

POST-SECONDARY SUCCESS AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY OVERVIEW



T.L.L. TEMPLE FOUNDATION
EST. 1962
BUILDING A THRIVING RURAL EAST TEXAS

OBJECTIVE

All 16-24-year-old rural East Texans earn a credential with labor market value that contributes to building a thriving East Texas.

CHALLENGE

Our educational systems in rural East Texas are not preparing students with the knowledge and skills they need for future workforce success. Increasingly, jobs require postsecondary credentials—something beyond high school.¹ Technological advancements are leaving behind workers in occupations susceptible to automation, particularly those without access to transformative learning opportunities.² According to a recent statewide analysis, less than 0.01 percent of students earned an industry-recognized credential while enrolled in Texas high schools.³ Only one out of five eighth graders in Texas go on to complete any degree or certificate within six years of high school graduation.⁴ And some of those credentials, like cosmetology, are not in demand and pay limited average wages.⁵ East Texas is further behind the curve for postsecondary educational attainment, lagging state and national credential achievement. Rapid demographic changes already underway will compound this problem, as those populations that are fastest growing are also the most underserved by our educational systems.⁶ Simply put, our region cannot thrive without improving education and workforce outcomes. Young people will not reach their full potential, families will suffer, and employers will continue to struggle with talent shortages.

OPPORTUNITY

A thriving rural East Texas requires an educational infrastructure that prepares each generation of East Texans for the high wage, high demand jobs of the future. Despite unprecedented challenges due to a global pandemic and economic upheaval, local leaders are pioneering new educational and workforce models tailored to rural East Texas. Small school districts are creating alliances to offer their students academic and career opportunities that would be impossible to provide in isolation. Community colleges are developing guided pathways that increase the number of young people who enter post-secondary education, complete credentials, and secure better jobs. Local industries are coming together to build up talent pipelines so that East Texas has a workforce that drives economic development. Across the board, there is a renewed focus on equity, so that every East Texan has the access and opportunity they need to thrive. At every level of education, innovative collaborations and system alignments are moving forward, and the T.L.L. Temple Foundation is accelerating the best ideas with the greatest potential for impact.

“Despite unprecedented challenges due to a global pandemic and economic upheaval, local leaders are pioneering new educational and workforce models tailored to rural East Texas.”

¹ https://cew.georgetown.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/Recovery2020.ES_Web_.pdf

² <https://www.brookings.edu/research/automation-and-artificial-intelligence-how-machines-affect-people-and-places/>

³ <https://credentialsmatter.org/#/explore-by-state/Texas>

⁴ <http://www.theccb.state.tx.us/DocID/PDF/10117.PDF>

⁵ <https://www.credentialsmatter.org/data-exploration/are-the-credentials-students-earning-in-high-school-aligned-with-jobs-demanded-in-the-workforce/tx/>

⁶ <https://www.raiseyourhandtexas.org/stories/the-texas-demographic-revolution/>

STRATEGY

The T.L.L. Temple Foundation is pursuing a targeted strategy for rural East Texas to increase the number of students who attain high-skill, high-demand credentials, align K-16 educational pathways, and strengthen linkages between education and key industry clusters to propel local economic development. The T.L.L. Temple Foundation activates transformative organizations and ideas that will build and elevate a thriving East Texas as a leader in rural education and economic opportunity.

The T.L.L. Temple Foundation is seeking education and industry partners that recognize and understand the unique challenges and unprecedented opportunities facing our rural East Texas communities. Fundamental to the strategy are strong partnerships founded on a shared commitment to pursue transformational system-level impacts, incorporate equitable access to opportunity, strengthen collaboration and innovation across institutions and sectors, and pursue data-driven accountability for results.

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FOCUS AREAS

- **Student Success:** Advance rural education models and programs that help students complete postsecondary degrees and credentials that lead to high demand, high wage careers.
 - Ensure rural students, particularly historically underrepresented groups, are prepared for college and career success.
 - Develop effective pathway models to help rural students, particularly historically underrepresented groups, gain degrees or credentials that lead to high demand, high wage jobs.
- **Education System Redesign and Alignment:** Strengthen and better align educational institutions to improve student outcomes.
 - Strengthen and scale guided pathways to postsecondary success.
 - Align K-16 math pathways for postsecondary success.
 - Connect schools and/or districts to vetted technical assistance providers that help schools improve and address systemic barriers to equitable student outcomes.

MONITORING PROGRESS

To ensure that we are accelerating change and achieving results, the Foundation is monitoring the number and percent of credentials completed by grade 12 and in postsecondary education:

- By geography: In school districts and institutions of higher education participating in project investments, in our service area, and in Texas
- By socio-economic status, race, and gender.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about T.L.L. Temple Foundation or about this strategy, please refer to our website tlltemple.foundation or call **936-634-3900**.