

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 Board 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 across states and nations.

This report lists the TSSB's accomplishments and progress in each of these areas in FY05, followed by a list of challenges for the future.

Texas Skill Standards Board
P.O. Box 2241
Austin, Texas 78768

ANNUAL REPORT

September 2004 – August 2005



Dear Interested Party:

On behalf of the members of the Texas Skill Standards Board (TSSB), I am pleased to present this Annual Report. It highlights the achievements and progress of the Texas skill standards system in Fiscal Year 2005. I call your attention to a couple of those successes.

One of the most gratifying accomplishments has been the realization of the TSSB's vision to recognize community and technical college programs that integrate skill standards into their curriculum. With the assistance of the TSSB's User's Guide and Skill Standards Usage Workshop, as well as incentive awards granted by the Texas State Leadership Consortium for Curriculum Development with funding from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, six college programs were recognized by the TSSB. Those Recognized Programs will now be promoted to employers as meeting industry-defined standards.

In addition, I would like to commend two of the TSSB's partnerships, the Industrial Instrumentation and Controls Technology Alliance and the Gulf Coast Process Technology Alliance. These groups developed rigorous and comprehensive skill standards that received TSSB recognition for the occupations of Industrial Instrumentation and Controls Technician and Chemical/Refining Process Technician, respectively.

Many other initiatives are described within this report. Please feel free to let us know what you think about the work of the TSSB or this report. Or if you would like to become involved in the Texas skill standards system, please call the TSSB office at (512) 936-8100.

Sincerely,

Wayne J. Oswald

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Recognized new Texas skill standards:

- ★ Industrial Instrumentation and Controls Technician – developed by the Industrial Instrumentation and Controls Technology Alliance (IICTA), an industry-driven coalition of process and manufacturing industry employers of, and education providers for, Instrumentation and Controls Technology.

The skill standards development was facilitated by the Center for Digital and Fieldbus Technological Education at Lee College as part of a National Science Foundation Grant. The standards will serve as the basis of curriculum development across IICTA community college partners in Texas.

- ★ Chemical/Refining Process Technician – developed by the Gulf Coast Process Technology Alliance (GCPTA), an industry-driven alliance of employers and educators of process technicians, with the collaboration of the Center for the Advancement of Process Technology and the College of the Mainland.

The GCPTA was established to develop standards for process technology education that meet industry's needs and to increase the availability of process technicians in the chemical and refining industries along the Gulf Coast.

Recognized updated national skill standards:

- ★ Machining Levels I and II – originally developed by the National Tooling and Machining Association (NTMA) with cooperation from seven other trade organizations and organized labor, the skill standards were updated by the National Institute of Metalworking Skills, Inc. (NIMS).

In FY05, the South Texas Manufacturers Association, which participated in the development and validation of the standards by NIMS, presented, along with the North Texas Chapter of the NTMA, the revised edition of the standards for TSSB recognition. The standards provide a foundation for community and technical colleges to develop curriculum for entry-level machinists in the State of Texas.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Developed Targeted CTC Awareness and Usage Strategies.

In FY04, the TSSB launched its Awareness and Usage Campaign to inform community and technical colleges about the opportunity and benefits of Program Recognition. This publicity resulted in the first six Recognized Programs. In FY05, the TSSB developed awareness and usage strategies to increase the numbers of Recognized Community and Technical College (CTC) Programs in Texas.

Developed CSC Outreach and Awareness Campaign.

TSSB staff researched and developed an outreach and awareness campaign to inform career schools and colleges (CSC) of skill standards, as well as test the feasibility and market demand of Program Recognition for this population. This research will be presented to TSSB members in FY06.

Implemented Outreach Letter Campaign to Local Boards.

An outreach letter was developed and mailed to Texas' 28 local workforce development boards, offering to address skill standards usage for their training providers. Initially, this mailing resulted in presentations to two boards. Strategies will be updated and expanded to local boards in FY06.

SYSTEM PROGRESS

The TSSB continued to implement and refine its tools and assist community and technical colleges to use skill standards.

Delivered Skill Standards Usage Workshops and Presentations.

Skill Standards Usage Workshops were conducted on eight Texas college campuses, and skill standards presentations were delivered at community and technical college professional association conferences and at the quarterly meeting of the presidents' Texas Association of Community Colleges, with over 100 participants served.

Revised User's Guide. Based on the experience and comments of colleges that piloted this tool in FY04, the TSSB improved upon *A User's Guide: Incorporating Skill Standards into Community and Technical College Curriculum* by streamlining the steps and restructuring the contents to provide a more coherent format.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

In FY04, the TSSB adopted policies to recognize community and technical college programs that integrate skill standards into their curriculum. In FY05, accomplishments included:

Recognized Six Community and State College Programs:

Customer Service Representative Program at Brookhaven and Cedar Valley Colleges of the Dallas County Community College District (DCCCD) – for integrating the Customer Service and Sales Skill Standards into the curricula.

As a sister college in the DCCCD, Cedar Valley was the first to take advantage of the TSSB's Program Recognition Replication policy by submitting the identical curriculum for recognition as Brookhaven. By establishing common, skill standards based curriculum, colleges signal to employers that their graduates have accomplished the same set of skills.

Air Conditioning and Refrigeration AAS Degree Program at Lamar State College-Port Arthur – for integrating the Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration Technician Skill Standards into the curriculum.

Safety Management Technology Program at Lee College – for integrating the Hazardous Materials Maintenance Technician Skill Standards into the curriculum.

Open Source Technology and Radio Frequency Identification Technology Programs at North Lake College of the DCCCD – for integrating the Web Development and Administration and Manufacturing Logistics and Inventory Control Skill Standards into their respective curricula.

Adopted Program Recognition Policy Amendment: Based on experience with the Recognized Program pilots, the TSSB improved the Program Recognition application to enable more accurate evaluation of the skill standards integration, and delegated authority to the Chair to grant Program Recognition between TSSB meetings to avoid implementation delays.

Developed Program Recognition Award Packet: The TSSB developed promotional materials for Recognized Programs, including a sample press release for the local community and a sample letter to employer recruiters.

RECOGNITION AND MAINTENANCE OF SKILL STANDARDS

The TSSB continues to recognize both new skill standards developed in Texas and nationally-established, industry-endorsed standards, and to maintain the currency of existing skill standards. To date, 34 standards are housed in the Texas Skill Standards Repository. In the future, the TSSB will take advantage of Texas' target industry clusters initiative to identify additional skill standards development and recognition opportunities.

PROMOTION OF STANDARDS TO EMPLOYERS

An ongoing challenge is to promote the use of voluntary standards and credentials among industry. In FY06 and beyond, the TSSB will publicize Recognized Programs to employers as a source of qualified applicants for their jobs. As part of this effort, the TSSB will explore, with community and technical colleges, the possibility of indicating on a college credential that an individual has graduated from a TSSB-Recognized Program. This step would be the final structural element to implement the TSSB's vision of a state skill standards system that truly meets the needs of Texas industry.

FACILITATION OF SKILL STANDARDS USAGE

In FY06, the TSSB will implement targeted strategies to increase the numbers of Recognized Programs that meet industry-defined standards. In addition, the TSSB will decide whether to launch a skill standards awareness and usage campaign to career schools and colleges.

STATES AND NATIONAL SYSTEMS ALIGNMENT

In FY06 and beyond, the TSSB will begin to implement strategies to address its third mandate to enhance the portability of skills across not only the State of Texas, but other states and nations. This plan will be an ongoing challenge, which will evolve and be enhanced over time as the TSSB consults with its state skill standards partners.