

# Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

## Agency Workforce Plan

### AGENCY OVERVIEW

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (Coordinating Board) was created by the Texas Legislature in 1965 and is statutorily charged with actively promoting quality education throughout the state. Under the leadership of its gubernatorially appointed board and the Texas Commissioner of Higher Education, Dr. Harrison Keller, the agency works in partnership with Texas institutions of higher education, state and federal policymakers, representatives from the K-12 sector and the workforce, and other stakeholders to advance the important mission of higher education, increase accessibility and success for Texans of all backgrounds, and to build upon higher education's unique role as a driver of our state's economy.

Most of the Coordinating Board's statutory authorities are found in the Texas Education Code, Subchapter C, Section 61.051. Among the major responsibilities of the agency are:

- Developing, revising, and evaluating progress toward a long-range master plan for higher education. The Coordinating Board recently updated the plan, known as *Building a Talent Strong Texas*, to increase postsecondary attainment, expand the educated workforce, and drive economic prosperity. The plan includes goals to:
  - Increase credential attainment to 60% across all working age adults to increase employment opportunities and income for individuals, create a deeper talent pool for employers, and align skills with the increasing number of jobs requiring postsecondary education;
  - Ensure that by 2030, all degrees, certificates, and other credentials awarded by public institutions of higher education are credentials of value, and every student has the opportunity to complete a credential of value with no or manageable debt; and
  - Expand the state's capacity for generating knowledge through basic and applied research, translating research to innovations and discoveries, and partnering with industry at all levels to drive the economy.
- Acting as the steward of the state's combined state educational and workforce data infrastructure. The agency is working closely with partners to provide actionable intelligence for students and families, institutions, employers, and policymakers about educational opportunities and workforce needs.
  - The agency, supported in part by private philanthropic funding and federal Governor's Emergency Education Relief (GEER) funding, has launched an ambitious effort to modernize data infrastructure and make data more accessible and useful to decision makers. This includes a comprehensive upgrade of our interactive advising tools so students can find and compare educational programs and training opportunities, view potential costs and earnings, and find out more about postsecondary programs of interest.

- The initiative will also provide secure tools that allow Texas colleges and universities to monitor, analyze, and support individual student progress to credentials.
- Administering and overseeing over \$580 million per year in state-funded student financial aid grant programs.

Since Sept. 1, 2021, the agency is statutorily authorized to have 296.9 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions. FTEs whose salaries, benefits, and other expenses related to employment are funded through private grant funds are not counted toward this cap, pursuant to the General Appropriations Act, Senate Bill (SB) 1, 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, Regular Session, Article III, Section 36 (III-61). FTEs paid exclusively from bond proceeds who are employed only to support the agency’s student loan program are also excluded from the Coordinating Board’s FTE limit per General Appropriations Act, SB 1, 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature, Regular Session, Article III, Section 5 (III-55).

**A. Agency’s Mission Statement**

The mission of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board is to serve as a resource, partner and advocate for Texas higher education, resulting in a globally competitive workforce that positions Texas as an international leader.

**B. Agency’s Workforce Strategic Goals and Objectives**

The Coordinating Board’s workforce planning efforts are focused on succession planning to prepare for the large percentage of employees who will be eligible to retire in the next two to five years. We are continuing to work on strategies to enhance the diversity of our applicant pools.

<b>Goal 1: Retention &amp; Recruitment</b>	Recruit and retain a highly educated, skilled, and diverse workforce.
<b>Objective</b>	Provide a highly qualified pool of applicants, internal and external, for management’s consideration and retain the critical education and skill levels needed to perform the agency’s mission.
<b>Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Proactively seek new recruitment opportunities.</li> <li>● Develop tools and resources for hiring managers.</li> <li>● Advise and communicate with hiring managers to ensure a qualified applicant pool.</li> <li>● Develop an Equal Employment Opportunity Workforce Action Plan to provide details on recruitment, hiring, and retention of workforce to reflect the state’s workforce.</li> <li>● Conduct market studies, as needed, generally identified by hard-to-fill or high-turnover positions and propose changes to the salary structure as appropriate.</li> </ul>

<b>Goal 2: Succession Planning of Critical Positions</b>	Cross train agency staff and prepare for retirement of key positions.
<b>Objective</b>	Maintain business continuity and avoid interruption of critical agency functions.
<b>Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue cross-training employees, especially in critical agency positions.</li> <li>• Continually review agency workforce needs (i.e., skills, education, experience, etc.).</li> </ul>

<b>Goal 3: Economic Conditions</b>	Prepare for the legislative session and the possibility of budget reductions.
<b>Objective</b>	Provide quality, thoughtful information for considering alternatives.
<b>Strategies</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor legislative issues and provide alert on issues of concern.</li> <li>• Discuss concerns that may affect the agency workforce and identify possible actions.</li> </ul>

**C. Agency’s Core Values**

The Coordinating Board’s core values are:

1. **Evidence-Based** – Our work is grounded in research and practices that are proven effective and are continually accessed to generate new insights and ensure meaningful progress toward our goals.
2. **Equitable** – We work toward a future in which all Texans have an equitable opportunity to participate in, contribute to, and benefit from our world-class economy.
3. **Scalable** – We design our work to make a statewide impact.
4. **Sustainable** – Our products, programs, and services engage the necessary resources and partnerships to operate sustainably in the long term.

#### D. Anticipated Changes to the Mission, Strategies, and Goals

In our agency strategic plan, the Coordinating Board identified the following three goals, with action items to achieve over the next five years. The goals and actions are aligned with the statewide objectives issued by the Office of the Governor and Legislative Budget Board.

### Agency Goals and Action Items for FY 2023-2027

#### **GOAL 1: Educate with Purpose**

*Support innovative education that offers value to students throughout their lives.*

- Support the development of new credentials aligned with labor market demands.
- Foster the creation and implementation of innovative education practices, including digital learning, work-based learning, and open educational resources.
- Collect, curate, and report data on credentials of value.

#### **GOAL 2: Expand Access**

*Use financial aid to remove barriers to student enrollment, improve affordability, and enhance value.*

- Deliver targeted aid to enhance value.
- Develop new infrastructure for flexible, portable aid.
- Test and scale innovative practices.

#### **GOAL 3: Clear the Path**

*Promote efficient and flexible pathways and transfer opportunities for students to earn postsecondary credentials of value.*

- Fully implement SB 25 and the Texas Transfer Framework and develop fields of study with a priority on high-demand fields.
- Collect recommended course sequence data and leverage it to provide actionable insights for students.
- Provide targeted aid to transfer students and test impact.

#### **Goal 4: Support Success**

*Improve student supports and advising related to college and career options, costs, and potential value.*

- Release centralized, student-centered technology resources to provide clear, high-quality, actionable information to students.
- Test and scale innovative practices in supporting success.
- Support college readiness.

**Goal 5: Build a Vibrant Texas Future**

*Promote research, development, and innovation for the benefit of Texas.*

- Update *Building a Talent Strong Texas* goals to include research expenditures and doctorates.
- Launch a Workforce Innovation Division.
- Modernize data infrastructure.
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**1. Current Workforce Profile (Supply Analysis)**

Coordinating Board employees are comprised of diverse, well-qualified individuals.

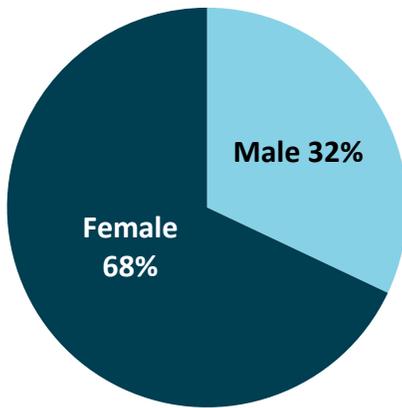
**A. Workforce Demographics**

The following charts profile the agency’s workforce as of April 4, 2022. Agency staff include part-time and full-time employees comprised of 32% male and 68% female. Approximately 74% of employees are over the age of 40 and approximately 35% have fewer than two years of service with the Coordinating Board.

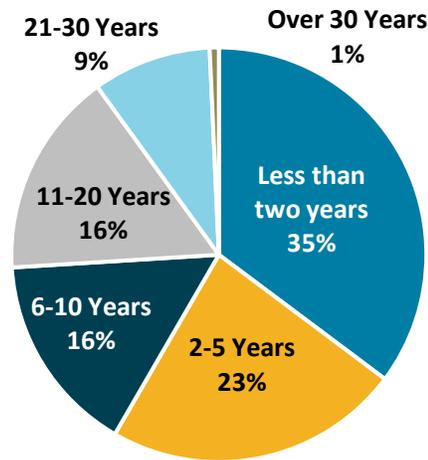
**Workforce Breakdown**

*(as of April 4, 2022)*

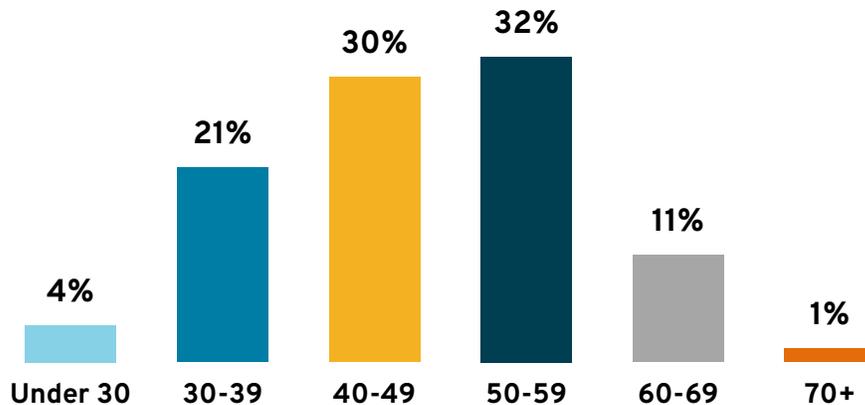
**Employees by Gender**



**Years of Service of Employees**



**Employees by Age Group**



The following table provides a comparison of the ethnicity of Coordinating Board employees, as of April 4, 2022, and the ethnicity of the statewide workforce as reported by the Texas Workforce Commission, Civil Rights Division.

Workforce Utilization Analysis						
	Female		Hispanic		African American	
	THECB %	Civilian Workforce %	THECB %	Civilian Workforce %	THECB %	Civilian Workforce %
<b>Officials/Administration</b>	46.6%	38.8%	13.3%	22.4%	6.6%	8.1%
<b>Professional</b>	60.7%	54.5%	21.4%	20.3%	11.6%	10.9%
<b>Technical</b>	33.3%	55.2%	4.2%	29.2%	12.5%	14.4%
<b>Administrative Support</b>	83.3%	71.6%	40.7%	36.4%	33.3%	14.3%

Note: There are inconclusive statistical results for the utilization analysis in the Hispanic population of the Officials/Administrator category due to a small number of employees (<30). There is also a potential underutilization in the Hispanic population in the Technical category.

### B. Retirement Eligibility

Coordinating Board retirement does not account for most separations:

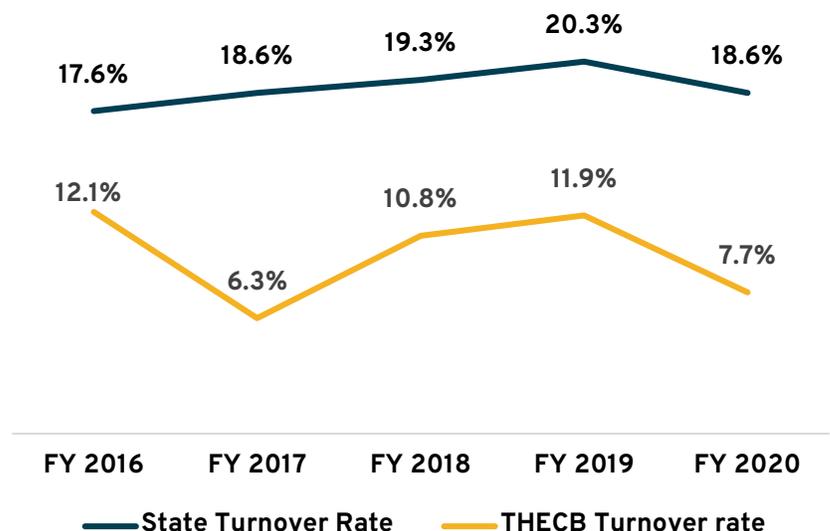
Percentage of Employees Who Retired Fiscal Years 2020 and 2021				
	FY 2020		FY 2021	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Retirement	6	18%	9	24%

Fifteen employees retired in Fiscal Years (FYs) 2020 and 2021. An additional 79 employees will be eligible to retire in the next five years. We are enhancing succession planning for critical positions, cross-training existing employees, and implementing processes to boost external recruitment.

### C. Employee Turnover

Turnover is an important issue in any organization and the Coordinating Board is no exception. The turnover rate for FY 2020 was 7.7%. The state's average turnover rate for FY 2020 was 18.6%. The following charts compare the agency's turnover rates to that of the state from FY 2016 to FY 2020. Over this timeframe, the Coordinating Board's turnover has generally been lower than the state's turnover rate.

Statewide and Texas Higher Education  
Coordinating Board Turnover Rate  
Fiscal Years 2016-2020



Turnover by Age				
	FY 2020		FY 2021	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Under 30	0	0%	6	16%
30 - 39	8	24%	10	27%
40 - 49	7	22%	5	14%
50 - 59	10	30%	10	27%
60+	8	24%	6	16%

Turnover by Years of Service				
	FY 2020		FY 2021	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Under 2 years	6	18%	17	46%
Between 2-5 years	18	55%	7	20%
Between 6-10 years	0	0%	4	11%
Between 11-20 years	5	15%	4	11%
Between 21-30 years	2	6%	2	5%
Over 30 years	2	6%	3	7%

Turnover by Gender & Ethnicity				
	FY 2020		FY 2021	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Male	13	39%	15	41%
Female	20	61%	22	59%
African American	4	12%	4	11%
Hispanic	11	33%	8	22%

**D. Projected Retirement Rate over the Next Five Years**

The Coordinating Board has 37 employees who are eligible for retirement as of May 1, 2022. Current projections show that this number will double over the next four years, which reflects 25% of the current workforce.

Employees Eligible to Retire				
Eligible as of May 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026
37	+7	+10	+10	+9

**E. Critical Workforce Skills**

The agency's workforce is made up of diverse, well-qualified individuals, many of whom possess highly specialized skills that are unique to the agency. There are specific knowledge and skill areas that are critical to the agency's ability to operate effectively,

efficiently, and consistently to meet performance measures and legislative requirements. Among them are: Formula funding and capital planning

- Legal expertise
- Student loan bonds
- Governmental accounting
- Project management
- Research and data analysis
- Leadership/management
- Information technology

Positions critical to the agency include mid- and upper-management positions, such as the Commissioner of Higher Education, deputy commissioners, associate commissioners, general counsel, assistant commissioners, deputy assistant commissioners, directors, senior program directors, and managers, as well as positions with highly specialized skills. These positions require extensive experience, specialized designations, and detailed knowledge of the agency's statutory regulations, functions, and rules.

### **3. Future Workforce Profile (Demand Analysis)**

The Coordinating Board's critical functions must be maintained when turnover occurs. Since the agency has a unique workforce to accomplish a wide variety of tasks, every position is critical to maintain efficient and effective operations. Vacated positions must be filled quickly and effectively.

The agency continues to emphasize the need for workplace diversity and strives to recruit and retain a workforce that is reflective of the ethnic and racial composition of the state's population. We have expanded our recruitment resources for all job postings to reach additional diverse candidates and will continue to improve upon our recruitment efforts.

#### **A. Workforce Challenges**

The agency will continue efforts to improve recruitment of candidates from underrepresented groups. We strive to produce a pool of qualified applicants that represent female, Hispanic, and African American groups for the Technical category.

To meet the agency's goal to recruit in the potentially underutilized categories, the agency posts jobs with Workplace Diversity, which targets diverse candidates, including Hispanics; Executive Women in Texas Government; CareerBuilder, which advertises on several sites that target women; Texas Association of Black Personnel in Higher Education; NAACP; and a variety of colleges and universities, including minority-serving institutions, to seek a diverse applicant pool.

Recruitment and retention strategies must be developed and monitored to maintain the agency's workforce dynamic. According to data from the State Auditor's Office, better pay and benefits are consistently cited as top reasons' employees leave their jobs within respective state agencies.

**B. Future Workforce Skills Needed**

After review and assessment of information compiled on the Coordinating Board's workforce, the agency has determined that no gap exists between the agency's workforce supply and future demand. Additional skilled labor exists in the workforce for the existing positions, and although any loss of staff will impact agency operations, replacement with appropriated personnel at the current budgeted salary levels will allow the agency to replace vacancies.

**C. Anticipated Increase/Decrease in Number of FTEs**

While the agency does anticipate an increase in the number of FTE's required to fill important roles, the agency will continue to review work demands, along with the state's increasing population and number of students attending Texas institutions of higher education, to ensure that the agency has appropriate staffing levels and skills necessary to fulfill its mission.

**4. Strategy Development**

The Coordinating Board has made efforts to increase the capacity of the agency's workforce and restructure internally to meet the changing demands of Texas higher education institutions and agency partners. The agency is implementing strategies to attract, develop, and retain employees to meet agency objectives and support the goals of *Building a Talent Strong Texas*.

**SCHEDULE G:**

**Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan**

System Objective	Key Actions/Strategies/Outcomes
Expand licensure and industry certification	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The state’s updated long-range strategic plan for higher education – <i>Building a Talent Strong Texas</i> – includes a new requirement that all measured credentials be <b>Credentials of Value</b>. Only credentials that yield a positive return on investment for students will count toward statewide attainment goals. This will ensure that traditional workforce certificates and degrees offered at institutions are of strong value for students. And for the first time, the state will include industry-recognized certifications (that meet Credential of Value standards) in meeting state targets. To accelerate this work, the Coordinating Board awarded grants to Texas institutions to help them develop or expand short-term, industry-recognized postsecondary credentials.</li> <li>• The agency is implementing SB 1102 (87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature creating the <b>Texas Reskilling and Upskilling through Education (TRUE)</b> Program The agency will make grant awards to 2-year institutions and consortia targeted at programs to support high-demand, growing occupations that will provide high value career opportunities for Texas students for years to come. To initially support this initiative, the Coordinating Board awarded over \$26 million to 47 two-year institutions to accelerate high-value workforce training and credentialing opportunities. As of May 2022, the agency is accepting applications for an additional \$15 million in TRUE grant awards.</li> <li>• <b>Carl D. Perkins career and technical education funds</b> (Perkins V) emphasize alignment with state-level and local workforce needs. Under the Perkins State Leadership Grant, the agency annually awards projects that seek to improve and better articulate credential completion pathways for students in high-wage, high-demand career and technical fields.</li> </ul>
Expand partnerships with system partners and stakeholders to promote collaboration, joint planning, and enhanced participant outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The work of the <b>Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative</b> (established by Governor Greg Abbott in 2016 and composed of the Coordinating Board, TEA and TWC) was codified by the Texas Legislature through HB 3767 (87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature). The Tri-agencies have established three key priorities: support efficient and flexible pathways to earning degrees, certificates, and other credentials linked to high-wage, in-demand jobs; ensure students receive the supports necessary to succeed at all stages of their educations and in their transitions to the workforce, and; create a robust infrastructure for interagency collaboration around common goals, data, and processes to ensure improved student outcomes and to meet employers' needs. Strategies to support these priorities were published for public comment as of May 2022.</li> <li>• To support increased Tri-agency collaboration and planning, the Coordinating Board and TWC made their first <b>joint senior staff</b> hire. The Assistant Commissioner for</li> </ul>

	<p>Workforce Innovation is working to assist with various Tri-Agency workforce education and data collection initiatives, with a focus on developing strategies that foster the creation and implementation of evidence-based, field-initiated innovations to improve student workforce education outcomes with a focus on high-value skills and credentials.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The agency is assisting institutions and policymakers through the <b>Texas Commission on Community College Finance</b> (SB 1238, 87<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature) to make recommendations for consideration by the 88<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature to establish a state funding formula and funding levels sufficient for sustaining viable community college education and training offerings throughout the state.</li> </ul>
<p>Improve and enhance services, programs, and policies to facilitate effective and efficient transitions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a result of legislation (HB 2827) and budget changes during the 87<sup>th</sup> Legislature, the agency has assumed statutory responsibility for <b>Texas OnCourse</b> from The University of Texas at Austin. Texas OnCourse provides extensive professional development and support products for counselors across the state on college and career advising. The further integration of OnCourse into the agency will strongly enhance efforts to create and advise students regarding efficient pathways for achieving postsecondary credentials.</li> <li>• <b>Advise TX</b> pairs recent college graduates from participating Texas higher education institutions with full-time, near-peer college advisers in 110 high schools with historically low college-going rates to help students identify the education options that best fit their career and academic goals. Data show that Advise TX schools have higher rates of college applications and FAFSA completion, and advisees are more likely to enroll in higher education than similarly situated students.</li> <li>• The Coordinating Board partnered with The University of Texas at Austin to develop a <b>virtual advising system, ADVi</b>, which communicates through text message and web chat and uses artificial intelligence to provide on-demand support to Texans looking to attend or return to higher education, and if needed, connects students to live advisers for additional help.</li> <li>• The agency created the <b>Work-based Learning (WBL) Opportunity Grants</b> program to strengthen the education to workforce pipeline, drive student opportunity, and aid in the state's economic recovery from the global pandemic. The program funds expand the availability and accessibility of internships and apprenticeships as important on-the-job learning experiences for students of all means. In 2022, the agency awarded \$5 million in grants to 28 recipients to support this initiative.</li> <li>• The Coordinating Board also dedicated \$765,000 to amplify and improve the <b>Texas WORKS</b> program created</li> </ul>

	by the 86 <sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature (HB 3808) to allow the Coordinating Board to partner with employers to create and support paid internship opportunities for students.
Develop and implement policies and processes to ensure portable and transferrable credit and credentials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The agency has continued to prioritize implementation of <b>SB 25</b> (86<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature), key legislation designed to improve the efficient transfer of credit and reduce time-to-degree completion. The agency has completed key bill requirements including allowing students to provide consent to share information about other programs if not admitted to their institution of choice; establishing earlier degree plan filing requirements; studying the effectiveness of transfer of core curriculum courses and the feasibility of meta majors; producing a report on non-transferable credit; and collecting recommended course sequence data.</li> <li>• In January 2021, the agency adopted rules to implement the <b>Texas Transfer Framework</b>. This consists of 60 semester credit hours (SCHs) of lower-division courses that a student must complete to earn an direct transfer degree. This framework aims to optimize the course selections made by students, with the intent that students who complete 60 SCHs will transfer to universities with junior standing in their major, and that as many courses as possible will apply to their selected degree programs.</li> <li>• In March 2021, the Coordinating Board adopted revised transfer rules that establish a new framework for transfer curricula and a new governance committee, the <b>Texas Transfer Advisory Committee (TTAC)</b>. The TTAC will manage and maintain the Texas Transfer Framework and the rolling out of new curricula, supported by the expertise of faculty in the discipline.</li> </ul>

*Describe the approach and list the strategies that your agency will employ to build internal organizational and staff competence in each of the three strategic pillars noted in the Texas Workforce System Strategic Plan (fiscal years 2016 to 2023)*

1. *Customer service and satisfaction*

*Agency Response:* The Coordinating Board has work underway in several key customer-facing domains to improve service and satisfaction.

- The agency is preparing to launch a significant overhaul of its main website to enhance the user experience through instituting modern web design principles and best practices, a focus on accessibility and improved governance and content curation.
- The Office of Student Financial Aid Programs prioritizes enhancing services to effectively meet customer needs, consistently tracking response-time metrics, and identifying, prioritizing, and pursuing a set of projects to improve service.
- The agency administers numerous grant programs on behalf of the state. Staff who run these programs meet regularly to streamline processes and discuss potential improvements to serving grant applicants and recipients. Additionally, the agency has convened an internal Grants Management workgroup to evaluate the administration of

grants across the agency and identify common issues and solutions to improve processes.

2. *Data-driven program improvement*

*Agency Response:* The agency has put a strong focus on using data to drive improvements to programs and processes. The allocation of over \$360 million in federal Governor's Emergency Educational Relief (GEER) funding to the Coordinating Board has supported the creation or expansion of multiple programs that advance Texas goals for higher education. The agency has ensured that such programs include specific, quantifiable measures of performance and outcomes that inform program improvement, along with avenues for evaluating and scaling programs that can help to address statewide needs.

3. *Continuous improvement and innovation*

*Agency Response:* The Coordinating Board has adopted significant efforts to enable more effective use of data for strategic decision-making, improvement, and innovation.

- **Rearchitecting our education and workforce data infrastructure.** Beginning in 2020, the Coordinating Board established the Data Modernization Initiative, a wholesale change in the agency's approach to data submission, data management, and data provisioning and products. The new data architecture will take advantage of powerful new tools that will allow "deep dive" analyses on education and workforce data and provide decisionmakers with new insights to help inform their thinking. It will equip institutions of higher education with focused, timely data to better target student advising and support efforts. Importantly, this architecture will be subject to the highest standards of governance and security to ensure that data is accessed only by authorized users, for authorized purposes, and in accordance with state and federal laws.

A key focus of this effort is to ensure that existing education and workforce data is presented to decisionmakers and stakeholders in a way that is easily accessed, readily understandable, and directly relevant to their priorities. The Coordinating Board is working in close coordination with its Tri-Agency partners, the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to provide important new insights into the interplay of educational and workforce policies and practices across K-12, higher education, and the workforce. Through this initiative, the Coordinating Board is actively evaluating existing reports and dashboards to ensure that the agency communicates data that most effectively meets users' needs.

- **Prioritizing excellent execution, management, and improvement.** The Coordinating Board has successfully integrated and expanded efforts to streamline planning, facilitate intra- and inter-agency collaboration, and enhance operational efficiency and productivity. In 2022, this effort was supported through the creation of an Assistant Commissioner for Strategic Implementation. As part of the role, the incumbent will provide agencywide leadership and support for management of federally funded initiatives, including monitoring project timelines, coordinating with project leads to assess resource needs, ensuring proper documentation, and improving processes.

**Texas Higher  
Education  
COORDINATING BOARD**

This document is available on the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board website:  
<http://highered.texas.gov>.

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