%
8	80%	84%	83%	78%

SBOE

Board to extend current GED arrangement

After listening to presentations from three test providers related to a Request for Proposals (RFP) during its April meeting, the State Board of Education voted to extend a Memorandum of Understanding with the state's current test provider for the Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency for six months beyond expiration of the current MOU.

GED Testing Service's contract with the state to provide all Texas high school equivalency exams will expire Dec. 31, 2015. The new Memorandum of Understanding authorized by the board would extend that contract through June 30, 2016.

During the April meeting, the Committee on Instruction heard presentations from three vendors who had responded to the RFP. However, based on language in the RFP, the board was only able to select one vendor to offer the high school equivalency exam in Texas. After some members expressed interest in allowing more than one vendor to offer the test in Texas, the board instructed TEA staff to begin the development of a new RFP to potentially identify multiple test providers.

No timeline has yet been determined for the new RFP.



SBOE

Nominations open for SBOE Heroes for Children award



The State Board of Education (SBOE) is now accepting nominations for the 2015 Heroes for Children Award. This annual award recognizes public school volunteers who have been strong advocates for Texas schoolchildren.

Volunteers may be nominated by individuals or by organizations. Educational employees, elected government officials and organizations are not eligible for the award.

As it does annually, the State Board of Education will select 15 Heroes for Children—one person from each of the 15 SBOE districts. Heroes will be honored during the State Board of Education's Sept. 11, 2015 meeting.

Completed applications must be received by 5 p.m. on Friday, May 29. Applications may be submitted by:

Mail

Heroes for Children

Communications Division, Texas Education Agency
1701 North Congress Avenue, Room 2-180
Austin, Texas 78701-1494

FAX

512-463-9838

Email

Heroes@tea.state.tx.us

For more information, please contact

DeEtta Culbertson

512-463-9839

Heroes@tea.state.tx.us



The nomination form is available on the Heroes for Children Award page on the Texas Education Agency website at tea.texas.gov/About_TEA/News_and_Multimedia/Awards/Heroes_for_Children_Award/.

TEA

2014 Blue Ribbon Schools



The 2014 Blue Ribbon Schools were honored at the SBOE's April 17, 2015 meeting. Representatives of the school were honored with a resolution recognizing their accomplishment. Photos of all the school representatives with their SBOE member are available at www.flickr.com/photos/txedu/sets/72157652057971716/.



TEA

Texas student groups' graduation rates outpace peers

According to the latest figures released by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics, the Class of 2013 high school graduation rate for Texas African-American and Hispanic students topped that of similar student groups across the country.

In addition, various student groups in Texas – including White, Asian, Economically Disadvantaged and students with disabilities – rank in the top five nationally in national Class of 2013 graduation rate comparisons.

"Across the board, student groups in the Texas Class of 2013 easily outpaced the national graduation rate of their counterparts in other states," said Commissioner of Education Michael Williams. "The Class of 2013 comparisons confirm Texas as a national education leader committed to helping every student earn a high school diploma and that bodes well for our state's economic future."

Last month, numbers compiled by National Center for Education Statistics showed the Texas Class of 2013 set a high school graduation rate of 88.0 percent, topping the national average of 81.4 percent. The Texas graduation rate hit 88.0 percent for the second consecutive year, tying Wisconsin

for the nation's third highest. Only Iowa at 89.7 percent and Nebraska at 88.5 percent posted higher graduation rates for the Class of 2013.

Note that NCES updated its Class of 2013 data (now including percentages to the first decimal point) which has adjusted Texas' overall national ranking to third. Figures released earlier this year had initially indicated Texas ranked second tied with four other states for the Class of 2013.

The National Center for Education Statistics is the primary federal entity for collecting, analyzing and reporting data related to education in the United States and other nations. Since 2010, states, districts and schools have used a common metric – the adjusted cohort graduation rate – in reporting graduation rates to the federal government. Use of the adjusted cohort graduation rate allows for an accurate and uniform comparison between the 50 states and the District of Columbia.

To read more about the national graduation rate comparisons for the Class of 2013 (including a state-by-state breakdown of various student groups), visit www.ed.gov/news/press-releases/achievement-gap-narrows-high-school-graduation-rates-minority-students-improve-faster-rest-nation.

Adjusted Cohort Graduation Rate			
	National	TEXAS	Ranking
African-American	70.7%	84.1%	1st
Hispanic	75.2%	85.1%	1st
American Indian/Alaska Native	69.7%	86.0%	1st (Tied)
White	86.6%	93.0%	2nd
Economically Disadvantaged	73.3%	85.2%	2nd
Students with Disabilities	61.9%	77.8%	3rd (Tied)
Asian/Pacific Islander	88.7%	93.7 %	5th
Limited English Proficiency	61.1%	71.3%	9th
CLASS OF 2013 (TOTAL)	81.4%	88.0%	3rd (Tied)



TEA

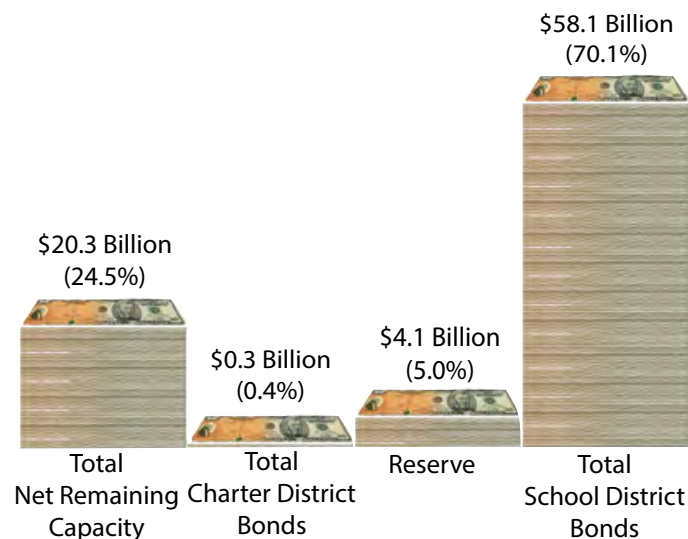
Bond Guarantee Program finishes fiscal year in good health

As the 2014 fiscal year ended on Aug. 31, the Permanent School Fund's (PSF) Bond Guarantee Program was within the capacity limits set by law and the Internal Revenue Service.

Staff from the Texas State Auditor's office presented a brief overview of the program's status to members of the SBOE's Committee on School Finance/ Permanent School Fund, which oversees the program as part of its official duties.

As of Aug. 31, 2014, the program has 2,879 outstanding bond issues guaranteed by the PSF for a total of \$58.4 billion. In total, the program has the capacity to guarantee up to \$82.8 billion in bond issues.

Bond Guarantee Program Capacity as of Aug. 31, 2014



The chart shows a summary of the program's capacity as of Aug. 31, 2014, including the bond guarantee reserve and net remaining capacity.

The SBOE holds \$4.1 billion (5%) of the fund in reserve to award guarantees to school districts with unforeseen catastrophes or emergencies that require renovation or replacement of school facilities.

The program's remaining statutory capacity, net the reserve funds, was \$20.3 billion at the end of the 2014 fiscal year, which means the program could guarantee an additional \$20.3 billion in bonds before reaching its statutory limit.

In addition to guaranteeing bonds for independent school districts, the program began to award guarantees to charter school district bonds in May 2014.

The SBOE guaranteed \$302.5 million in bonds for six charter districts during fiscal year 2014.

As of the end of the 2014 Fiscal Year, of the \$302.5 million in bonds issues to charter districts, \$152.5 million were refunding bonds and \$150 million were non-refunding bonds or new bond issues.

As of April 21, 2015, the capacity to guarantee charter school bonds was exhausted. To date, the Texas Education Agency has a total of \$502,812,219 new charter bonds guaranteed or in the process of being guaranteed. Of that amount, \$225,929,219 is in the process of being guaranteed.

As of April 21, the amount of charter bonds under refunding stands at \$394,626,216. Of that amount, \$215,656,216 is in the process of being guaranteed.

The Texas Education Code limits the available bond capacity for charter districts based on the percentage of the number of students enrolled in all Texas public schools. Consequently, as enrollment increases, the bonding capacity available to charter districts increases.

Committee members also discussed with staff the current Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for investment rating agency services that is in progress.

The ratings firms are used to provide investment ratings for school and charter districts when they apply for the program. Current rules allow only for investment ratings firms that are, or are part of, Standard & Poor's, Moody's or Fitch and are designated by the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission as a nationally recognized statistical rating organization. That rule section expires Sept. 1, 2015.

♦ See **Bond Guarantee**, page 8



SBOE

CTE TEKS revisions planned for 2017-2018

At its April meeting, State Board of Education members gave final approval to revised Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for Career and Technical Education (CTE) courses for Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications; Business Management and Administration; Education and Training; Finance; Hospitality and Tourism; Human Services; Manufacturing; and Marketing Career Clusters, as amended.

The State Board of Education is updating the curriculum standards for about 200 CTE courses.

The massive effort makes revisions and updates to about 700 pages of the career and technical education TEKS, which were last updated in 2009. The board divided the courses into two groups to facilitate the review. Roughly half of the courses received final approval in April and the revised TEKS will be effective for the 2017-2018 school year.

Before granting that final approval, the board amended the rules to standardize the credits awarded in practicum courses to two credits and directed staff to develop an additional one-credit practicum co-requisite course that would allow students to earn a total of three credits in practicums, as determined appropriate by the school district.



To provide more time for review and revision, the board delayed to July final approval of Food Chemistry and several welding courses.

The board also gave preliminary approval to revised TEKS for the following CTE Career Clusters: Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources; Architecture and Construction; Government and Public Administration; Health Science; Information Technology; Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security; Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics; and Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics. This approval also included substantial changes to the originally proposed revisions to the Financial Mathematics course.

If final approval is given to this group of TEKS revisions at the board's July meeting, the changes would be effective for the 2017-2018 school year.

The board also agreed to include a call for new CTE instructional materials in Proclamation 2017, which means the new material would be available for use in Texas classrooms when the revised TEKS are implemented in the 2017-2018 school year.

As it becomes available, information about the CTE TEKS review will be posted at tea.texas.gov/Curriculum_and_Instructional_Programs/Curriculum_Standards/Career_and_Technical_Education_Texas_Essential_Knowledge_and_Skills/.

Bond Guarantee *continued*

Information from the RFQ will be presented to the board at its July meeting.

Number of Guaranteed Bonds Outstanding

Category	Number of Issues	Dollar Amounts of Issues
Balance as of Aug. 31, 2013	2,789	\$55,218,889,156
Issued during fiscal year 2014	323	\$8,745,481,511
Issues that matured during fiscal year 2014	(184)	(\$2,065,610,524)
Issues that refunded during fiscal year 2014	(49)	(\$3,516,482,338)
Other adjustments	Not applicable	(\$17,927,022)
Balance on Aug. 31, 2014	2,879	\$58,364,350,783

Summary of the fiscal year 2014 activity for the Permanent School Fund's Bond Guarantee Program and shows the changes in the number and dollar amount of the outstanding bonds guaranteed by the BGP.



TEA

Grades 3-8 math tests excluded from ratings

The 2015 State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) in mathematics for grades 3–8 will be excluded from the 2015 state accountability system, Commissioner of Education Michael Williams announced April 8.

Williams reached his decision following numerous discussions with math teachers, parents and superintendents across the state regarding new curriculum standards in mathematics for grades K–8. New rigorous math standards were adopted by the State Board of Education in April 2012 with implementation now taking place this current school year.

“The teachers I have spoken with have confidence that Texas students will, in time, adjust to the more rigorous math standards, but for accountability purposes asked for a transition year,” said Williams. “Based on what I hear from those working in the classroom, I agree and will not count grades 3–8 math assessment results in 2015 accountability ratings for schools, charters and districts.”

Although the grades 3–8 math assessment results will not be part of the 2015 state accountability system, campus-level results will still be reported to school districts and charters. The results, based on actual student performance standards, will be provided to school districts, charters and parents in early September.



Last year, Williams announced that the Student Success Initiative (SSI) requirement that students in grades 5 and 8 must pass the STAAR mathematics assessment in order to move on to the next grade level would be suspended for this school year. Suspension of the 5th and 8th grade mathematics requirement applies only for the 2014–2015 school year. State law requiring students in grades 5 and 8 to pass the STAAR reading exam in order to proceed to the next grade level is still in effect. The STAAR mathematics assessments in grades 5 and 8 will only be administered one time this school year.

Along with the grades 3–8 math assessments, results from STAAR Accommodated (STAAR A) and STAAR Alternate 2 (a redesign of the original STAAR Alternate) will also be excluded from the 2015 state accountability system. The U.S. Department of Education no longer allows Texas to use modified assessments (such as the STAAR Modified), which had been used for students receiving special education services that met certain participation criteria. Those students were administered the STAAR Accommodated this year. In addition, House Bill 5, passed by the Texas Legislature in 2013, required the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to redevelop the STAAR Alternative (STAAR Alt) test which is designed for the state’s most cognitively disabled students. That test was administered for the first time this school year. While results from the STAAR Accommodated and STAAR Alternate 2 will be excluded from the state accountability system, results will be reported to school districts, charters and parents.

In 2013 and 2014, districts and charters had to meet all four indexes to receive a Met Standard or Met Alternative Standard rating. The four indexes are:

- Student Achievement (Index 1),
- Student Progress (Index 2),
- Closing Performance Gaps (Index 3), and
- Postsecondary Readiness (Index 4).

For 2015 accountability, due to the changes in the state assessment program this school year, a campus or district must meet the target on either Index 1 or Index 2 plus meet the target on Index 3 and Index 4. School administrators should note that for 2015, the performance standard in Index 1 is increased from 55 percent to 60 percent.

An overview of the substantial differences in state accountability between 2014 and 2015 is available on the TEA website.

The state accountability system will be fully explained in the 2015 Accountability Manual, which is scheduled for release in May. TEA will release 2015 state accountability ratings for districts, charters and campuses in August.



TEA

Forty-four new early college high schools planned

Commissioner of Education Michael Williams on April 7 gave final approval to 44 new Early College High School (ECHS) designations for the 2015-2016 school year. With these designations, Texas will become home to 154 ECHS campuses across the state.

Early college high schools are innovative high schools that allow students least likely to attend college an opportunity to earn a high school diploma and either an associate degree or at least 60 college credit hours toward a baccalaureate degree. Under this model, an ECHS provides dual credit at no cost to students; offers rigorous

instruction and accelerated courses; provides academic and social support services to help students succeed; increases college readiness; and reduces barriers to college access.

"School districts continue to see the value in providing an avenue for students to not only earn college credit, but also potentially earn an associate's degree while still in high school," said Williams. "Texas remains a national leader in the early college high schools and will continue to be as more districts and charters embrace this innovative concept."

2015-2016 ECHS School districts, charters and campuses

Abilene ISD

- ❖ **Holland Medical Early College High School**

Alice ISD

- ❖ **Alice Early College High School**

Austin ISD

- ❖ **South Austin Early College High School at Travis**

Brownsville ISD

- ❖ **Gladys Porter Early College High School**

Del Valle ISD

- ❖ **Del Valle Early College High School**

Diboll ISD/Hudson ISD/Lufkin ISD

- ❖ **Angelina County Cooperative CTE Early College High School**

Dilley ISD

- ❖ **Dilley Early College High School**

Ector County ISD

- ❖ **ECISD Early College High School Academy**

Fort Worth ISD

- ❖ **Tarrant County College South/ Fort Worth ISD Collegiate High School**

Freer ISD

- ❖ **Freer Early College High School**

Galena Park ISD

- ❖ **Galena Park Career and Technical Early College High School**

Grand Prairie ISD

- ❖ **Grand Prairie Early College High School**
- ❖ **South Grand Prairie Early College High School**

Harlingen CISD

- ❖ **Harlingen High School**
- ❖ **Harlingen High School South**

Hays CISD

- ❖ **Hays Early College High School**

Jim Hogg County ISD

- ❖ **Hebbronville Early College High School**

Karnes City ISD

- ❖ **Karnes City High School Early College High School**

Killeen ISD

- ❖ **Killeen ISD Early College High School**

La Vega ISD

- ❖ **La Vega Early College High School**

Longview ISD

- ❖ **Longview Early College High School**

♦ See **ECHS**, page 11



ECHS *continued*

Miami ISD

- ❖ **Miami High School**

Pecos-Barstow-Toyah ISD

- ❖ **Pecos High School**

Pharr-San Juan-Alamo ISD

- ❖ **PSJA Elvis J. Ballew High School**
- ❖ **PSJA College, Career and Technology Academy**

Riviera ISD

- ❖ **Riviera Seahawk Early College Academy**

Royal ISD

- ❖ **Royal STEM Academy**

San Antonio ISD

- ❖ **Early College Academy at G. W. Brackenridge High School with St. Philip's College**

San Diego ISD

- ❖ **San Diego Early College High School**

San Felipe Del Rio CISD

- ❖ **Del Rio Early College High School**

Slaton ISD

- ❖ **Slaton High School**

Socorro ISD

- ❖ **Socorro Early College**

South San Antonio ISD

- ❖ **South San Antonio Early College High School**

Tioga ISD

- ❖ **Tioga Early College High School**

Tyler ISD

- ❖ **Tyler ISD Early College High School**

United ISD

- ❖ **United Early College High School**

Weslaco ISD

- ❖ **Weslaco Early College High School**
- ❖ **Weslaco East Early College High School**

West Oso ISD

- ❖ **West Oso High School**

Wink-Loving ISD

- ❖ **Wink-Loving Early College Academy**

In addition to the ECHS designations listed, four ECHS campuses with a career technical education (CTE) focus will be designated as part of the tri-agency CTE ECHS Initiative by the Texas Education Agency, Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and Texas Workforce Commission. School districts and campuses to be designated as part of the CTE ECHS Initiative include:

Alief ISD

- ❖ **Alief CTE Early College High School**

Dallas ISD

- ❖ **H. Grady Spruce High School**

Ector County ISD

- ❖ **Odessa College Technical Early College High School**

Houston ISD

- ❖ **Houston CTE Early College High School**

A school district or charter must obtain an ECHS designation from the Texas Education Agency to allow high school students to enroll in more than two dual credit courses per semester and enroll in dual credit coursework with freshman or sophomore standing.

School districts and charters approved for an ECHS designation must complete technical assistance activities during the spring. In addition, a final, signed memorandum of understanding with an institution of higher education partner must be submitted to TEA before the start of the 2015 school year.

More information about early college high schools can be found on the TEA website at tea.texas.gov/index2.aspx?id=4464&menu_id=814.



SBOE

Summaries of SBOE actions can be found online

The State Board of Education met April 14 – 17, 2015. Summaries of actions taken by the SBOE can be found on the Texas Education Agency's website at tea.texas.gov/sboe/actions/.

SBOE

Student Performance

Prekindergarten students from Mainland Preparatory Academy in La Marque read two books to the SBOE at the April 17, 2015 meeting. Photos of the presentation are available at www.flickr.com/photos/txedu/sets/72157651710815880/.



Texas Education Today may be found online at tea.texas.gov/communications/tet.aspx.

State Board of Education

Please visit the SBOE on Facebook.

Michael Williams

Commissioner of Education

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