



# Using Major Sources of Support in Texas for Back on Track Pathways for Opportunity Youth

## AT A GLANCE

This report examines state policies and funding streams available to support alternative schools and programs for opportunity youth in Texas. Based on interviews with policy experts and practitioners from 12 schools and programs across the state, the report shares examples of how funding and policies are being leveraged to support postsecondary success outcomes in alignment with the three phases of the Back on Track model-- Enriched Preparation, Postsecondary Bridging and First Year Support and Beyond. The report also identifies programming challenges and funding gaps and recommends strategies for maximizing funding opportunities that can lead to achievement of the state's postsecondary success outcome goals for opportunity youth.

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## About Jobs for the Future

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# Introduction

Even as the U.S. economy recovers from the pandemic and ensuing recession, young adults ages 16 to 24 are in danger of suffering lifelong effects from the disruption to their schooling and employment. One of the disastrous aspects of a recession is that the short-term impact on young workers often turns into long-term damage to their economic prospects. They lose access to training and work experiences at a critical moment in their career development, and this lowers future earnings.<sup>1</sup> Pre-pandemic research shows that higher wages at age 23 predict higher wages as older adults.<sup>2</sup>

A Strada Education Network survey of recent high school graduates suggests many young adults feel overwhelming levels of uncertainty, anxiety, and confusion about their future and are not sure how to make wise decisions about their education or career.<sup>3</sup> The imperative to help these disconnected young adults successfully prepare for and transition into postsecondary education and attain credentials has never been more critical.

Over the past decade, Jobs for the Future (JFF)—which drives transformation of the U.S. education and workforce systems to achieve equitable economic advancement for all—has partnered with numerous institutions and organizations in Texas. The goal? To implement strategies to reengage young adults who have become disconnected from school and work (often referred to as opportunity youth), so they can graduate from high school college- and career-ready, transition to postsecondary education and training, and persist to credential attainment. The COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic fallout have only increased this work’s need and importance. The share of young Americans who were neither enrolled in school nor working more than doubled by June 2020, to 28%.<sup>4</sup> JFF brings its evidence-based Back on Track (BOT) model to this work, helping schools and programs implement proven practices to boost the success of opportunity youth.<sup>5</sup> This approach can help the state meet the 60X30TX goal set by the Higher Education Coordinating Board, which aims for 60% of Texans attaining a marketable credential by 2030.<sup>6</sup>





# Back on Track: Postsecondary Success

## Enriched preparation

Integrates high-quality college/career-ready instruction with strong academic and social supports.



## Postsecondary bridging

Builds college/career-ready skills and provides informed transition counseling.



## First year support and beyond

Offers appropriate supports to ensure postsecondary persistence and career success.

As detailed in JFF's recent report, Texas is remarkable in the myriad initiatives, policies, and practices to prepare young adults from low-income backgrounds for postsecondary education and careers.<sup>7</sup> This report builds on JFF's earlier work by further examining key funding streams and policies that support the implementation of BOT pathways and alternative programs designed to increase the success of opportunity youth. It illustrates the varied and sometimes unique approaches to using these funds in schools and programs around the state.

Detailed profiles of three BOT sites and nine other non-BOT alternative schools and programs (see Appendix A) demonstrate how to use Texas policies and funding streams to support opportunity youth in completing high school and transitioning to postsecondary education and training. The three BOT sites included in this report, along with seven others, have received three years of coaching from JFF, with generous funding by the Greater Texas Foundation.

We completed our work in two phases. During Phase I, we interviewed practitioners implementing BOT pathways and experts in programs and policies supporting opportunity youth in Texas. We also researched funding available through the Texas Education Agency (TEA) and Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) to understand how policies and funding were being implemented in support of the BOT approach. During Phase II, we interviewed practitioners and system leaders from nine alternative schools and programs in Corpus Christi, Houston, San Antonio, and Lufkin serving opportunity youth that were not implementing the full BOT model.<sup>8</sup> We sought to supplement our understanding from the Phase I sites and explore how these programs used available funding sources and deployed available resources to support opportunity youth in completing high school and beyond. We also identified funding gaps. (See Appendix B for a list of interviewees.)

We found BOT and non-BOT sites relied on two major streams to fund their programs in varied, unique, and often innovative ways to support opportunity youth to obtain a high school credential and successfully transition to postsecondary education and training opportunities. Other major findings included:

- Charter schools and nonprofits have the most flexibility in using state funding for both high school graduation and postsecondary bridging.
- Adult education funding is insufficiently robust and burdened by bureaucratic complexity, making it difficult to access.
- There are gaps in understanding and utilization of some available funding



streams that could support student transitions to postsecondary education and training.

- Youth in juvenile justice facilities have limited options for gaining the knowledge and skills necessary to further their education and career opportunities.

## Policies and Funding Supporting Opportunity Youth

Over the past decade, Texas has established an array of state policies and funding sources to support high school completion for individuals who lack a high school credential and have become disconnected from school. These policies and funding streams assist traditional and alternative high school diploma-granting institutions and schools and nonprofit organizations offering high school equivalency programs (HSEP). These mechanisms support JFF's BOT model, which focuses on ensuring reengaged young people attain the credentials, skills, and knowledge required for postsecondary education and careers and make those transitions successfully.

The state provides many funding options for both high school diploma-granting programs and HSEPs through traditional and alternative programs (as summarized in Table 1). Policies can work with the funding streams to offer the flexibility for meeting the needs of students who are in danger of dropping out, have dropped out, or are behind in core subjects (as summarized in Table 2).

Funding use and availability are driven by a combination of population served and the institution providing services. Two agencies provide the majority of funding that aligns with the BOT approach in support of opportunity youth—TEA and TWC.

Table 1.

## Texas State Funding Sources Aligned With Back on Track Postsecondary Success Model: Key Funding Sources

**Foundation School Program (FSP).** This is the primary source of state funding for school districts, providing a basic allotment based on a district's average daily attendance (ADA). To be eligible to generate FSP funding for attendance, a student must be in attendance and provided instruction at least two hours (half day) or at least four hours (full day attendance). Students participating in work-based learning opportunities are eligible to generate FSP funding. Weighted ADA (WADA) is an adjusted student count that offers additional allotments based on student and district characteristics (for example, special education). Those that can be used to provide resources for programs and services for opportunity youth are described below.

- **Special Education.** Students with disabilities who receive special education are assigned weights ranging from 1.15 to 5.0 based on the duration of the service provided and the location of the instruction.
- **Compensatory Education.** Compensatory education funding provides resources for programs and services designed to supplement the regular education program for students identified as at risk of dropping out of school. Funding is based on a student who is educationally disadvantaged and resides in a Census block group defined as economically disadvantaged based on U.S. Census data. Weights are based on five tiers from least to most severely economically disadvantaged, ranging from 0.2250 to 0.2750.
- **Career and Technical Education (CTE).** CTE funding is available for eligible students in grades 7-12 who are enrolled in approved CTE programs and can be used to pay for CTE course materials and staff members' salaries. For each student in ADA in an approved CTE course, a district is entitled to the following weights: 1.1 for CTE courses not in an approved program of study; 1.28 for levels one and two CTE courses in an approved program of study; 1.47 for levels three and four CTE courses in an approved program of study. In addition, school districts are also eligible to receive \$50 for each student in ADA enrolled in a TEA-designated P-TECH (grades 9-12) or New Tech Network (grades 7-12) campus. P-TECH and NTN campuses must be designated as such by TEA. If a CTE course meets state requirements for dual credit, students enrolled in the courses are eligible to be counted for CTE contact hour funding according to the weighted formula above.
- **Bilingual/English-language class weights.** Bilingual education weights of 0.1 or 0.15 are provided for students enrolled in a bilingual education program using a dual language immersion/one-way or two-way program model. An additional 0.05 additional weight is offered for students enrolled in a dual language immersion two-way program who are not limited-English proficient.

<p><b>HSEP funding</b> is provided under the state’s FSP for students enrolled in a high school equivalency program. A student is counted as in attendance based on actual daily contact minutes the student receives instruction in the HSEP, traditional classes that count toward graduation requirements, or both. A student must receive instruction in the HSEP or the HSEP in combination with traditional coursework at least 45 minutes on a given day.</p>
<p><b>The College, Career, or Military Readiness Outcomes Bonus (CCMR OB).</b> An annual bonus paid to districts for graduates who exceed a performance threshold for readiness as defined in accountability standards, such as meeting Texas Success Initiative (TSI) criteria and earning an industry-based credential (IBC) among three groups (economically disadvantaged, non-economically disadvantaged, and students served in special education programs). Districts receive \$5,000 per student in the economically disadvantaged group, \$3,000 per student in the non-economically disadvantaged group, and \$2,000 for students in the special education group.</p>
<p><b>College Preparation Assessment Reimbursements</b> provide funding to districts for the cost of the administration of college preparation assessments—SAT, ACT, and Texas Success Initiative Assessment (TSIA)—once per student either in the spring of their junior year or in their senior year.</p>
<p><b>IBC Reimbursements</b> provide a one-time reimbursement to districts and open-enrollment charter schools to defray the cost of IBC exams taken by students in grades 9-12. One reimbursement per student is allowed for a passed exam.</p>
<p><b>Adult Education and Literacy (AEL)</b> is a program administered by TWC through a competitive process using Federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) funds authorized under Title II of the federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), the state’s general revenue, and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). Under this program, TWC partners with local AEL providers, Texas Workforce Solutions offices, and nonprofit agencies to increase opportunities for adult learners to transition to postsecondary education, training, or employment. Individuals who are at least 16 years old, lack a high school credential or function below the high school level, or cannot speak, read, or write English and are seeking career training, high school equivalency preparation, or college are eligible to participate in AEL programs. Funds are allocated to each of the 28 workforce areas in Texas based on the number of individuals at least 18 years of age residing in the area who lack a high school diploma or its equivalent.</p>
<p><b>Additional Funding Sources</b></p>
<p><b>Summer CTE grant program</b> is a competitive grant program that provides funding for districts to offer students greater access to career opportunities.</p>
<p><b>Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE)</b> provide no-cost activities before and after school and during summer for K-12 students in Title I schools. The program is federally funded through 21st Century Community Learning Centers and is competitively funded at the state level by TEA.</p>

**Communities in Schools of Texas (CIS)** is a model designed to keep students persisting in education and ultimately graduating from high school. CIS customizes supports for students and families and provides individual case management services to help students fully engage in learning, involving the community as part of the process. The program is funded through a competitive grant process using a combination of state and federal TANF funds.

**Ability to Benefit (ATB)** is a provision under Title IV of the Higher Education Act that allows an individual without a high school diploma or equivalency to receive student financial aid to pay for postsecondary education and training if they are enrolled in a career pathway program. To receive the financial aid, the student must first complete six credits (or equivalent) toward a degree or certificate, pass an exam approved by the U.S. Department of Education (such as the TSIA), or complete a state process approved by the secretary of education.

**TEA** administers the Foundation School Program (FSP), which forms the core of how the state finances public P-12 education and was restructured in 2019 with the passage of HB3, a wide-reaching school finance reform. School districts receive a basic allotment (\$6,160 for 2022-23) based on average daily attendance (ADA) and can qualify for additional funding based on student and district characteristics. FSP's provisions include several that could support programs for opportunity youth, including:

- **Compensatory education funding** provides weighted funding based on the ADA of students identified as educationally and economically disadvantaged and can be used to support programs and services designed to supplement the regular education program for students identified as at risk of dropping out of school—including alternative education programs within a district. This funding aligns with the core features of the Enriched Preparation phase of the BOT model but probably is not sufficient for supporting postsecondary bridging activities.
- The **Tiered Career and Technical Education (CTE) allotment** provides weighted funding to school districts for eligible full-time equivalent students in approved CTE programs. Funding can be used to pay for CTE course materials and staff members' salaries and in partnership with other organizations (such as community colleges, businesses, and nonprofits) to cover the costs of providing CTE programs. Thus, a district's CTE allotment can support the postsecondary bridging component of the BOT model, assisting in building college and career-ready skills.

- *HSEP* funding is also provided under FSP for students ages 17 to 21 who meet specific eligibility criteria. They must have one-third or fewer of the credits needed for graduation, be at least two years removed from their initial ninth-grade enrollment, and receive instruction in an HSEP for at least 45 minutes on a given day. Although any school district or open-enrollment charter school can apply for authorization to operate an HSEP, students included in a district's HSEP ADA count cannot also be counted under the district's ADA as part of the basic FSP. Nevertheless, these funds can support students in obtaining a high school credential they can use to transition to educational and career opportunities.
- The *College, Career, or Military Readiness (CCMR) Outcomes Bonus* provides funding to school districts based on the number of annual graduates who demonstrate college, career, or military readiness in excess of specified thresholds.
- The *College Preparation Assessment and IBC reimbursements* offer funding for the cost of the administration of college preparation assessment and for IBC exams taken by students before graduation. This funding can be important in supporting opportunity youth seeking college admission or career certifications.
- An HSEP subsidy is provided through a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between TEA and TWC to provide funds for individuals 21 years of age and older to take high school equivalency (HSE) exams—GED or High School Equivalency Test (HiSET)—in support of a Texas Certificate of High School Equivalency (TxCHSE). The funds cover the cost of the exams. Individuals do not need to be enrolled in a TWC-affiliated adult education program to access these funds.

In recent years, TEA additionally has offered at least three competitive grants designed to support students to high school completion and beyond. These include a summer CTE grant program to help students in accessing career opportunities and credentials; Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE), which can provide opportunities for students to enroll in courses leading to an industry-based certification (IBC) before or after school; and Communities in Schools (CIS) of Texas, a program offering customized supports for students and families to keep students persisting in school. The federal 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers program supports the ACE program, and state and federal funds support CIS programs.

Although not directly targeted at high school completion, other sources of federal funds commonly used to support programs for opportunity youth include:

- Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), Title I Part A funding for improving basic programs for schools with high proportions of students from low-income backgrounds
- ESEA, Title I, Part D funding for children and youth who are neglected, delinquent, or at risk
- Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), Part B funding for students with disabilities
- Vocational rehabilitation funding, which can be used to serve youth and students with disabilities when pre-employment transition services are needed to prepare for and obtain postsecondary education and employment opportunities.

**TWC** is the state agency overseeing and providing workforce development services to Texas employers and jobseekers. TWC is part of the statewide Texas Workforce Solutions network, comprised of 28 local Workforce Development Boards, their contracted service providers and community partners, and over 170 comprehensive and affiliate Workforce Solutions Offices providing locally customized services in each region of the state.<sup>9</sup> As a result, the program offerings and populations targeted for services can be highly variable.

TWC administers the second major funding stream supporting opportunity youth in Texas—the Adult Education and Literacy (AEL) program—through a competitive process. Most of the funding comes from federal sources—some from Federal Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA) authorized under Title II of WIOA and some from TANF. The state’s general revenue also supports AEL. Each of the 28 workforce boards receives funds based on the number of individuals at least 18 years old residing in the area who lack a high school diploma or its equivalent. The AEL program provides English language, math, reading, and writing instruction to participants to prepare for the workforce, attain an HSE credential, and/or enter into college or career training.

WIOA specifies the types of organizations eligible to apply for funds in the competitive state process and includes only organizations that have demonstrated



effectiveness in providing AEL services.<sup>10</sup> Effectiveness is based on an applicant's performance data related to improving the skills of eligible individuals. Ten organization types are eligible to apply for funding: a local educational agency, a community-based or faith-based organization, a volunteer literacy organization, an institution of higher education, a public or private nonprofit agency, a library, a public housing authority, a nonprofit institution different than the others listed, a consortium or coalition of eligible agencies, and a partnership between an employer and any of the listed entities.<sup>11</sup>

Once eligibility is established based on effectiveness, there are 13 additional factors specified in AEFLA section 231(e) and 34 CFR 463.20(d) that must be considered in making an award.<sup>12</sup> These factors are commonly referred to as the "13 considerations." They include issues ranging from the degree to which the provider is responsive to regional needs identified in a local workforce development plan to the use of instructional practices that include the essential components of reading instruction. Programs specifically targeted to out-of-school youth have 14 additional program requirements. Grantees are required to meet both state and federal performance and accountability measures in education and training as well as enrollment targets. Enrollment targets are associated with the types of services provided to participants that commonly include AEL support, integrated education, training and workforce preparation activities, and programs leading to a secondary school diploma.

Even though the AEL program can be a significant source of funding for programs that support all three phases of the BOT model, the complexity of the process required both to apply for and implement AEL services is, according to interviewees, time-consuming and overly focused on compliance, which can be a serious barrier to program providers. Moreover, school districts have few incentives to either apply for funding or join a competitive bid.

### **Supporting Policies**

The funding available in Texas to support programs designed to lead to a high school credential and postsecondary education and training for opportunity youth are supported by several key state policies that foster reengagement of individuals who have become disconnected from school (as summarized in Table 2). Most importantly, perhaps, is HB 1137, which allows districts to include in their ADA count for state funding individuals ages 21 to 26 admitted by a school district to complete

requirements for a high school diploma. Certain disincentives exist in the state's accountability system for school districts to reengage youth who left high school without a diploma.<sup>13</sup> Specifically, if reengaged students do not recover credits quickly and graduate with their cohort, they can be counted multiple times in the district's longitudinal completion rate. As a result, districts prioritize young people close to graduation in their reengagement efforts and might not be persuaded to serve older students.

<b>Table 2.</b>
<b>State and Federal Policies Supporting Opportunity Youth</b>
<b>Texas Policies</b>
<b>House Bill 1137</b> allows districts to include in their ADA count individuals between the ages of 21 and 26 who are admitted by a school district to complete requirements for a high school diploma.
<b>Optional Flexible School Day Program (OFSDP)</b> allows districts to provide flexible hours and days of attendance for some students. The goal of the program is to improve graduation rates for students who are in danger of dropping out of school, have dropped out, or are behind in core subject courses.
<b>Open-enrollment charter schools</b> allow flexibility in curricula, instruction, and use of budget. A charter operator functions like a school district and can be a nonprofit organization, a higher education institution, or a governmental entity.
<b>District of Innovation status</b> can provide flexibility through the use of innovative curriculum or methods, modifications to the school day or year, and accountability and assessment measures that exceed state and federal law and allows exemptions from some requirements related to educator certification, teacher contracts, school schedule, class size, and purchasing and contract requirements.
<b>High school equivalency program (HSEP)</b> can be operated by any school district or open-enrollment charter school that applies for authorization to run an HSEP. The in-school HSEP is designed to provide an alternative for high school students age 16 and over who are at risk of not graduating from high school and earning a high school diploma.
<b>Dual credit</b> allows an eligible high school student to enroll in college courses and receive credit for the course(s) from both the college and high school. Dual credit courses may be taught on a high school campus by an approved instructor or on the college campus. Both academic and technical courses can be considered for dual credit.
<b>Federal Policies</b>
<b>Ability to Benefit (ATB)</b> is a provision under Title IV of the Higher Education Act that allows an individual without a high school diploma or equivalency to receive student financial aid to pay for postsecondary education and training if they are enrolled in a career pathway program. To obtain the financial aid, the student must be enrolled in an eligible career pathway (determined by the institution) and either complete six credits (or equivalent) toward a degree or certificate or pass an exam approved by the U.S. Department of Education (such as the TSIA).

Another important policy, the Optional Flexible School Day Program, allows districts to provide flexible hours of attendance for students who are in danger of dropping out of school, have dropped out, or are behind in core subject courses. This policy allows school districts to provide flexible programming, such as morning, afternoon, and evening classes, and to capture funding for students even if they attend school for only 45 minutes a day. One downside associated with this policy is that districts must apply to participate, develop an implementation plan, and track student attendance separately from the regular ADA system.

State policy also supports open-enrollment charter schools, which can be important in offering alternative schooling that supports the acquisition of a high school credential because they are allowed flexibility in curricula, instruction, and use of budget. As they are considered public schools, they receive funding under FSP, much like how funds are allocated to traditional districts, including the CTE allotment described earlier. Similarly, an independent school district (ISD) can apply for District of Innovation status, which also provides flexibility in using innovative curriculum, modifications to the school day or year, and accountability and assessment measures, all of which can be used to provide alternative schooling options for opportunity youth.

Any independent school district or open-enrollment charter school in Texas can apply to operate an HSEP. This policy is designed to support alternative options for high school students ages 16 and over at risk of not graduating from high school. School districts can offer an HSEP in addition to traditional high school degree-granting programs.

One policy that supports students as they near the end of their high school program and aligns with BOT's postsecondary bridging phase is dual credit, which allows students to enroll in college courses and receive credit from both the college and the high school. This policy encourages students to prepare for postsecondary transitions by engaging in college and career readiness activities and seamlessly transitioning to a postsecondary option. The district's ADA accounting includes students who take a course for dual credit during school hours, provided the district or charter school has an MOU with the college. Both academic and technical courses can be considered for dual credit. As such, students can be counted for CTE contact hour funding if the dual enrollment courses meet Texas Administrative Code requirements. Among other items, the MOU must describe the funding sources for tuition and transportation and any required fees or textbooks for students participating in the dual credit program. Students may be required to pay these costs, although the college may cover some.

Somewhat similar to the dual enrollment provisions for high school programs, the federal Ability to Benefit (ATB) provision under Title IV of the federal Higher Education Act

allows adults to dually enroll in an HSEP while receiving federal financial aid for enrolling in an eligible postsecondary career pathway program. To obtain the financial aid (typically in the form of a Pell Grant and/or reduced tuition), the individual must be enrolled in an eligible career pathway program, which each institution determines, and either accruing six credit hours toward a degree or certificate or pass an exam approved by the U.S. Department of Education. The TSIA qualifies as an approved exam. Both dual enrollment and ATB have the potential to provide critical support for the postsecondary bridging component of JFF's BOT approach.

## Putting the Policies to Work

To illustrate how funding and supporting policies can be used to support the implementation of BOT pathways and increase the success of Texas opportunity youth, Appendix A provides in-depth descriptions of the 12 sites included in our work. These include the three Phase I sites implementing the BOT model and nine Phase II sites in four regions of Texas providing programs and services to support opportunity youth. Table 3 provides a detailed summary of the three BOT programs' characteristics, illustrating differences in population served, staffing models, program approaches, and funding sources used. Table 4 provides selected characteristics of the nine Phase II sites, showing the organizational type, program focus, staffing models, key partnerships, and major funding sources .

<b>Table 3.</b> <b>Key Characteristics of Sites Supporting Back on Track Programs for Opportunity Youth</b>			
<b>Program Features</b>	<b>La Joya College &amp; Career Center</b>	<b>Texas Can Academy Fort Worth Westcreek</b>	<b>Restore Education</b>
<b>Program Overview</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offers both traditional high school diploma and high school equivalency program</li> <li>Operates as a “specialty school” within the La Joya ISD</li> <li>Strong focus on college and career readiness with bridge to postsecondary college and career opportunities</li> <li>Flexible scheduling based on four hours per day</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offers traditional high school diploma</li> <li>Part of nonprofit network of 14 open-enrollment charter high schools</li> <li>Flexible scheduling with four academic classes per day</li> <li>Students can enroll at any time in one of four nine-week terms</li> <li>Multiple career pathways offered</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offers high school equivalency program</li> <li>Nonprofit organization providing continuum of services to support postsecondary success in partnership with six sites throughout San Antonio</li> <li>Provides college readiness and support and career readiness and training with flexible options</li> <li>Offers 10 career pathways with certification</li> </ul>
<b>Population Served</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individuals between the ages of 18 and 26 who were unable to complete high school graduation requirements with their cohort</li> <li>Must be resident of La Joya ISD 250-300 students served annually over three semesters (winter, spring, summer)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individuals between the ages of 14 and 21 who have struggled in a traditional high school setting</li> <li>About 375 students served annually</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individuals who are at least 16 years of age who have lost connections with traditional educational settings</li> <li>About 1,200 individuals are served annually (although most are adults)</li> </ul>

<p><b>Staffing</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12-14 full-time and part-time instructional staff members</li> <li>• Two administrators</li> <li>• One part-time social worker</li> <li>• One counselor</li> <li>• Two support staff members</li> <li>• Some staff members shared with other district schools, and additional resources can be drawn on from those schools as needed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 13 full-time instructional staff members</li> <li>• One online recovery support staff member</li> <li>• One literacy coach</li> <li>• One academic advisor</li> <li>• One student advocate</li> <li>• One counselor</li> <li>• One campus transition coordinator</li> <li>• Two instructional aides</li> <li>• Three support staff members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 15-20 full-time and part-time instructional staff members</li> <li>• Five instructional aides</li> <li>• Four to six training advisors and career placement staff members</li> <li>• Two college navigators</li> <li>• One social worker</li> <li>• One student success specialist</li> <li>• Six intake and data staff members</li> <li>• Three student outcomes staff members</li> <li>• 10 leadership staff members</li> </ul>
<p><b>Partnerships</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dual enrollment options provided through South Texas College and University of Texas Rio Grande Valley</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First-year supports provided in partnership with Tarrant County Community College, Dallas Community College, and Texas Christian University</li> <li>• Community partnerships provide wraparound services for students (food, clothing, counseling, child care)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dual enrollment options provided through San Antonio College</li> <li>• Partnerships with Alamo Colleges District, Texas A&amp;M University-San Antonio, and University of Texas at San Antonio</li> </ul>



<b>Primary Funding Source</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State FSP (including local tax revenue)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State FSP for open-enrollment charter schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>State AEL funding</li> </ul>
<b>Additional Funding Sources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federal ESEA, Title I, Part A</li> <li>Federal Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief Fund (ESSER), Title III (until 2023)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Federal ESEA, Title I, Part A</li> <li>Federal school improvement funds</li> <li>Federal school nutrition funds</li> <li>Federal IDEA, Part B funding</li> <li>Federal Teacher Incentive Funds (TIF)</li> <li>Local foundation and development funds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>TWC grant for integrated education and training (IET)</li> <li>Local foundations, city of San Antonio grants</li> <li>United Way grants</li> <li>Earned income from off-site workshops and activities</li> <li>Individual and corporate giving</li> </ul>

<b>Table 4. Key Characteristics of Phase II Sites</b>				
<b>Site</b>	<b>Organizational Type/Program Focus</b>	<b>Staffing</b>	<b>Key Partnerships</b>	<b>Main Funding Sources/ Approach</b>
<b>Corpus Christi</b>				
<b>Tuloso-Midway Academic Career Center</b>	Within-district alternative school  High school diploma, career training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Six instructional staff members for core content areas</li> <li>One special education teacher</li> <li>One electives teacher (CTE certified)</li> <li>Two paraprofessionals</li> <li>One full-time counselor</li> <li>Access to district's social worker and school psychologist on as-needed basis</li> </ul>	Del Mar College	FSP (State Compensatory Education, CTE, special education)

<p><b>Crossroads at Education Service Center, Region 2</b></p>	<p>Nonprofit organization</p> <p>GED, English language classes, career training for individuals 16+</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 40 part-time teachers</li> </ul>	<p>Craft Training Center of the Coastal Bend</p>	<p>AEL</p>
<p><b>Solomon M. Coles High School &amp; Education Center at Corpus Christi ISD</b></p>	<p>Within-district alternative school</p> <p>Dropout recovery, high school diploma</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 12 instructional staff members for core content areas</li> <li>• One art teacher</li> <li>• Two CTE instructors</li> <li>• Two special education teachers</li> <li>• Three administrators</li> <li>• Two counselors</li> </ul>	<p>Communities in Schools</p>	<p>FSP (State Compensatory Education, CTE, special education)</p>
<p><b>Houston</b></p>				
<p><b>Harris County Education Transition Center</b></p>	<p>Charter school for students involved in juvenile justice system (Excel Academy Charter Network)</p> <p>GED and online credit recovery for students who are currently or were previously justice involved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Four instructional staff members for core content areas</li> <li>• One special education teacher</li> <li>• One data specialist</li> <li>• Three school juvenile probation officers</li> <li>• One school-based therapist</li> <li>• One campus behavior coordinator</li> <li>• One principal</li> <li>• Seven academic coaches</li> <li>• One strategic partnership manager</li> <li>• One constable</li> <li>• One special projects coordinator</li> </ul>	<p>WorkTexas Training Center</p>	<p>FSP (charter schools, special education, federal compensatory education); Harris County Juvenile Probation Department and Child Protective Services cover salaries of some staff members; WorkTexas covers costs for CTE</p>

<p><b>Premier High School - Houston (Gallery Furniture North)</b></p>	<p>Open enrollment charter school (Responsive Education Solutions)</p> <p>High school diploma, credit recovery, dual credit, career training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five to six core instructional staff members for core content areas</li> <li>• One special education teacher</li> <li>• Two office staff members</li> <li>• One campus director</li> </ul>	<p>WorkTexas Training Center; Houston Community College</p>	<p>FSP (charter schools, CTE, special education). CTE funds are shared with WorkTexas to cover staff members' salaries. WorkTexas can use additional available funds to support the CTE programming or other services for participants.</p>
<p><b>Wesley Community Center (WCC)</b></p>	<p>Nonprofit organization</p> <p>Career planning, coaching, training for out-of-school youth ages 16-24</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One eligibility and navigation specialist</li> <li>• One coach/case manager</li> </ul>	<p>Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries (ACAM)</p>	<p>WIOA funding; WCC can draw on additional available funding for services not covered by the NextGen grant</p>

<b>Lufkin</b>				
<b>Stubblefield Learning Center</b>	<p>Nonprofit organization (cooperative among the following: Angelina County Chamber of Commerce, Angelina College, Central ISD, Diboll ISD, Hudson ISD, Lufkin ISD, Zavalla ISD)</p> <p>High school diploma</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Five instructional staff members for core content areas and electives</li> <li>• One principal</li> <li>• One social worker</li> <li>• One student navigator</li> <li>• One custodian</li> <li>• One Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) administrator</li> <li>• One administrative secretary</li> </ul>	<p>Angelina College, Legacy Institute</p>	<p>Funding is provided primarily by the five participating school districts in proportion to size from their FSP allocations; individual, corporate, and foundation donations cover additional expenses</p>
<b>San Antonio</b>				
<b>Healy-Murphy Center</b>	<p>Nonprofit organization</p> <p>GED and high school diploma</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 17 teachers covering instructional content</li> <li>• One executive director</li> <li>• One principal</li> <li>• One assistant principal</li> <li>• Two mental health counselors</li> <li>• One case manager</li> <li>• One social worker</li> <li>• Three front-office staff members</li> <li>• One CFO</li> <li>• One assistant and two full-time cafeteria staff members</li> <li>• One head of maintenance and two janitors</li> </ul>	<p>Opportunity Center</p>	<p>TEA FSP funding, and these funds are used to support nine staff members who teach at the high school. Additional funds are raised from United Way, city of San Antonio, and federal food programs as well as locally generated rental income.</p>

The two tables highlight several important findings. First, the populations served and funding streams used by BOT and other alternative programs are similar, but BOT sites have more robust staffing models and partnerships in place for postsecondary bridging activities. Second, while all the sites tend to use the two major funding streams available to support opportunity youth, the partnerships and use of secondary funding sources vary. No single model for funding or programming emerges. Rather, each program has used the funding and policies necessary to address the needs of the population served.

For example, one of the BOT sites, the La Joya College & Career Center, offers an alternative program within an independent school district for students ages 18 to 26. The program employs the optional flexible school day program and offers both a traditional high school diploma and an HSEP to accommodate older students. Funding is provided primarily by the state's FSP and is an important in-district option for students who otherwise would drop out of school.

The Texans Can Academy Fort Worth Westcreek (TCA Westcreek) site is an open-enrollment charter high school that also uses flexible scheduling and was included as a BOT site. Its alternative program focuses on students ages 14 to 21, offering a traditional high school diploma as well as multiple career pathways. The state FSP for open-enrollment charter schools provides the lion's share of the funding for TCA Westcreek, which uses federal funding sources and local foundation funds to support its program. Unlike in-district alternative schools, charter school status gives TCA Westcreek flexibility in partnerships and in raising and using supplementary funding for program support.

Restore Education, a nonprofit education organization and a BOT site, supports postsecondary success through a continuum of services, including an HSEP and 10 career pathways. Program participants are at least 16 years old, although most individuals in Restore Education's programs are older. State AEL funding administered by TWC provides the core funding for Restore Education's programs. As a nonprofit organization, Restore Education has the flexibility to raise and use funds to supplement TWC funding.

The non-BOT sites have similar fundamental services and funding streams, and several use unique approaches to support programs for opportunity youth. Nevertheless, their programs and services seem less robust, especially for activities aligning with postsecondary bridging, and many may lack both

resources and capacity to expand their programs and staffing models. Healy-Murphy Center in San Antonio, for example, is a nonprofit that offers a traditional high school credential and a GED program for students ages 14 to 21 who have had difficulty succeeding in a traditional school environment. Under an MOU with Healy-Murphy, the San Antonio ISD includes Healy-Murphy students in its ADA count to receive funds under the state FSP, and the district uses those funds to pay for high school staff members who are hired by Healy-Murphy. As a nonprofit, Healy-Murphy has the flexibility to receive corporate and foundation support as well as locally generated revenue to support and supplement its services. These funds currently support wraparound service as well as job placement and career guidance and could be used more specifically to focus on postsecondary bridging and the first-year support components of the BOT model.

Stubblefield Learning Center (SLC) in a rural area of Texas is organized as a nonprofit cooperative among five school districts, the county chamber of commerce, and Angelina College. Organized 25 years ago to address the area's high rate of students dropping out of school, Stubblefield focuses on dropout recovery and prevention, serving as an alternative pathway to graduation for students in danger of not completing their high school credential. Students who attend SLC are considered members of their sending district and are counted in that district's ADA under the state's FSP. Most students also qualify to be counted for the weighted compensatory education funding. The five districts support SLC proportionate to their size, with larger districts providing more support than smaller districts. As a nonprofit, SLC can raise additional funding through individual, corporate, and foundation donations to cover expenses beyond basic operating costs. A recent grant from the T.L.L. Temple Foundation, for example, supports a student navigator position, student stipends, and incentives aligning with BOT's postsecondary bridging recommended activities. Again, the nonprofit status offers the flexibility the program needs to use state funds to expand services for SLC students.

Premier High School - Houston (Gallery Furniture North (GFN)) is a charter school that is one of over 80 campuses under the Responsive Education Solutions (Responsive Ed) charter management organization. GFN allows students to work toward a high school diploma at their own pace through credit recovery while simultaneously providing opportunities to work toward career-oriented certificates. The school partners with WorkTexas Training Center (WorkTexas), a Houston-based nonprofit, to provide career training and



certificate programs. GFN is supported primarily by charter school and CTE funding under the state's FSP. Responsive Ed shares its CTE funds with WorkTexas under an agreement that pays WorkTexas 30% of the CTE funds if Responsive Ed pays for the instructor and 85% of the funds if WorkTexas pays for the instructor. The charter school and WorkTexas can raise additional funding to support GFN. WorkTexas has raised additional funds from individual and corporate donations to support the CTE programming at the high school. Notably, WorkTexas receives WIOA funding for its adult-oriented programs, but these funds cannot support programs at the high school, which is not an AEL partner.

Wesley Community Center (WCC), a Houston nonprofit, provides an example of the locally targeted nature of WIOA funding distributed by TWC via the local workforce development boards as well as the complexity of such funding. WCC is one of five direct-service providers in the Houston area receiving funding from the Alliance of Community Assistance Ministries (ACAM) in a service collaboration called NextGen. It uses WIOA funding provided to Gulf Coast Workforce Solutions and targeted to out-of-school youth. As such, the collaboration's services must align with 14 federally specified program components, and participants must meet an extensive set of federal eligibility criteria. Both state and federal participant and program performance targets are also incorporated as part of the funding. NextGen funding is intended to provide a comprehensive, integrated employment and education service for eligible opportunity youth to help them get a job, keep a job, or get a better job and build skills for future job and career transitions. Participants can earn their GED while also earning work-ready certification, gain on-the-job experience through internships, and work with a career coach/case manager to develop college and career transition strategies. As a nonprofit, WCC has other funding available to cover additional services for the NextGen participants, such as GED tutoring, advanced training, and further education, if participants are interested.

A review of the profiles of the 12 sites included in our work reveals that while the funding sources are similar, there are key differences in resource deployment and the foci of the programs. For example, many non-BOT sites focus on assisting participants to attain a high school credential but not on academic or career transitions beyond high school, such as those included in the BOT approach. As a result, the staffing models emphasize instructional staff members but not positions such as college and career navigators or transition coordinators.

It is also clear nonprofit organizations and charter schools have the most flexibility in braiding resources from disparate sources to provide educational and career opportunities to opportunity youth. Nonprofit organizations are not eligible to receive funding under the state's FSP, but programs can use partnerships creatively to fund services for opportunity youth. It is difficult for school districts to raise additional funding and braid resources from TEA and TWC. While school districts can be an applicant or a partner in a consortia of service providers under WIOA, there is little incentive given the complexity of the competitive process, the multiple funding streams available to schools under FSP, and the typical lack of school resources for fundraising, grant writing, and grant administration.

While it may seem promising that nonprofits and charter schools can raise funds privately through individual, corporate, and foundation donations to supplement TEA or TWC funding, it is not a sustainable model to support necessary services to prepare opportunity youth for the future. The state should invest funds specifically to support postsecondary bridging activities in alternative education programs for opportunity youth to provide all services that would improve their chances of success.



## Conclusion

Texas may be unique in the multitude of initiatives, policies, and practices to support young adults from low-income backgrounds in preparing for postsecondary education and careers. An analysis of the policies and funding sources, with attention to those that support the types of practices incorporated in JFF's BOT model, confirms the findings of JFF's earlier report that the funding and policies provide a promising foundation for BOT pathways.<sup>14</sup> The sites included in our work make use of the two major funding streams available to support opportunity youth, often developing creative partnerships to address local service needs. Charter schools and nonprofit organizations have the greatest flexibility to develop such partnerships and raise additional funding through individual, corporate, and foundation donations. And the CTE funding available through FSP seems to offer the most promise for creating such partnerships.

Yet important gaps remain. The two major funding streams available to support opportunity youth—TEA’s FSP and TWC’s AEL program—differ in their robustness and purpose. FSP primarily focuses on programs and services for school-aged students that provide a high school credential. By contrast, AEL focuses on more of an adult population seeking career training, and the funding is thin. There is some flexibility in FSP funding and distribution (to traditional, alternative, and charter schools), while bureaucratic complexity and scope limitations hamstring AEL funding. FSP funding is also more robust in the amount of funding provided per student and the multiple funding streams available (such as compensatory education and CTE funding). And, importantly, the AEL funding very purposefully targets local needs. All types of programs serving opportunity youth use these funding streams, including traditional and alternative education schools, charter schools, community-based organizations, and other nonprofits. Innovative partnerships are being developed to employ the available funding.

Thus, the two major funding streams support programs and services in assisting opportunity youth to attain a high school credential and transition to postsecondary and career opportunities. Although we did not engage in a statewide information-gathering quest, our findings suggest that some funding may see limited use. For example, only one site mentioned a partnership with Communities in Schools. This may indicate a lack of knowledge of these funds or a lack of bandwidth to apply for and manage competitive grants. Another seemingly underutilized source of funding is ATB, which could be critical to opportunity youth in making postsecondary transitions for academics and career training.

In fact, we identified several gaps in support for postsecondary transitions and follow up. Limited funding is available to support positions such as career navigators or transition counselors who could work closely with students for postsecondary transitions and success. In addition, the state could expand its corequisite model for students who earn a GED with a low passing score, indicating a lack of sufficient skills to enroll in college as legislated in the TSI program. It includes developmental and credit-bearing courses, expanding the use of IET, which pairs adult education with career training. A different gap exists for students in juvenile justice facilities. There are no funds for dual enrollment or career training or any postsecondary options for students who have already earned a GED before being placed in a juvenile justice facility. The result is that students may get a GED but have limited use of the IET and corequisite models, and these limitations mean individuals may not obtain college or career-ready skills. The need to better understand the population of young people involved in the juvenile justice system is ripe for

further research.<sup>15</sup> Similarly, understanding the variability and funding for programs and services for opportunity youth across the Workforce Solutions Boards could highlight funding gaps and opportunities.

Here we have showcased creative approaches to support robust programs for opportunity youth, noting the variation in programs, partnerships, and staffing in four Texas regions. We hope our work will spur other creative approaches to funding robust programs that support opportunity youth in attaining credentials that enable them to be successful adults. However, relying on private funding to support the programs and services opportunity youth need and deserve is not a winning strategy. In the same way that Texas invested in early college nearly 20 years ago and today has a flourishing early college system, the state should make investments to support postsecondary bridging and career exploration activities to expose opportunity youth to a broad range of activities to prepare them for postsecondary success. Only in this way will the state's 60X30TX goals come to fruition.

# Appendix A:

## Profiles of Three Back on Track Sites and Nine Non-BOT Alternative Schools and Programs

### Back on Track Sites

#### Back on Track Site: La Joya College & Career Center (La Joya, Texas)

##### Overview

La Joya College and Career Center (C&CC) provides services to students between the ages of 18 and 26 who seek to advance in their education but couldn't complete high school graduation requirements with their cohort. With a strong focus on college and career readiness, C&CC provides opportunities for students to obtain a high school diploma or complete an HSEP, earn industry certifications, and prepare to attend a postsecondary institution. In alignment with the BOT model, C&CC provides strong academic enrichment to reengage students in high school completion, gives opportunities for bridging to postsecondary college and career opportunities, and supports students to ensure college and career success. Every semester, career-oriented courses are planned based on the needs of the students enrolled.

Operating as a “specialty school” within the La Joya ISD, C&CC offers three options to La Joya ISD residents for enrollment:

- Be a fifth-year senior between the ages of 18 to 21 who needs no more than five credits to graduate from high school and needs to pass a state assessment—Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) or State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR); or
- Be between the ages of 21 to 26, have at least 14 high school credits, and need to pass state assessments (TAKS or STAAR); or
- Be between the ages of 18 to 21, enroll voluntarily, and meet all HSEP or GED requirements, have a government-issued ID, have enrolled in ninth grade at least two years before enrolling at C&CC, have no more than seven high school credits toward graduation, have taken TAKS/STAAR before enrolling in HSEP, complete a full



application, and take TAKS/STAAR when offered while enrolled in HSEP.

Most students enrolled at C&CC come from the three comprehensive high schools in the district. About 70% of the students served are within six credits of graduating.

Making use of the TEA [Optional Flexible School Day Program](#) (OFSDP) allowing districts to provide flexible hours and days of attendance for students who are in danger of dropping out of school, have dropped out, or are behind in core subject courses, C&CC offers day, afternoon, and evening classes as well as online support for credit completion.<sup>16</sup> Flexible scheduling allows C&CC to serve about 250 to 300 students each academic year, graduating students by semester (winter, spring, summer) as they complete requirements. Most of the students served receive a traditional high school diploma.

In the past few years, C&CC has expanded the postsecondary options and supports available to students, developing partnerships with a variety of businesses and postsecondary institutions that support students in obtaining career-oriented certifications. Dual enrollment options are available for students who meet college entrance criteria and are interested in pursuing college credits. They can do this while finishing their high school degree through partnerships with postsecondary education institutions, including South Texas College and University of Texas Rio Grande Valley.

## Staffing

Staffing varies with the number of students enrolled, but C&CC typically employs 12 to 14 full- and part-time academic teachers. OFSDP, which requires that a student receive at least 45 minutes of instruction on a given day for instructional contact time to be recorded, allows the program to maximize staff members by providing both morning and afternoon classes. HSEP students and diploma-seeking students can be instructed in the same classes, creating efficient use of available funding.

Other staff members supporting students enrolled at C&CC include a principal, an assistant principal, a part-time social worker, a counselor, and a campus secretary/attendance clerk. Additional supports, primarily counselors, from the comprehensive high schools in the district can also be drawn upon. Similarly, as a district school, C&CC provides professional development opportunities for staff members through the district's staff development program.

## Funding

C&CC is funded through a variety of federal, state, and local dollars. The primary source of funding is through the state FSP, which allocates funds based on ADA. C&CC receives additional state funding through the weighted ADA component of the state's FSP, which provides additional allotments based on district and student characteristics. C&CC's budget for 2021-22 included allotments for compensatory education; bilingual education; college, career, and military readiness; and CTE funding and additional weights for programs for special education students and English learners as well as general local funds. In addition to state and local dollars, Federal ESEA, Title I, Part A funding and ESSER, Title III funds were available for the 2021-22 school year.

General local funds support the school's principal and teachers for Spanish, art/physical education, and health (shared with the comprehensive high schools in the district) as well as support staff members (secretary, nurse, library clerk, college readiness clerk, instructional assistant). State compensatory funds support the assistant principal, counselor, and core instructional staff members (ELA, math, science, social studies). State bilingual funding supports a shared language proficiency assessment committee (LPAC) clerk, and state special education dollars support a part-time special education teacher. Federal ESSA, Title I, Part A funding supports both the part-time social worker and a reading teacher. State CTE funding supports a teacher of business information management.

For the 2021-22 school year, the budget for La Joya C&CC was about \$1.4 million, with about 80% supporting staff members' salaries. About 53% of those funds were provided through state dollars, with 27% coming from local tax revenue and 20% from federal sources. Although C&CC does draw from resources available at the other comprehensive high schools in the district (for example, guidance counselors, nursing staff), there were no additional funds available from local foundations or other sources to support the program. The average per-pupil expenditure is estimated at \$5,933.

## Back on Track Site: Texans Can Academy Fort Worth Westcreek

### Overview

Texans Can Academies (TCA) is a nonprofit network of 14 charter high schools serving students ages 14 to 21 seeking to advance in their education after struggling in a traditional high school setting. Schools are tuition-free, open-enrollment public high schools of choice. TCA embraces the core values of student-centered decision-making, a rigorous curriculum based on reading and thinking skills, and achieving its mission to provide the highest quality education for all students, with urgency.

TCA Fort Worth Westcreek (TCA Westcreek) serves about 375 students annually. Like all schools in the network, TCA Westcreek offers a flexible schedule for students, providing morning and afternoon classes with a minimum of four hours of focused academic time daily. Students attend four classes a day in reading, writing, math, and science or social studies. The schools also offer small class sizes and personalized education. Academics are provided in four nine-week terms. Students can enter the program at any time. They receive a high school diploma upon program completion and successfully passing state testing requirements. Community partnerships remove barriers to students' success by connecting students with food, clothes, counseling, and child care when necessary.

Building on a strong core academic program, in partnership with JFF, the leadership at the TCA Westcreek campus spearheaded efforts to strengthen community partnerships focused on postsecondary bridging and first-year supports for students. TCA Westcreek's school leader sought ways to improve postsecondary access and opportunity for the students. Understanding the alignment between her vision for the school and JFF's BOT postsecondary success initiative, she pioneered a partnership with JFF at TCA Westcreek that facilitated development of a clear focus at the school to graduate every student with a postsecondary plan. Toward this end, every student has an advocate who can mentor students through high school graduation. A campus transition coordinator is available to work with students on implementing postsecondary college and career plans.

Most students attending TCA Westcreek are career-oriented, and postsecondary options have centered on students' career goals. As such, the school is a flagship among the network schools with respect to career pathways, offering multiple certification programs, including business information services, health services (community health

services and phlebotomy), a pre-apprenticeship partnership with TRIO Electric, and an optical technician certification leading directly to employment with community opticians. Career pathway opportunities have been developed in conjunction with the community based on both student interests and employer needs. Content for some pathway programs (for example, business management) can be incorporated into the core curriculum. Still, most certification programming is considered elective and delivered outside of the four-hour academic session.

TCA Westcreek also has partnered with local colleges to provide first-year supports to those students transitioning to college. Partnerships are in place with Tarrant County Community College, Dallas Community College, and Texas Christian University; a partnership with University of North Texas is in the works.

## Staffing

TCA Westcreek is typically staffed by 10 full-time teachers who provide core academic instruction in math, English language arts, science, and social studies. The school also employs a business information teacher, a teacher supporting students who are working on online credit recovery, a literacy coach, an interventionist to support students with disabilities, an ESL teacher, an academic advisor, a student advocate, a counselor, and a transition coordinator as well as two instructional aides, two clerks, and a registrar. Leadership staff members include a principal and an assistant principal. In addition, staff members are contracted from Trio Electric for the pre-apprenticeship electrician program and from Baylor Scott & White health care for the health services pathways.

## Funding

The primary source of funding for TCA Westcreek is the state's charter school funding program.<sup>xvii</sup> Like non-charter public schools, open-enrollment charter schools are entitled to FSP state aid, which provides funding based on the school's ADA. The average basic allotment for ADA for the 2021-22 school year was \$6,160. TCA Westcreek receives additional state funding through the weighted ADA component of the state's FSP, which offers additional allotments based on district and student characteristics. TCA Westcreek receives allotments to adjust for small and midsize districts; for career and technology programming, transportation, school safety, and college preparation assessment reimbursement; and for students served in special education, compensatory education, and bilingual education. TCA Westcreek also receives an allotment under the HB3 provisions for programs designated as dropout recovery or residential placement facilities.

In addition to the state funding, all TCA schools qualify as schoolwide Title I campuses, which makes each school eligible to receive federal funds to support schools with a high percentage of students who receive free/reduced lunch. Westcreek also receives funding through other federal grants, including school improvement funding, school nutrition funds, and IDEA, Part B funding for students with disabilities. Some funding is also available through the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) managed by the central office.

For the 2021-22 school year, the budget for TCA Westcreek was about \$3.56 million. About 86% of those funds were provided through state dollars, with 11% from federal sources. Grants from local foundations and development dollars comprised the remaining 3% of funds. The vast majority of funds supported staff members' salaries. On average, the per-pupil expenditure at TCA Westcreek was \$11,557 for the 2021-22 school year.

## Back on Track Site: Restore Education

### Overview

Restore Education (Restore) is a nonprofit organization providing services to individuals ranging from basic literacy and English learning to high school equivalency (GED), career training, and college support. Services are free and flexible, allowing individuals to select a unique pathway to postsecondary success. Restore describes its objective as restoring “the potential of students who have lost connection with traditional education and putting them on individualized and supported pathways to life-sustaining careers.” Currently, Restore has six partner sites throughout San Antonio, serving youth and adults of all ages. Restore is part of the AEL Alamo Consortium, led by Education Service Center (ESC), Region 20, is a United Way partner agency and a Train for Jobs San Antonio and Ready to Work partner.

In alignment with the BOT model, Restore provides programs to reengage students in high school completion, bridging to postsecondary college and career opportunities, and supports to students to ensure college and career success. More specifically, Restore offers three program options that align with the BOT model:

- **High School Equivalency** is a program for individuals at least 16 years of age who need to complete a high school credential. The program provides an individualized curriculum typically completed in six to 12 months through flexible scheduling, including remote, morning, afternoon, and evening options. Students must commit

at least eight hours per week and complete 40 hours within two months. Learning materials, instruction, and one test voucher per subject of the GED are provided free. An accelerated eight-week GED Now class is also offered, as well as a dual enrollment program, which allows students to earn college credits while finishing their GED. Eighty percent of program graduates continue to career training, college, or employment within a year of GED completion. This program serves approximately 400 to 500 students annually.

- **College Readiness & Support** prepares individuals for college entrance exams—TSI and Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS)—as well as offering guidance in the college enrollment process and application for financial aid and supports throughout the first year of college and beyond. Students are expected to commit to college test preparation and engage in at least 40 hours of instruction to prepare for the TSI or TEAS. This program also provides first-year supports for students who enroll in college, offering academic coaching, tutoring support, financial aid renewal, scholarship search advising for course selection, and assistance with transfer and degree selection to four-year universities. Students enrolled in this program can also participate in career preparation workshops and activities. First-year support students are expected to enroll in and earn six college credit hours during the first two semesters of college, commit to 40 hours of academic assistance during the first semester of college and commit to regular check-ins with a College Navigator as well as progress testing. About 30 participants are enrolled in the first-year support program. Extended supports are also available to students beyond the first year of college. Students receiving extended support commit to regular check-ins with a College Navigator to keep staff members apprised of academic and career progress. Students receiving extended supports also get opportunities to serve as peer mentors, public speakers, and higher education advocates. Approximately 50 to 60 students receive extended supports.
- **Career Readiness & Training** offers over 10 career pathways in high-demand industries, including medical, business, and information technology. Each pathway leads to a training certification that can lead to a successful career. This program provides guidance and job placement support as well as training materials and fees for certification tests. Expectations for individuals enrolled in this program include having internet and computer access, having a resume and cover letter, completion of a baseline and progress tests, completion of 12 hours of support before starting the program, completion of 40 hours of support once enrolled in the program, at least 12 hours per week in attendance, and completion of certification tests after training

sessions are finished. Individuals in this program must be 18 or older and be eligible to work in the United States. Most training programs require a high school diploma or GED and can be completed in eight to 12 weeks. About 400 to 500 students enroll in career readiness and training programs annually, with an 88% completion rate.

In addition to these BOT-aligned program options, Restore offers English language classes to learners of all levels to assist in improving English speaking, listening, reading, and writing skills. Individuals can enroll in this virtual class before moving on to the GED or career training programs. Restore also offers intensive English language instruction, college and career guidance, and foreign credential evaluation support to internationally trained professionals to connect them to careers. About 50 to 75 students enroll in English language classes annually.

Restore has an MOU with San Antonio College for dual enrollment GED classes; it has also worked with the five community colleges comprising the Alamo Colleges District and has provided services or classes in partnership with Texas A&M University San Antonio (TAMUSA) and University of Texas at San Antonio (UTSA).

The largest group of students served by Restore programs is between the ages of 25 and 49 (45%), with 30% between the ages of 16-24. About half the group of 16- to 24-year-olds have no GED or high school diploma. The remaining quarter of the population served are over 50 (20% are 50 to 64 and 5% are over 65). More than three-quarters (78%) are female, and the vast majority identify as Latinx (82%).

Many of the students served by Restore are identified as opportunity youth aged 16 to 24. Most are from low-income backgrounds (82%), Latinx (82%), Black (9% to 10%), unemployed (62%), and parenting (68%). Forty-six percent are English learners, and 65% are reading between fourth- and eighth-grade levels. Thirty percent are considered to belong to at-risk populations (foster youth, homeless, justice-involved), and 20% have been diagnosed with a physical or learning disability.

## Staffing

Across the programs, Restore employs 15–20 full- and part-time instructional staff, about five instructional aides, four to six training advisors and career placement staff members for the certification programs, two College Navigators for the college readiness program, one on-site social worker, and a student success specialist for the HSE and English language programs. In addition, Restore employs six staff members in its intake and data department, three staff members who focus on student performance outcomes, and 10 staff members in leadership positions, including the president and CEO, director of student success, controller, director of instruction, director of career pathways, director of development, instructional coach and training manager, el civics program coordinator, compass program coordinator, and an intake and data coordinator.

Some funding is available for student supports, such as tuition assistance, child care, bus passes, emergency housing, and testing fees. The TWC provides professional development for staff members in accordance with adult education requirements through the state education training system; some in-house training is also offered, such as training on JFF's Common Instructional Framework.<sup>xviii</sup> Volunteers are often used as tutors in the HSE or certificate programs, or they offer sessions on issues related to college enrollment or financial literacy. Additionally, Restore has over 100 community partners who provide a host of services, such as food, clothing, counseling, housing, and child care.

## Funding

For the 2021–22 school year, Restore had a budget of close to \$6 million, with revenue streams coming from multiple state and local sources. A primary source of revenue for Restore is TWC's [AEL funding](#), which awards funds to local eligible providers through a competitive grant process using AEFLA funding authorized under Title II of WIOA, the state's general revenue, and federal funding for TANF.<sup>xix</sup> Restore is eligible for this funding as part of the Education Service Center, Region 20, AEL Alamo consortium of providers. These funds provide approximately \$600 to \$1,800 per student, depending on the type of services. For example, services such as HSE or English learning are about \$600 to \$800 per student, while more intensive services—like workplace literacy, advanced English language services for internationally trained professionals, or corrections education—may be reimbursed at about \$1,200 per student. IET programs or other training services are about \$1,600 to \$1,800 per student. Some of this funding goes toward the college and career navigators who support students transitioning into postsecondary education and training or employment.



Restore also has an additional grant from TWC, called Accelerate Texas, for IET training. This allows it to offer expanded training seats for the short-term training programs to students beyond the IET targets set by Region 20.

Over the past 14 years, Restore has received funding from several local family foundations and larger corporate funders like the Bank of America Charitable Foundation and Dollar General Literacy Foundation. These foundations have funded items ranging from GED testing fee vouchers to programming/staffing new programs and general operating expenses.

Government contracts and foundation and United Way programs fund program staffing and program management as well as some administrative funds to cover accounting, leadership, and data tracking. United Way and foundation funds also cover costs such as GED testing fees and emergency assistance for students needing child care or bus passes to continue in the program. Earned income covers delivery of off-site workshops and activities. And the individual and corporate and event revenue account for any additional needed support as well as general operating expenses, like building maintenance.

AEL funding along with a training grant from TWC comprise more than three-quarters of Restore's budget (78%) for 2021-22. Foundations and the United Way combine for the next-largest share of funding (17%). The remainder comprises giving from individuals and corporations, event fundraising, and earned income from contracted services such as workshops. A significant portion of the funds received from the city of San Antonio passed through to students for attendance hours.

Restore does not receive any federal funds directly. For the 2021-22 school year, the average per-student expenditure at Restore was approximately \$3,633.

## Non-Back on Track Sites

### Crossroads at ESC-2, Corpus Christi

#### Overview

Crossroads is operated by Education Service Center, Region 2 (ESC-2)—one of 20 Education Service Centers throughout Texas—and offers HSE and training programs to individuals across 11 counties. ESC-2 is located in Nueces County, which includes Corpus Christi.

Crossroads started as a new program in August 2018 after successfully obtaining AEL funding from TWC in June 2018 as a sole provider. ESC-2 hired a program manager with over 25 years of experience in adult education to develop the program. The manager needed to quickly acquire space, teachers, and materials and recruit students. By 2019, there were 119 part-time teachers, and course offerings included three online classes. When the pandemic hit, Crossroads made all courses virtual and trained teachers to teach online. It was difficult to transition back to in-person learning once COVID-19 restrictions eased, so most courses have remained online. Crossroads currently has 38 part-time teachers and offers a robust online program and 11 in-person classes—one in each of the counties ESC-2 serves.

#### Students

The Crossroads program serves various student groups, but it is primarily an adult education program. Students between the ages of 16 and 18 who are not in school or have been court-ordered to attend a program may enroll with parental permission. Adults 19 years and older can enroll if they do not already have a high school diploma and/or need English language services. Individuals with a high school diploma are eligible if they are deemed basic skills deficient, as defined by the National Reporting System for Adult Education (NRS). While there is no maximum age for students, the average student served by the program is between ages 24 and 36. Latina women with children comprise the majority of the student population.

The annual enrollment goal for 2022-23 is 1,752 students (down from 2,200 students in previous years). Approximately 1,500 of those students will pursue their GED and/or seek English language services. The remaining students will enroll in career training, for which Crossroads partners with the Craft Training Center of the Coastal Bend (CTC). A

subset of students requires additional case management, or intensive services, because they have extended barriers to education and employment, including recently leaving correctional, rehab, or other institutional settings. In those cases, Crossroads serves as a “lifeline” and provides high-touch guidance and support to prevent recidivism. Crossroads staff members also can identify employers who will hire individuals who have been justice-touched or are overcoming other barriers.

Total current enrollment stands at 900 students, 800 of whom are actively engaged in education or training services. Approximately 8% to 10% of students are court-ordered, either as juveniles or parolees. Some students are compelled to attend because they are collecting unemployment benefits. Crossroads also takes referrals. Once a referral is made, Crossroads staff members reach out to the referred individual to try to enroll them in a program. They also will follow up with the person who made the referral to provide updates.

Although the program is designed to focus on students in the 11 counties served by ESC-2, students currently come from across Texas, with demand increasing as the program has shifted predominantly online. Requests to enroll come from outside the state as well, but Crossroads cannot accommodate individuals outside Texas. Most students reside in Nueces County, but there are students from each of the 11 counties served by ESC-2.

## **Academic Programs**

Most academic courses leading to the GED are conducted online using Aztec Software to supplement class instruction, with one in-person class available in each county. Crossroads also offers the GED in Spanish, so students can obtain their credential quickly and then work on improving their English skills through available services. The greatest demand for programming at Crossroads is the GED preparation classes. Classes are offered two times a week, on Monday and Wednesday or Tuesday and Thursday from 9 a.m. to noon or from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m.

## **College and Career Programming**

Crossroads works in partnership with CTC to offer vocational training to enrolled students. CTC was built by major port authority companies (for example, Exxon) that needed skilled workers and provides a variety of career-oriented training programs. High schools populate the facility during the day, and in the evenings, adult education programs send interested students for training. Of the 152 students who enroll in Crossroads' CTC programs, approximately 80% also will seek their GED through IET;

the remaining 20% either already have a high school diploma or equivalent or only want training to increase their employability. Crossroads staff members encourage individuals in that latter 20% to pursue their GED as well as some training programs (for instance, phlebotomy) require a diploma or GED for enrollment.

The CTC offers certificate programs in fields such as business, health care, industry, and welding. It only provides Level 1 training—students interested in further training will be referred to programs available through TWC. Crossroads also will pay for the National Center for Construction Education and Research core training and a Transportation Worker Identification Credential. All of these programs have immediate positive impacts on completers' employment marketability.

As part of Crossroads' intensive services, it also works with internationally trained professionals to help them acquire the language and literacy skills—as well as social and civics preparation—necessary to navigate social systems and successfully live and work in the United States.

## **Nonacademic Supports and Services**

Crossroads' approach is to “start from the heart,” meaning that it incorporates social-emotional learning components and takes the whole student into account when engaging them in programs and services. Its model is high-touch to build persistence and resilience and prepare students for the world of work. It follows students beyond credential attainment to ensure they're ready for and obtain sustaining employment.

## **Staffing**

Crossroads currently has 38 part-time teachers, down from a pre-pandemic high of 119. Ideally, it would have around 80 teachers, but teacher shortages have made it difficult to find adequate staff. In the past, teachers who work in school systems have taught adult education classes to supplement their income. Still, ESSER funding for public schools enabled many teachers to work extended hours and earn more in their primary jobs, which has made working in the Crossroads program less attractive.

## **Funding and Policy**

Funding for the program is about \$1.8 million, with all funding coming from TWC through the AEL program. Staff members' compensation is the program's largest expense. Additional funding will be sought to reach additional students, expand its family literacy

program, and increase computer access within the community. Crossroads would like to partner with schools to utilize their facilities in the evening to provide additional training options for students, but schools are not inclined to do so if it's not a revenue source.

## **Tuloso-Midway Academic Career Center, Corpus Christi**

### **Overview**

The Academic Career Center (ACC) is an alternative option to the traditional high school campus within the Tuloso-Midway Independent School District (TMISD), one of five independent school districts in Corpus Christi. The ACC is a school of choice that serves students at risk of dropping out and/or not graduating with their cohort; however, students with discipline problems may not enroll at the ACC. ACC students can participate in all district activities and events, including athletics.

### **Students**

Enrollment at the ACC is capped at 40 students in order to offer a highly personalized program. Referrals come from counselors at the traditional high school and may be initiated by either the student or the counselor (or another adult in the building). In rare cases, parents might refer their child to the ACC. The ACC accepts all referred students if it has capacity and keeps a waitlist if enrollment is full; as students complete their requirements throughout the year, students on the waitlist are contacted and invited to enroll.

Most students enroll in 11<sup>th</sup> or 12<sup>th</sup> grade, but ninth- or 10<sup>th</sup>-grade students may also attend if they have extenuating circumstances, such as being pregnant or parenting. The majority of students is between 16 and 20 years old but may be as young as 14 years old.

### **Academic Programs**

Schools in the TMISD, including the ACC, operate a year-round schedule. Students attend school on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8:30 a.m. until 2 p.m. and on Wednesdays from 8:30 a.m. to noon. The early release on Wednesdays allows teachers to collaborate and address student needs. Students close to completing their requirements and/or have child care or work responsibilities may opt to attend half days; the school has discretion to make those allowances due to state alternative education policy that sets

the minimum attendance requirement at four hours per day.

The ACC offers an accelerated academic program, and curricula vary based on students' needs. Each student has an Individual Graduation Plan, and all core courses are taught in person. Teachers provide personalized supports. The school uses a Texas-certified online program, Bright Thinker, to offer courses aligned with student interests that would not otherwise be possible given the school's size; students take these courses in the school building with supervision and support from a teacher.

Students typically complete the requirements for their diploma within three to six months, but those who are further behind may take up to a year or more. Students rarely return to the traditional high school after enrolling from ACC, and the school consistently demonstrates high graduation rates and a near 0% dropout rate.

## **College and Career Programming**

The ACC partners with Del Mar College to offer certificate programs in oil and gas pipeline, welding, millwright, nursing, and construction and building trades. Students who are far enough along in their academic program to graduate with their cohort are encouraged to participate in one of the CTE programs. The ACC pays all expenses related to CTE participation, including tuition, uniforms, testing, computers, and transportation. Most students who participate graduate with at least initial certification in one of the fields offered, and many continue their training beyond graduation to attain additional certification levels. The ACC previously tried partnering with the Craft Training Center of the Coastal Bend to offer welding and pipefitting, but scheduling was difficult because those programs were primarily geared toward adults.

Most ACC students who pursue a college degree initially enroll in a trade program at Del Mar College and receive their associate's degree, and some then transfer to Texas A&M to pursue their bachelor's degree. Most ACC students are first-generation high school graduates, and many are not initially interested in higher education; few go directly from high school to degree-granting college enrollment. Texas state policy mandates that every student complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) before graduating from high school, and the ACC ensures that all students also have taken the TSIA—the state's entrance exam for public colleges and universities—and have been admitted to Del Mar College. Program coordinators/instructors from Del Mar College come to the ACC to support students in these college planning and preparation activities.

While there are no formalized postsecondary follow-ups or supports, students form strong bonds with the adults during their time at the ACC and regularly check in after graduation and provide continuous updates about how they're doing.

## **Nonacademic Supports and Services**

The size of the school enables faculty and students to form tight bonds that extend beyond formal programming. Teachers and administrators routinely assist students with personal challenges, and most provide their cell phone numbers and make themselves available outside of school hours. If students require mental health and intellectual disabilities intervention, the ACC faculty members refer them to the districtwide school psychologist.

## **Staffing**

The principal does all of her own hiring for dedicated school faculty and staff. The ACC currently has two teachers each for math, English, and social studies; it is trying to find a suitable science teacher. In the meantime, one of the social studies teachers with experience with science instruction is filling in. The school also has one special education teacher and one electives teacher (who is CTE certified), as well as two instructional paraprofessionals. The ACC has one dedicated full-time counselor, and it has access to the district's social worker and school psychologist as needed.

## **Funding**

Funding is typical of an alternative school that is part of an ISD. It receives FSP funding with weights for CTE and special education, with the primary source of program funding from the state Compensatory Education program. The district generally funds any additional resource requests because the school significantly affects the district's graduation rate. In 2023, all schools in the TMISD were required to become Title I campuses. The designation yielded very little additional funding for the ACC (\$158), and the process was cumbersome.

Total 2021-22 school year expenditures were approximately \$873,000, with 75% spent on instructional services. Guidance counseling services comprised 11% of expenditures and school leadership another 9%. The remaining expenditures were for curriculum/staff member development, facilities and plant maintenance, health services, security, and data processing.

# Solomon M. Coles High School & Educational Center, Corpus Christi

## Overview

Solomon M. Coles High School (Coles) is an alternative education program within the Corpus Christi Independent School District (CCISD). It is a nontraditional campus serving students in grades 8-12 who have dropped out or are at risk of leaving high school without a degree. In the 2022-23 school year, Coles is serving 165 students ages 15 to 20; however, enrollment fluctuates throughout the year, with a typical range of 140 to 225 students. Students can be referred to Coles by a district recovery specialist or a staff member at their home campus within CCISD, including students who are behind on credits, have left a CCISD high school without a degree, or are currently enrolled but struggling in a traditional program.

## Academic Programs

Coles offers two separate programs for students—those who enter in eighth grade and those who enroll in grades 9-12. Students who enroll at Coles in eighth grade enter the Learning Enrichment and Acceleration Program (LEAP). These students typically are over-age (15 to 16 years old or older) and/or are significantly off track to high school completion. LEAP's accelerated program enables students to get back on grade level. If students in the LEAP program meet all of the eighth-grade requirements during their first semester, they are promoted to ninth grade in January; students can complete 10th grade by the end of the first year. Students who successfully complete LEAP are encouraged to return to their home high school campus, though some opt to stay because their previous school did not work well for them. Current students who missed a significant amount of school because of the COVID-19 pandemic—some hadn't attended school in three years—are more likely to remain at Coles because they need to develop foundational skills before they can be successful in a traditional high school. Most students who enter LEAP complete the program. This year, approximately 18 students entered, and 15 to 16 of those students are expected to finish.

Students who enter Coles in ninth through 12th grades pursue one or more of three academic options:

1. Credit recovery: Students who already have passed STAAR can recover credit for courses using Apex Learning, a self-paced digital platform. Students who have not yet passed STAAR receive remediation and credit recovery in an in-person course



with face-to-face instruction.

2. **First-time course-taking:** Students seeking to earn credit for a course who have not yet attempted to enroll in a face-to-face class. While these classes are synchronous, students also may take an accelerated instructional program that allows them to complete a yearlong course in one semester.
3. **STAAR retesting:** Coles offers retesting support in five content areas: algebra I, English I, English II, biology, and U.S. history.<sup>xx</sup> Students must pass STAAR testing in each subject area to earn a high school credential. Students must be enrolled in an instructional program to receive support for STAAR retesting and may pursue multiple content areas simultaneously.

Ninth- through 12<sup>th</sup>-grade students may enter Coles any time throughout the year, and all but the full courses (first-time) are self-paced. Most courses are completed in nine to 18 weeks. Five of the 154 students who enrolled in fall 2022 have already completed their requirements and will receive their diplomas at the district's spring graduation ceremony.

## **College and Career Programming**

Coles is working to build its IBC program and currently offers Microsoft Office and culinary training certificates. Through a partnership with Del Mar College, Coles' principal is looking to expand continuing education and dual enrollment programming to provide early college opportunities for high school students. Currently, students who complete the high school program at Coles are eligible for continuing education programming, and a Coles staff member provides transition support for interested students.

## **Nonacademic Supports and Services**

In addition to academic supports and services, Coles provides wraparound services for its students—98% of whom are at-risk and 100% of whom are from low-income backgrounds. Coles has an on-site day care for parenting students, among other pregnancy-related services. A social worker is on campus once a week, and virtual mental health services are available (Coles offers a private room where the social worker assists students with access). Coles also partners with CIS to provide individual case management services that can support students in completing their goals.

## Staffing

Coles has approximately 40 staff members, including three administrators, 17 teachers, two counselors, and other administrative and student support personnel. In 2022-23, there are four social studies teachers, three English language arts teachers, three math teachers, two science teachers, one art teacher, two CTE instructors, and two special education teachers.

## Funding and Policy

For the 2021-22 school year, expenditures reported for Coles were about \$2.6 million. FSP provided the vast majority of the funding through the state's compensatory education program. Additional weighted ADA funds went to CTE and students with disabilities, and students receiving bilingual services got a small amount. The bulk of the funding (75%) supported instruction and school leadership, with close to 12% for social work services and 7% for guidance counseling.

All other expenses are paid directly by CCISD—including permanent staff members and costs associated with state testing. Coles does not share resources with other district schools. Additional funds are raised through a relatively new school store, which was started using donations. The school also has volunteers from Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi and Upward Bound who work with students, mostly in English.

Because students typically are significantly behind in terms of credit accumulation, they attend Coles full day and do not utilize Texas's flexible day policy.

## Harris County Education Transition Center (Excel Academy Charter District), Houston

### Overview

Harris County Education Transition Center (ETC) is one of four schools run by Excel Academy Charter District. The charter is held by the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department. The ETC is a community charter; the other three schools under the charter are in juvenile justice facilities. ETC provides educational services for high school students who are currently or were previously justice-involved. This includes students who are expelled from their home schools to a juvenile justice alternative education program. Students from the 22 school districts across Harris County are eligible to be served by ETC. The school offers both a GED program and a credit recovery option.

## Students

ETC serves students in ninth grade or above with rolling enrollment. New students can be admitted at any time. As of January 2023, the school had 38 students enrolled, with four pending enrollments; it may serve as many as 90 students by the end of the year. Students range in age from 15 to 20. When students have completed probation, they can leave ETC, but they are also eligible to stay. About 20% of students stay longer than required; nearly all (98%) are court-involved and are on probation.

Students who enroll can be court ordered to attend school or to attend a GED program, but they are not ordered to ETC. Students are recruited from juvenile justice facilities for the most part so they can transition to ETC after they are released from the juvenile justice facility. Although students are legally eligible to return to their home schools after they are released, many students choose to stop attending school altogether instead, before they complete a high school credential. ETC provides an alternative for these students.

## Academic Programs

The school offers a GED program as well as the online credit recovery program through Edgenuity. The credit recovery program provides in-class teacher supports in conjunction with Edgenuity, but for the most part, this is not a successful model for the students at ETC. Thus, most students are in the GED track; they attend school from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and are at home the remainder of the day. Some students may be on a more flexible schedule, so they can get vocational education in the afternoon. The instructional staff provides vocational programming and some elective classes (for example, music production) in the final hour of the day.

## College and Career Programming

Although some of the students at ETC are interested in college, most obtain their GED with a low passing score, which indicates they are not ready for college and would need remedial services to be better prepared. Such services are not available through the juvenile justice system either at ETC or any of the juvenile justice facilities.

Some students are interested in completing certificate programs, and the administration is working on building out this area, but it needs additional funding and partners to come to the facility to do training.

The school has a training and logistics program that will lead to forklift certification,

and it is looking for funding to provide food handler’s certification. The administration at ETC is working on developing partnerships for an HVAC (heating, ventilation, and air conditioning) certificate, a barber program, and manufacturing opportunities. Some coursework associated with the certificate programs is provided by the instructional staff members certified in specific areas (for example, welding).

In 2022, ETC created a company called Project Remix Ventures to help students learn to be entrepreneurs. Students use their skills to create inventory they can sell through a variety of venues (such as Etsy, Facebook marketplace, or farmers markets). Students must learn how to budget for supplies, packaging, and shipping and how to open a warehouse for inventory and logistics. It is unclear if this qualifies as a certificate program that would generate CTE funds under the state’s funding system.

ETC partners with WorkTexas to provide vocational training in construction.

## **Nonacademic Supports and Services**

ETC provides transportation services to students so they can attend the school. The school has a Child Protective Services-funded worker who helps students connect to community services when necessary. ETC partners with Journey Through Life to provide case management (food, clothing, housing, medical, etc.) and behavioral skills training to enrolled students. Houston Threads, another ETC partner, provides free, new clothes to ETC students.

## **Staffing**

ETC is staffed with four core teachers in the content areas of math, ELA, social studies, and science. There is also a special education teacher, a data specialist, three school juvenile probation officers, a school-based therapist, a campus behavior coordinator, a principal, seven academic coaches (for behavioral support), a strategic partnership manager, constable, and a special projects coordinator.

## **Funding**

ETC is primarily funded through the state’s charter funding under FSP, including weighted funding for students with disabilities and for compensatory education. Although repeated requests have been made to TEA about accessing CTE funding, inexplicably, ETC’s vocational programming has not been found to qualify for CTE funds. Some federal funding—Title I Parts A and D and IDEA special education funding—are also part of ETC’s

budget. Most funds are used to provide instruction and instructional-related services. For the 2021-22 school year, the budget for ETC was \$238,000.

ETC receives charter school funding. Additionally, the Harris County Juvenile Probation Department covers the cost of some of the staff members at ETC, including the salaries of the seven coaches, the strategic partnership manager, constable, special projects coordinator, juvenile probation officers, and the campus behavior coordinator. Child Protective Services partially funds the community service worker.

Funds raised by WorkTexas are used to cover the cost of the construction training.

## **Premier High School – Houston (Gallery Furniture North)**

### **Overview**

Premier High School – Houston (Gallery Furniture North (GFN)) is one of over 80 campuses across Texas and Arkansas that is part of Responsive Ed, a nonprofit charter management organization. Responsive Ed campuses offer a variety of educational options and programs for students in P-12. The Premier High School campuses offer a mastery-based, blended learning program, with a focus on credit recovery, credit acceleration, and CTE for students who have struggled in a traditional educational environment.

Using a flexible schedule, GFN provides a self-directed academic program allowing students to work toward a high school diploma at their own pace while also providing opportunities for students to work toward career-oriented certificates. The school is housed at a furniture store and is set up to provide academic and vocational training for high school students during the day and adults in the evening.

The school partners with WorkTexas, a Houston-based nonprofit, to offer vocational opportunities to high school students as well as operate an adult trade school. WorkTexas partners with industry employers to ensure that training meets the needs of industry partners. Students enrolled in GFN can begin CTE courses through WorkTexas while earning their diploma, if they choose.

## **Students**

Students served by the school are between 14 to 26 years old in grades 9-12. Currently, the school enrolls about 150 students.

## **Academic Programs**

The school has a credit recovery focus. Students work independently at their own pace. The curriculum is divided into 10 units for a two-semester course and five units for a one-semester course. Each unit is completed when the student passes the associated unit test. Teachers score subjective questions, writing assignments, or projects throughout the unit. Students typically spend four to five hours a day on schoolwork and are encouraged to accelerate if they have the time to dedicate to their studies.

## **College and Career Programming**

Staff members address college and career programming based on the needs of students. Dual credit courses are offered as an option for obtaining college credit in partnership with Houston Community College (HCC).

Currently, the school offers three degree programs in partnership with HCC—welding, construction, and automotive. In addition, students can obtain training and certification in a variety of programs offered by WorkTexas. These include certifications in automotive, welding, construction, electrical (with a pre-apprenticeship program in partnership with TRIO), and health care.

## **Nonacademic Supports and Services**

WorkTexas partners with a wide variety of community and social service providers to support students both during training and once students enter the workforce to provide wraparound supports such as behavioral health, financial empowerment, and child care services.

## **Staffing**

Typically, five or six instructional staff members support students in math, science, English, and social studies. A special education teacher, two office staff members, and a campus director also are on staff.

## Funding

The high school had a budget of \$925,000 for the 2021-22 school year, with most funding received under FSP for public charter schools. In addition to the basic ADA allotment, weighted CTE funding was received for students enrolled in certificate-bearing courses as well as for students with disabilities. Charter management organization Responsive Ed pays WorkTexas 30% of the CTE funds it receives if Responsive Ed pays for the instructor and 85% of the funds if WorkTexas pays for the instructor.

Expenditures for the 2021-22 school year primarily were spent on instruction, instructional, and school leadership and staff member development (79%), with 18% on plant maintenance and operation. Less than 1% of expenditures went toward guidance (0.12%), social work services (0.11%), and health services (0.49%).

Notably, WorkTexas receives WIOA funding for its adult-oriented programs, but this funding is not used for the programs at the high school. As a nonprofit, WorkTexas raises additional funds from individual and corporate donations, which can be used to support CTE programming at the high school.

## Wesley Community Center, Houston

### Overview

Wesley Community Center (WCC) is a Houston nonprofit organization that provides a range of family and individual services, including Early Head Start, child care, after-school and summer care for school-aged youth, food for struggling families, meals and activities for seniors, and a financial opportunity center for individuals to gain financial stability. In fall 2021, WCC became one of five direct-service providers in the Houston area to receive funding from ACAM in a service collaboration called NextGen, funded by Gulf Coast Workforce Solutions. NextGen aims to provide a comprehensive, integrated employment and education service for eligible opportunity youth to help them get a job, keep a job, or get a better job and build skills for future job and career transitions. WCC is now in its second year of funding from ACAM. The NextGen grant is the primary source of funding and programming for opportunity youth served by WCC, although additional funds may be used to provide additional services to participants.

## Participants

Under the terms of the NextGen contract, WCC is expected to serve at least 100 opportunity youth, ages 16-24, during the current contract year (October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023). Because funding for NextGen is provided primarily by WIOA grant funds, individuals served by WCC must meet the WIOA eligibility criteria for out-of-school youth.

## College and Career Programming

While individuals can opt to receive tutoring to pass the GED test, the NextGen grant focuses primarily on career planning, coaching, training, and readiness supports. (Separate from the NextGen grant, WCC provides GED services funded by two private sources—Methodist Hospital and Barbara Bush Houston Literacy Foundation).

Additional services required to be provided under the terms of the agreement with ACAM include:

1. Work-based learning experiences (paid or unpaid), including summer jobs, pre-apprenticeship, Registered Apprenticeship programs, internships, on-the-job training opportunities. Twenty-five participants are anticipated to receive these services in the 2022-23 school year.
2. Career pathways and credential attainment, including integrated education and training, occupational skills training, credentialing programs that lead to recognized postsecondary credentials aligned with in-demand industry sectors or targeted occupations, HSEP, alternative secondary school services, and evidence-based dropout prevention and credit recovery strategies, and entrepreneurial skills training. WCC anticipates 50 clients will receive these services. Health care is a major focus of the career planning and training offered at WCC. Training opportunities are provided to individuals interested in the following careers: certified nursing assistant, patient care technician, licensed vocational nurse, pharmacy technician, medical assistant, sterile processing technician, and child development associate. Additional training at local community colleges is encouraged to provide advanced skills for participants. This goes beyond what the NextGen grant offers.
3. Guidance and support, including career counseling and exploration services, mentoring, tutoring, skill-building/coaching, leadership development opportunities,



financial coaching, career counseling, assistance with transportation, child care, housing, and other services that enable an individual to participate in work and/or training, and a minimum of one year of follow up to ensure continued support and success of participants in postsecondary education, training, or employment. Referrals for guidance, counseling, and/or mental health and drug and alcohol abuse services are also included. All clients will receive services under this category.

## Staffing

The NextGen grant provides funding for two full-time staff members—an eligibility and navigation specialist responsible for outreach, recruitment, and enrollment of eligible participants and a coach/case manager who works directly with clients to develop goals/plans, conducts follow-up and accountability check-ins, assists with navigating through services, and ensures placements are completed.

## Funding

WCC received about \$6 million in revenue for 2021, with \$1.7 million from in-kind donations, \$1.7 million in government grants, \$700,000 from United Way, and \$770,000 from private and foundation grants. The vast majority of funding (96%) was used for program and supporting services. These funds covered the wide array of services provided to WCC clients.

The ACAM grant provided \$284,000 to WCC for the 2022-23 school year. About 62% of the funds are being used for personnel salaries and benefits, while 21% of funds are slated for wages and salaries of work-based learning experiences for participants. Remaining funds are to be used to cover the costs of certificate programs and supplies, such as computers (6%); participant incentives (4%); work and training barrier removal, such as uniforms for work, tools and equipment and testing (3%); and participant transportation costs (2%). Funding for NextGen partners is provided to ACAM by TWC, utilizing funding provided under WIOA.

WCC can draw on additional available funding to cover the costs for advanced training and education when desired by participants in the NextGen program or for services that are not covered by the NextGen grant.

# Healy-Murphy Center, San Antonio

## Overview

Healy-Murphy Center (Healy-Murphy) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to working with opportunity youth. The center offers high school and GED programs, day care for infants and children ages 6 weeks to 5 years, and health services for Healy-Murphy clients. Healy-Murphy Center, formerly St. Peter Claver Academy, was started over 120 years ago, redirecting its mission in 1970 to serve the needs of opportunity youth. The program developed at that time was the first accredited alternative education program in the state. The Center works in partnership with San Antonio ISD to serve students who need an alternative education program.

## Students

Healy-Murphy serves students ages 14 to 21 who have had difficulty succeeding in a traditional school environment and are in danger of dropping out; some students served have issues with chronic absenteeism or have been involved with the juvenile justice system. Occasionally, older students are served, such as students with disabilities; Healy-Murphy enrolls students over 18 in its high school equivalency program. About 30% of the students are working and require alternative services and scheduling due either to work or family obligations that make a traditional school schedule difficult to maintain. The high school program currently enrolls 170 students, although it can serve up to 175. The GED program has approximately 14 students. Students can enroll directly in the high school program, or they can be referred by someone in the district.

The child development center currently has 136 students, and there is currently a waiting list.

## Academic Programs

The high school program offers both a regular high school diploma and a GED. Some students do credit recovery, but most students are in a diploma-granting program. A flexible schedule is offered for working students. The program follows the core curriculum of the state of Texas (math, English, science, social studies, PE, Spanish, art, etc.), and there are 17 teachers for educational instruction.

## College and Career Programming

United Way and Goodwill provide some options for career certifications, such as a certified nursing assistant program and Microsoft certification, and Healy-Murphy partners with NXT Level San Antonio to provide case management and postsecondary planning.

## Nonacademic Supports and Services

Although Healy-Murphy Center focuses primarily on helping students obtain a high school diploma, many wraparound services are available, including one-on-one counseling and therapy services, support groups, and a health and wellness clinic. Job placement assistance and career guidance are also provided. There is an onsite Texas Rising four-star child development center for students who are parents. Students receive daily breakfast and lunch.

## Staffing

Healy-Murphy Center is staffed with an executive director, principal, assistant principal, and two professional counselors who address mental health needs of students, as well as a case manager and social worker and 17 teachers. There are three front office personnel, a chief financial officer, an assistant, and two full-time cafeteria staff members. There is a head of maintenance and two janitors.

The child development center is staffed with a director, two wing leaders, 35 teachers, two kitchen personnel, and one janitor. They share the maintenance supervisor with the high school program.

## Funding

Total revenues for the 2021-22 school year were approximately \$3.8 million for the Center. United Way and the city of San Antonio contributed over \$1 million for the high school, the child development center, and training. As a 501(c)(3), Healy-Murphy is eligible to receive corporate and foundation support as well as federal funding, such as the USDA's Child and Adult Care Food Program and National School Lunch Program. Healy-Murphy has earned rental income through the rental of Holy Spirit Hall, the CrossFit gym on the campus, and the gym. Grants and contributions comprise the lion's share of funding for the program, and most revenues are spent on employee compensation and benefits. Currently, the program receives corporate and foundation support from over 20

local and national groups (for example, Capital One, Koehler Foundation, and Methodist Healthcare Ministries). When students opt for a GED, the city of San Antonio and Valero Benefit for Children cover those costs.

Under an MOU with Healy-Murphy Center, San Antonio ISD includes the Healy-Murphy students in its ADA count for purposes of receiving state and local funding through the state's FSP. District funds are paid directly to support nine staff members at the high school program and four at the child development center. For the 2021-22 school year, San Antonio ISD reported expenditures of \$665,000 for Healy-Murphy, with revenue generated under the FSP for students with disabilities (15%) and for compensatory education (81%). Federal Title I, Part A comprised the remaining 4% of funds.

## **Por Vida Academy, San Antonio**

### **Overview**

Por Vida Academy charter high school was established as an alternative high school for at-risk students in San Antonio in 1996. At that time, the school was incorporated as a separate nonprofit organization named Blessed Sacrament Academy Second Chance High School. In 2001, the school changed its name to Por Vida Academy. Blessed Sacrament Academy is the parent company of Por Vida, and they also operate a college prep high school in Corpus Christi.

### **Students**

Por Vida serves students ages 14 to 21, with most students ages 14 to 18. In recent years, students are enrolling after eighth grade and remain at the school for all four years of high school. The school has capacity to serve 150 to 180 students, but the pandemic, coupled with a saturation of charter schools in San Antonio, has reduced its population to about 100 currently. That said, high student mobility due to family and legal issues means that the school typically serves anywhere from 200 to 400 students in a single year. Any student is eligible to enroll at Por Vida Academy. Student background and behavioral issues are not reviewed until they are at the campus.

### **Academic Programs**

The academic program at Por Vida offers small class sizes (about 15 per class), self-paced credit recovery courses, a flexible four-hour school day, one-on-one tutoring,

and intensive STAAR preparation. The smaller environment at Por Vida and the focus on social-emotional learning and relationship building are keys to the success of the school. Every student has an individualized program based on what they need to obtain a high school diploma. Three programs are offered—a more traditional classroom environment, a credit recovery option, and an adult diploma program. Students can graduate at any time once they finish their coursework and complete their STAAR testing.

Academic programming is offered using a flexible schedule from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. For the more traditional program, students attend academic classes in person with a teacher. Four classes—algebra I, English, biology, and U.S. history—are offered. For elective classes that are not STAAR tested, an online curriculum is available using EdGenuity, which is used to motivate students. Students can earn up to three credits per semester through EdGenuity.

Students who are off track and working on credit recovery (typically, these are older students) receive one-on-one targeted intervention with teachers for STAAR-tested subjects. There is also an after-school program supported with federal funds from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m. for students to receive additional targeted interventions for testing. There are also recreational opportunities during this time (for instance, archery).

## College and Career Programming

Each teacher at Por Vida teaches one CTE class in addition to an academic class as a way to gain efficiency. The most common offerings are business oriented. More and more students choose to attend college after finishing at Por Vida. Every student develops a transition plan as soon as they enroll. Alamo-area community colleges send administrative staff members to the school to assist students with applications and financial aid. Once they graduate, students can transition to community college, although there is often a hiccup with complicated financial aid issues.

AlamoPROMISE is a recent area program covering the full cost of tuition and fees (after financial aid) for new graduates from participating high schools who seek an academic certificate or associate's degree. Eligible students can start at any of the five Alamo colleges and then transfer to the University of Texas at San Antonio to complete a four-year degree, with most educational costs covered. However, charter and private schools are not included in AlamoPROMISE, so unfortunately, students attending Por Vida are not eligible for this program. This may create a disincentive for students to enroll at Por

Vida as well as for students at Por Vida to attend college without the promise of financial assistance. As a result, the school has started to offer a dual credit pathway paid for by the school. Students take the classes remotely on campus, and teachers support them when necessary.

## **Nonacademic Supports and Services**

A positive behavioral intervention and supports program and a focus on restorative justice are nonacademic supports provided to students by the school counselor and social worker. There is also a counseling center and drug and alcohol counseling center on campus available to students when needed. A social worker also helps with wraparound services, particularly housing, food, and prenatal care for pregnant teens.

## **Staffing**

Por Vida is staffed by a deputy superintendent, a principal, six full-time teachers, a special education director, a dropout prevention specialist, a counselor, an academic advisor, a social worker, a data entry/attendance clerk, two front-office staff, and a groundskeeper/custodian. Some of the teachers also work in the after-school program.

## **Funding**

In the 2021-22 school year, Por Vida had a budget of about \$3 million, with most revenue generated from FSP for charter schools. Weighted funding was provided for CTE programming, students with disabilities, state compensatory education, and bilingual programs. Federal funds from the 21<sup>st</sup>-Century Community Learning Centers Program support the after-school program; the school also receives a small Title I grant. Dual enrollment classes, a new addition to the programming at Por Vida, will be covered by locally raised revenue.

The vast majority of expenditures went toward instructional costs (60%), general administration (11%), and school leadership (10%), with 11% on facilities maintenance and operations. Guidance counseling and social work services each accounted for about 2% of expenditures.

# Stubblefield Learning Center, Lufkin

## Overview

Stubblefield Learning Center (SLC) is a cooperative between Angelina County Chamber of Commerce, Angelina College, and five participating school districts (Central, Diboll, Hudson, Lufkin, and Zavalla). The five participating school districts formed a cooperative about 25 years ago because the county dropout rate at the time was 33%, and there was a dire need for an alternative pathway to graduation. SLC, located in Lufkin, is a nontraditional high school that gives students a second chance to graduate from high school. It is set up as a nonprofit corporation.

## Students

Students are referred from one of the five participating districts to SLC. Students are assessed to determine their credit needs for finishing a high school credential. The age range of students is from 15 to 20, with most of the students around 17 years old. Most students who arrive at SLC are typically about two years behind in their coursework. The SLC program focuses on catching them up and connecting them to postsecondary opportunities. About 150 students are served at any one time. Students attend anywhere from two to three weeks up to two years, depending on how many credits they need to graduate and how quickly they attain those credits. Once they finish, they are counted in the graduation rate of the sending district.

## Academic Programs

SLC is a self-paced, year-round program that focuses on dropout recovery and prevention. SLC offers students an encouraging environment with high expectations to complete their high school diploma requirements and progress toward higher education or the workforce. Coursework is offered to students in a nontraditional setting with a flexible schedule and small classroom sizes. Each student obtains a pathway to graduation based on coursework completion. Additional resources can be provided if students wish to pursue higher education or workplace certifications upon completion.

The academic program has five classrooms and uses a year-round flexible schedule. Students are expected to participate in a self-paced four-hour-per-day program. Students work one on one with teachers to finish modules to recover credits. Edgenuity online modules are used as supplementary instruction in math and Spanish, which has

helped them address the needs of students who are at many different levels in math, but they do not rely on online instruction for their program.

## **College and Career Programming**

SLC recently hired a student college and career navigator who works closely with each student to understand their needs, interests, dreams, and aspirations, focusing on students very close to graduating. Some students may want to go straight to work, and the navigator will help align their interests with a community-based business, such as Lockheed Martin. Some students want to go to college, and the navigator will assist by helping students with the FAFSA and college applications as well as visiting college campuses and dorms and helping students understand financial aid. This is especially important as most students at SLC do not have support at home for going to college. Multiple partnerships have been established with local businesses and Angelina College, as well as with the Legacy Institute for Financial Education, which has an apprenticeship program that allows students to become certified quickly and get jobs.

## **Nonacademic Supports and Services**

In addition to the student navigator described above who works with students on postsecondary planning, the school has a social worker who provides daily supports to the students and families in the form of social and emotional supports and basic life counseling as well as helping to connect students with needed community resources.

## **Staffing**

The SLC program has five certified teachers across multiple academic areas who teach both academic content and electives. The school also has a principal, a social worker, a student navigator, a custodian, a PEIMS administrator, and an administrative secretary.

## **Funding**

SLC is supported primarily by funding from the five participating school districts. Students served by SLC are still considered to belong to the sending district, and consequently, they are counted in the district's ADA under the state's FSP. Students are counted for the basic allotment but also for receiving compensatory education. Districts support SLC proportional to district size regardless of how many students might be served in a given year by a single district. That is, larger districts provide more support to SLC than smaller districts. This approach has evened out over time and ensures that the sending districts have an alternative program in place when needed.



# Appendix B: List of Interviewees

**Traci Berry**

*The Goodwill Excel Center*

**Stacie Brady**

*Education Transition Center,  
Excel Academy Charter  
District*

**Ronny Cabrera**

*La Joya ISD College and  
Career Center*

**David Clauss**

*American YouthWorks*

**Nicole Colvin**

*Deep East Texas College  
and Career Academy*

**Amy Corron**

*Wesley Community Center*

**Mike Feinberg**

*Work Texas*

**Loren Franckowiak**

*Por Vida Academy*

**Hannah Gourgey**

*Aspen Institute*

**Chris Hill**

*Solomon Coles M. High  
School & Education Center,  
Corpus Christi ISD*

**Daniel King**

*Education Service  
Center, Region 1*

**Sr. Odelia Korenek**

*Por Vida Academy*

**Yael Lawson**

*Workforce Solutions Capital  
Area*

**Kumasi Lewis**

*Texans Can Academy at  
Fort Worth Westcreek*

**Brenda Matamoros-  
Beveridge**

*Texans Can Academy at  
Fort Worth Lancaster*

**Melodie McClarren**

*Tuloso-Midway ISD,  
Academic Career Center*

**Andrew Moore**

*National League of Cities*

**Vanessa Ramirez**

*WorkTexas*

**Irene Ramos**

*Education Service Center,  
Region 2*

**Kelli Rhodes**

*Restore Education*

**Kerri Rhodes**

*Restore Education*

**Angela Rios**

*Southwest Keys Juvenile  
Justice Alternative*

*Education Program*

**Abby Salazar**

*Healy Murphy Center*

**Kevin Taylor**

*Stubblefield Learning Center*

**Jeff Walker**

*Stubblefield Learning Center*

**Doug Watson**

*Healy Murphy Center*

**Jeff West**

*Education to Employment  
Partners*

# Endnotes

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4. Richard Fry and Amanda Barroso, Amid Coronavirus Outbreak, Nearly Three-in-Ten Young People Are Neither Working Nor in School (Washington, DC: Pew Research Center, July 29, 2020), <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2020/07/29/amid-coronavirus-outbreak-nearly-three-in-ten-young-people-are-neither-working-nor-in-school>.
5. The BOT model has three phases: enriched preparation, to ensure young people have the knowledge and skills to graduate ready for college or careers; postsecondary bridging, to provide a supported transition to postsecondary education and training; and first-year supports, to ensure young people succeed in the critical first year after high school and earn credits predictive of completion. See Appendix A for a full description of the BOT model.
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