



Manufacturing Matters

ALIGNING EDUCATION WITH WORKFORCE OPPORTUNITIES TAM SUPPORTS P-TECH 9-14 MODEL (SB 22, HB 1237)

An educated and skilled workforce is the lifeblood of Texas manufacturing. TAM has advocated for policies to better align the education system with the needs of employers, especially the skilled trades. TAM supported House Bill 5 in 2013, which provided flexibility in our high school curriculum to provide students with diverse education choices to prepare them for both post-secondary education and career opportunities in our industries.

TAM supported HB 5 because it allows for more applied and firsthand learning through career and technical education (CTE), dual credit and project-based learning. That kind of relevance to both the workforce and higher education will yield: 1) a lower high school dropout rate; 2) more students interested in education at all levels; 3) a significant closing of the skills gap; and 4) ultimately, a lower unemployment rate.

TAM also supports the 60x30TX plan which aims to have 60% of students earn a credential – either a technical certificate or licensure, an associate’s degree, or a bachelor’s degree by 2030. The current percentage is 38. Students need “marketable skills” to succeed regardless of their major, and graduates must have “manageable debt,” because 60% of K-12 students are socio-economically disadvantaged.

During the 2017 legislative session, TAM will support the P-TECH 9-14 model (SB 22 by Sen. Larry Taylor and HB 1237 by Rep. Eddie Lucio III). In a P-TECH school, students earn a high school diploma, an industry-recognized associate degree, and gain relevant work experience in a growing field. The schools create a seamless program for students to acquire the academic, technical skills, and workplace knowledge that employers need. The unique culture of a P-TECH 9-14 school is built upon high

expectations for students and adults alike. Students see themselves as “college students” and “on a career pathway” from the beginning of 9th grade. Likewise, teachers, partners, and parents work together to ensure that every student graduates fully prepared for the 21st century workplace.

TAM also supports dual credit, offering rigorous, college-level

courses in high school that count for credit in both college and high school. In 2015, TAM supported House Bill 18, which removed the limit on the number of dual credit courses students can take. HB 18 also directed middle schools to offer a career and college exploration course in time for eighth graders to pick their high school endorsement and provided school counselors and advisors with tools to better advise students on both career and college opportunities.

P-TECH Key Elements:

- 1) Focus on careers
- 2) Focus on college degrees
- 3) Redesigned high school experience
- 4) Diverse student body
- 5) Shared decision-making