65% of all U.S. jobs will require education or training beyond high school by 2030.

Nearly half of those will be in-demand, middle-skill occupations.¹

Only 44% of young Texans have a postsecondary certificate or degree and this rate is even lower in rural and low-income communities (32% in Northwest Texas; 33% in West Texas; 35% in Upper East Texas).²

Our statewide higher education plan, 60X30TX, has established the goal that by the year 2030, 60% of Texans ages 25-34 years old will earn a certificate or degree.

These statistics demand that we radically reimagine our education and training systems to bolster effectiveness, eliminate inequities, and create a skilled Texas workforce now and for the future. WE CAN TX will expand and improve the education and training programs that give more Texans the ability to support their families and create shared economic prosperity.
**WORKFORCE and EDUCATION COMMUNITY COLLEGE APPRENTICESHIP NETWORK in TEXAS (WE CAN TX)**

**WE CAN TX** is a statewide peer-learning network that empowers regional partnerships to build education-to-workforce pathways. Led by community colleges and workforce organizations, partners will develop and scale innovative, modern work-based learning experiences and academic structures (e.g. internships, youth apprenticeships, teacher and faculty externships) that address employer needs in high-wage and high-demand careers.

**OUR VISION**

To ensure equitable outcomes for first-generation, low-income students of color across Texas and meet the talent and workforce demands of businesses.

**OUR MISSION**

To increase the number of students who earn postsecondary credentials and are working in high-demand industries that pay a livable wage.

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**OUR GOALS**

- **ENHANCE REGIONAL CAPACITY and ALIGN to EMPLOYER NEEDS**
  Regions will receive technical assistance and strategic planning support to develop and/or expand work-based learning opportunities and infrastructure in high-demand industries that meet regional and state workforce needs.

- **INNOVATE for EQUITY**
  Network Members will design work-based learning programs that ensure equity of access and more certainty of success for low-income students of color. In addition to diversifying the number and type of industries participating in work-based learning, network members will develop strategies that are guided by a mutually agreed-upon Equity Plan.

- **SCALE and SUSTAIN**
  Educate Texas will guide regional teams to collaborate and implement practices designed to expand and sustain work-based learning, including: using common definitions and data measurements, developing regional backbones, establishing sector partnerships that meet employer needs, and braiding funding from different education and workforce sources.
WE CAN TX launched in March 2021 with a cohort of 11 regional partnerships that will receive technical assistance and engage in peer learning. Educate Texas will meet regions where they are and provide technical assistance and resources designed to realign and scale up work-based learning programs including but not limited to:

1. **REGIONAL ASSESSMENTS and OPPORTUNITY GAP ANALYSIS**
   Educate Texas will conduct an assessment of each partnership to identify assets and challenges and make strategic recommendations that inform technical assistance. This will include identifying opportunity gaps and disparities in enrollment, completion, and job placement for underrepresented and underserved populations (e.g. low-income, race/ethnicity, etc.).

2. **DATA LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS**
   We will examine what workforce data partners are accessing, where they are accessing data, and how they are using it. This will inform technical assistance and state policy recommendations both regionally and statewide.

3. **ADULT and YOUTH APPRENTICESHIPS**
   Educate Texas will assist partners with developing youth and adult apprenticeship programs that align with in-demand career fields. The apprenticeship strategy will be designed to offer early exposure and access to education and career opportunities for underrepresented and underserved individuals.

4. **WORK-BASED COURSES (WBCS)**
   This innovative course structure uses jobs as a learning lab. WBCs—which are co-taught by college faculty and employers—redesign the format of existing credit-bearing community college courses to incorporate teaching technical skills that employers need. These stackable courses may be taken individually or as a sequence and save time and money for students, colleges, and employers.

5. **TOOLS TO SUPPORT VIRTUAL LEARNING and WORK**
   We will leverage virtual learning in high demand sectors (such as healthcare, IT, and manufacturing) to support greater equity and access. These tools and resources will remove barriers—such as transportation and childcare—that prevent individuals from participating and are particularly useful in small and rural regions.
WE CAN TX SELECTION CRITERIA

- Partnerships have been selected from across Texas, representing institutions from large, urban to small and/or rural.
- In addition, Educate Texas purposefully selected regional partnerships at various phases of development to facilitate peer learning.
- While some regions are poised to implement or expand work-based learning this year, others are building knowledge and capacity and will take more time to engage.
- Another group of smaller and/or rural regions are moving toward work-based learning by building on dual credit and internships or existing sector partnerships.
- Above all, participating regions must demonstrate willingness and capacity to actively participate in technical assistance and to undertake strategic efforts to expand work-based learning.

WE CAN TX NETWORK MEMBERS by REGION

Central Texas
Workforce Solutions Capital Area & Austin Community College

North Texas
Dallas College
North Central Texas College
Tarrant County College

East Texas
Tyler Junior College

Gulf Coast
Lee College
San Jacinto College

Panhandle
Amarillo College

West Texas
Workforce Solutions West Central Texas

South Texas
Alamo Colleges District & SA Works
South Texas College & RGV FOCUS

For questions or more information on WE CAN TX, please visit wecantx.org or contact wecantx@cftexas.org.

To view our sources, please visit edtx.org/documentsources.