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Tarrant County College

# Trailblazing **Together:**



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*Five-Year Strategic Plan*

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# 1. Introduction

In spring 2024, Tarrant County College (TCC) began crafting a strategic plan to boldly lead the future. The plan encapsulates internal and external considerations — principal among them Texas House Bill 8 (HB 8) — that significantly shape the College’s priorities. HB 8 establishes key performance measures for success, including an outcomes-based approach that rewards colleges for awarding degrees, certificates and other “credentials of value.” For TCC, HB 8 is a mechanism to further elevate successes to meet desired outcomes outlined in the state’s strategic plan for higher education, Building a Talent Strong Texas.

## The TCC Story

The TCC story is one of access and opportunity, hard work and robust growth, opportunities imagined and challenges met. TCC was established in 1965 as the Tarrant County Junior College District and grew to four campus locations — South, Northeast, Northwest and Southeast; a name change to Tarrant County College District occurred in 1999. Two new locations — Trinity River and TCC Connect — were added in 2009 and 2015, respectively. TCC has proudly been designated a Hispanic Serving Institution since 2012.<sup>1</sup>

TCC was founded during the Golden Age of community colleges, a period of vigorous nationwide expansion fueled by federal funding from the Higher Education Act of 1965 and its amendments. Institutions like TCC adapted to changing educational and economic landscapes and continue to do so. These colleges were designed to educate underrepresented students, prepare students for the workforce, offer university transfer programs and emphasize lifelong learning.<sup>2</sup> U.S. community colleges like TCC serve more than 10 million students annually.<sup>3</sup>

Texas’ rich history with its community colleges mirrors the determination of the United States post-World War II to make higher education accessible to a diverse population. The Texas Junior College Act of 1965 provided funding to develop community colleges in the state — and thus was born TCC. Most recently, the state has aligned funding with performance outcomes for community colleges, recognizing their importance to Texas residents.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> National Center for Education Statistics (2013). Enrollment and degrees conferred in degree-granting postsecondary institutions that serve large proportions of Hispanic undergraduate students, by institution level and control, percentage Hispanic, degree level, and other selected characteristics: Fall 2012 and 2011–12.

<sup>2</sup> Cohen, A.M., Brawer, F.B., & Kisker, C.B. (2014). The American Community College (6th ed.). Jossey-Bass.

<sup>3</sup> American Association of Community Colleges. (2024). Fast Facts 2024. <https://www.aacc.nche.edu/research-trends/fast-facts/>

<sup>4</sup> Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

[A New Plan for Community College Funding to Fuel Texas’ Economic Success - Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board](#)

## Building on Success as One College

In 2025, TCC will celebrate six decades of transforming lives and serving the community. For 60 years, when a better path appeared, the College pursued it, making all the difference. Employees continue to be dedicated to working together to foster innovation through teaching and service to enhance quality of life and provide the best student experience.

*Trailblazing Together: 2030* informs the integration of College plans, such as academic, technology, communications and facilities. It has a solid foundation built on research and lessons learned and represents the perspectives of students, employees and the community.



TCC strives to come together as one college that provides a consistent experience for students, employees and community members. The College is student-ready, providing lifelong transformational education.

## New Opportunities for a Brighter Future

TCC embarked on this strategic planning process to map College priorities that reflect the state's attention to degree completion, dual credit opportunities, workforce alignment, high-demand careers and four-year school transfers. To support this focus, three pillars emerged to inform the plan:

- Build pathways to credentials of value
- Align resources to enrich student outcomes
- Drive transformation to boost economic impact

As TCC implements this strategic plan, priorities and decision-making throughout the College will support and advance the goals and objectives.

TCC is excited to blaze another trail to an exciting future with its education, community and business and industry partners.

## 2. Letter from the Chancellor

Greetings, TCC Community and Partners,

As we celebrate Tarrant County College's founding 60 years ago, we remain more determined than ever to make a great education attainable for all who seek it. Now especially, we stand ready to blaze new trails as a premier partner in the region, connecting students, educators and employers to achieve remarkable outcomes — academically, personally and professionally.

Tarrant County relies on us for open access to higher education. Delivering on the community's investment to transform lives will always be a top priority. From the moment they arrive, students know they belong, supported by faculty and staff who celebrate in their successes.

*Trailblazing Together: 2030* grew from the efforts of many people and is designed to engage students, employees, businesses, industry and the community in our shared goals. This is a transformative plan with an emphasis on student outcomes and economic impact. It will enrich the student and employee experience, generate more value-added credentials, and lift TCC's status as one of the finest comprehensive two-year institutions in the nation.

The plan has clear, measurable goals and objectives and will undoubtedly accelerate our progress. I invite you to join me on this journey as we propel TCC to a more vibrant, eventful future together.

Sincerely,



Elva LeBlanc, PhD  
Chancellor

### 3. Strategic Plan Process

A seven-phase strategic plan development process brought together TCC employees, students and partners to create *Trailblazing Together: 2030* with the support of the Chancellor, the Strategic Plan Advisory Team and MGT of America Consulting, LLC (MGT).

#### Phase 1: Project Initiation

- Review project objectives, expectations and roles/responsibilities
- Collect and review data, reports and strategic documents
- Communicate with TCC stakeholders

#### Phase 2: Environmental Scan and Institutional Comparison

- Review TCC's historical and projected budget and expenses
- Benchmark comparable higher education institutions
- Collect and analyze data on service area

#### Phase 3: Mission, Vision, Values, Strategic Priorities

- Facilitate visioning session with Board of Trustees
- Seek input from stakeholders
- Compile and summarize results

#### Phase 4: Community Engagement

- Communicate with TCC stakeholders
- Facilitate interviews and focus groups
- Conduct web survey questionnaire

#### Phase 5: Future Envisioning

- Analyze student, employee and community responses and environmental data
- Facilitate Future Envisioning workshop
- Prepare report on findings

#### Phase 6: Final Strategic Plan and Presentation

- Create comprehensive strategic plan
- Key stakeholders provide feedback
- Prepare final plan and supporting materials

#### Phase 7: Implementation and Assessment Plan<sup>5</sup>

- Develop implementation schedule
- Determine metrics, key performance indicators and assessments
- Share implementation and assessment plan

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<sup>5</sup> Phase 7 begins fall 2024 and is an ongoing process following delivery of the final strategic plan.

## Project Initiation

The project initiation allowed an opportunity for College senior leadership and the Strategic Plan Advisory Team to engage in a working session with MGT. The session focused on identifying and confirming project objectives, timelines, key data points, communications and the plan for work scope

## Environmental Scan

The environmental scan provided major data points about the College and community. The environmental scan clarified what may drive and, alternately, deter the plan. It also revealed opportunities in programming and partnerships and identified potential new target audiences. Analysis of such data points included:

- Peer institution comparison data, including enrollment, retention and graduation trends
- Demographic, educational, economic, employment and social/cultural trends and projections for the service area of Tarrant County
- Service area high school graduation counts and rates

### Analysis Highlights:

- Over the past three fall semesters, enrollment increased by 4,440 students. More TCC students are taking 15 or more credit hours per semester (700 more students since 2021), and 2,316 more students have taken 12-14 credit hours since 2021, so academic goals are being met sooner. The number of degrees and certificates awarded increased by 327 over the prior year.
- The Dallas-Fort Worth population is forecast to increase for those 15-19 years old by 7%, 20-24 by 15%, and 25-29 by 19% from 2023-2033. DFW is one of the few regions in the United States where all age groups should increase over the next 10 years. Also, the population is projected to become more diverse, with the greatest increases in Hispanic, Black and Asian residents. More than half of Tarrant County households have incomes below \$75,000, a larger proportion than in North Central Texas.

- Forty-two percent of DFW residents have earned a high school diploma or some college credits. Fourteen percent lack a high school diploma, which illustrates around two million residents who could be prime candidates for TCC.
- Tarrant County College outperformed selected in-state peer colleges in enrollment, full-time and part-time student retention, and number of degrees and certificates awarded. TCC also offered generally lower tuition than its peers, and its graduation rate was 6.5 percentage points below the average.

## **Mission, Vision, Values, Strategic Priorities Review Session and Revisions**

The mission, vision, values and strategic priorities review examined both purpose and direction for the College to approach the future with energy and innovation. In a conversation with MGT, TCC trustees suggested that the current mission statement, vision statement and values do not adequately frame the College's future.

Trustees noted that the mission statement should better reflect the audience, and the vision statement should be more aspirational and define the College as a premier partner. They advocated for excellence being the ultimate goal and expectation for all things TCC.

In the meeting, trustees identified innovation, flexibility, openness, trust and integrity as core values. They said the core values of the College should promote student success while complementing business and industry needs.

For top strategic priorities, trustees listed providing the wraparound services required for student success, connecting students to opportunities in today's workforce, aligning with industry and employer needs, and meeting the needs of faculty and staff — all conducted in a culture of care and respect.



## Community Engagement Feedback

TCC engaged the community through several efforts to capture the unique views of internal and external perceptions for the College to advance from mission to vision. The questions for interviews, focus groups and a survey questionnaire were created based on feedback from the environmental scan, engagement with leadership, and insight from the Board of Trustees.

Through in-person meetings, virtual conversations and a survey questionnaire, vital themes emerged. Stakeholders repeatedly noted TCC's strengths:

- Affordability
- Accessibility
- Quality programs and learning experiences
- Engagement with the Tarrant County community

Stakeholders identified areas of opportunity for growth:

- Bureaucracy and inefficient and nonintegrated processes that hinder functioning as one college
- Employee recruitment, retention and support
- Alignment and communication of student needs and resources that advance student success

Feedback about institutional priorities was collected to gain understanding of internal and external stakeholder insights:

- Focus on student success and the student experience in and out of the classroom. Ensure a smooth enrollment process with quality advising and support, including for those who struggle financially, academically or circumstantially.
- Invest in employees. Effective faculty-staff recruitment and retention are critical. TCC employees are committed to their work but want to feel more involved in decision-making. They seek a stronger administration commitment to transparency and professional development; they assert that they can better assist students when they feel supported by the institution.
- Develop enrollment management strategies that reflect local trends and needs. Smoothing the registration and onboarding processes will help sustain growth.
- Continue to enhance partnerships to secure funding for special projects, ensure program alignment with industry needs, and offer students opportunities for real world work experience while they pursue their degree or certification.

Collectively, this feedback was utilized to inform priorities of the strategic plan.

## Future Envisioning

In preparation for the future envisioning workshop with MGT, TCC Institutional Research provided the Chancellor's Cabinet and the Strategic Plan Advisory Team with a summary of findings from the Spring 2024 Student Survey, Employee Engagement Forums, Student Engagement Forums and updated Recruitment Retention Completion data. With this information shared, MGT then facilitated a future envisioning session including:

- Overview of the strategic plan process
- Review of the environmental scan
- Preliminary review of community engagement insights from the interviews, focus groups and survey questionnaire
- Review of the proposed new mission statement, vision statement and core values
- Review of top data-informed strategic priorities

## Final Strategic Plan and Presentation

In consultation with MGT, TCC used data and perceptions collected from the environmental scan, mission, vision, values and strategic priorities review, community engagement and future envisioning to complete development of *Trailblazing Together: 2030*.

## Implementation and Assessment Plan

Following completion of *Trailblazing Together: 2030*, an implementation and assessment framework will be developed to include goals, objectives, strategies and metrics. This phase will initiate in fall 2024 and implementation and assessment will be an ongoing process throughout the five-year duration of *Trailblazing Together: 2030*.

## 4. Mission

Through a clear and concise mission statement, TCC Board of Trustees focus the College on the outcomes and impact of our service to the community.

Effective mission statements are clear, memorable and consistent over time. They detail the primary reason an organization exists and what it provides for the greater good. The target, especially in higher education, is to define the institution's distinction.

### Mission Statement

*Tarrant County College is the guiding star for accessible, high-quality educational experiences that drive lasting impact.*

## 5. Vision

Through a memorable and ambitious vision, TCC Board of Trustees provide direction for the College toward achieving our long-term outcomes and impact.

Effective vision statements are memorable and evolve over time. They provide a future direction and aspirations that outline the path to an ambitious destination.

### Vision Statement

*Tarrant County College aspires to be the leader for academic excellence, student success and economic impact.*

## 6. Core Values

Through core values, TCC Board of Trustees provide the guardrails to keep the College on the path from mission to vision.

Effective core values define beliefs and support the direction of the College. They underscore everything we do and guide decision-making to advance toward our vision.

### Value Statements

*Commitment to Excellence  
Connection for Belonging  
Opportunity in Engagement  
Transformation with Innovation  
Trust through Integrity*

## 7. Goals and Objectives

Goals focus on priorities that move us along a path to success. The objectives are designed to activate the goals and move us forward. These goals and objectives build on our accomplishments and focus on how we collaborate and engage with the community to advance toward our vision.

### To enhance **access and support** for student success

- By developing students' college, career and transfer readiness knowledge, skills and abilities.
- By cultivating and connecting students with resources that reduce barriers.
- By aligning enrollment strategies with population trends, workforce demand and community development needs.

### To elevate **educational quality** for optimal student outcomes

- By providing access to high-value educational resources.
- By aligning curriculum and learning strategies with educational and workforce pathways.
- By advancing employee excellence through performance expectations and support.

### To promote excellence in **community engagement**

- By providing opportunities for engagement that add value to the student, employee and community experience.
- By increasing knowledge and strengthening awareness of our brand and value.
- By delivering learning, leadership and service opportunities that develop responsible community members.

### To ensure responsible **stewardship of resources**

- By aligning capacity and sustainable resource planning with institutional priorities.
- By improving institutional efficiency and operational effectiveness.
- By leveraging resources for strategic impact.

### To **transform lives and communities** through education

- By aligning programs and credentials with needs of students, businesses and the community.
- By providing reskill or upskill opportunities for individuals seeking career advancement.
- By advancing our economic impact.

## Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Our College will use 11 key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the success of our organizational strategy, the achievement of our goals and the arrival at our vision. Benchmarks establish the baseline of the KPIs.

Key Performance Indicator	Definition	Benchmark
<b>Credentials</b>	The number of degrees and certificates and other awards conferred.	<b>7,631</b> (2024 outcomes)
<b>Credentials Awarded in High-Demand Fields</b>	The number of degrees and certificates that prepare our students for Texas occupations projected to experience significant job growth over the next decade; determined by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.	<b>1,978</b> (2024 Outcomes)  <b>1 in 4 of credentials are in high demand fields</b>
<b>Student Transfers</b>	Students who earn at least 15 credit hours at our College and transfer to a public college or university in Texas to further their education.	<b>3,330</b> (2024 Outcomes)
<b>Dual Credit Students</b>	High school students who complete at least 15 credit hours in academic or workforce dual credit programs at our College.	<b>2,936</b> (2024 Outcomes)
<b>Resource Cost Variance</b>	The budgeted/scheduled cost versus the actual cost. Helps monitor and achieve better resource planning accuracy and cost-effectiveness.	<b>Actual Spend / Budgeted</b> (Fiscal Year 2025)

Key Performance Indicator	Definition	Benchmark
<b>Composite Financial Index (CFI)</b>	<p>A composite measure of the institution's financial health at a given time.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Primary Reserve — the level of financial flexibility</li> <li>•Viability — the organization's ability to cover debt with available resources</li> <li>•Return on Net Assets — the overall asset return and performance</li> <li>•Net Income Ratio — the operating performance</li> </ul>	<b>6.1</b> (Fiscal Year 2024)
<b>Net Promoter Score</b>	A measure of customer satisfaction, loyalty and enthusiasm that includes how likely they are to recommend our College. Helps monitor satisfaction with the delivery of services and allocation of resources.	<b>45 with 4% of the total student population participation (FL24)</b>  <b>40 with 3% of the total student population participation (SP25)</b>
<b>Taxpayer: Benefit-Cost Ratio</b>	Benefit-cost ratio is the cumulative value taxpayers receive for every dollar of public money invested in our College.	<b>1.3</b> (Fiscal Year 2024)

## 8. Strategic Plan Acknowledgments

Encouraged by the Board of Trustees, Chancellor LeBlanc and Cabinet, the Strategic Plan Advisory Team developed *Trailblazing Together: 2030*. Special thanks to the participants who engaged in the interviews, focus groups, survey questionnaires, student and employee forums and other activities. None of this would be possible without the effort invested by our students, faculty, staff and community partners.

### Chancellor's Cabinet

Antonio U. Allen, General Counsel  
Pamela Anglin, Chief Financial Officer  
Zarina Blankenbaker, Campus President  
Madelyn P. Bowman, Chair-Elect, Joint Consultation Committee  
Andy Bowne, Campus President  
Jan Clayton, Interim Campus President  
Reginald Gates, Vice Chancellor for Communications and External Affairs  
S. James Gleaton, Chair, Joint Consultation Committee  
Todd Kreuger, Chief Information Officer  
Dan Lufkin, Campus President  
S. Sean Madison, Campus President  
Gloria Maddox-Powell, Chief Human Resources Officer  
Carlos Morales, Campus President  
Laure O'Neal, Executive Director of the TCC Foundation  
Shelley Pearson, Vice Chancellor and Provost

### Strategic Plan Advisory Team

Jason Abreu, Vice President for Student Affairs  
Tara Firmin, Director of Strategic Support  
Serafin García, Assistant to the Chancellor, Team Co-Lead  
Cecilia Jacobs, Executive Director of Communications, Public Relations and Marketing  
Marcus Kerr, Executive Director of IT Project and Portfolio Management  
Margaret Lutton, Executive Director of Institutional and Strategic Development  
Holly Stovall, Executive Director of Institutional Research  
Anthony Walker, Director of Administrative Initiatives  
Victoria Yen, Chief Transformation Officer, Team Co-Lead

### Strategic Plan Communications Team

Reginald Gates, Vice Chancellor for Communications and External Affairs  
Robert Heyser, District Director of Digital Strategy  
Cecilia Jacobs, Executive Director of Communications, Public Relations and Marketing  
Arturo Martinez, District Director of Creative Strategy  
Hillary Snider, Manager of Internal Communications

## 9. Glossary

**Access:** The opportunity for individuals to obtain a quality education regardless of their background or circumstances.

**Accessible:** Designing courses and teaching styles to meet the needs of students from different backgrounds, abilities and learning styles.

**Belonging:** The feeling of security derived from a sense of acceptance, inclusion and connection.

**Comparison institution:** A college or university similar to TCC chosen for data comparison.

**Core values:** Principles, beliefs or ideals that ground the institution — guardrails that help TCC move from mission to vision.

**Credit hour:** The amount of credit given for one classroom hour per week for a given term.

**Dual credit:** A system in which an eligible high school student enrolls in college course(s) and receives credit for the course(s) from both the college and high school.

**Economic impact:** The effect a particular activity or program has on the economy of a place, region or country.

**Engagement:** Involvement and active, meaningful participation.

**Environmental scan:** An examination of an organization, project or activity's internal and external attributes to identify trends and influential forces.

**Graduation rate:** The percentage of first-time, full-time students who complete their degree or certificate program within 150% of the program's published length.

**Mission:** An important goal or purpose accompanied by strong conviction. A calling or vocation.

**One college:** A TCC organizational structure and practice that provides students with similar quality experiences and services regardless of location.

**Operational effectiveness:** A business metric measuring how well an institution delivers value and achieves outcomes it intends to produce.

**Premier partner:** An agency with which TCC fashions a close working relationship aimed at common educational, workforce and/or community outcomes.

**Student retention:** The number or percentage of students who re-enroll from one year to the next.



**Student-ready:** A commitment to meeting students where they are and with what they bring to the table.

**Texas House Bill 8 (HB 8):** In 2023, the 88th Legislature approved a new funding model for the state's 50 community college districts. HB 8 replaces a static model based on courses and credit hours with a performance-based model tied to specific outcomes.

**Underrepresented students:** Student groups such as ethnic minorities, first-generation students, low-income students and students experiencing housing insecurity who represent a lower proportion of a student population than their proportion in the overall population.

**University transfer programs:** Programs that prepare students to continue their education at a four-year college or university.

**Workforce demand:** The amount of labor force required by employers.

**Wraparound services:** Comprehensive, holistic services to meet student academic, financial, social and mental health challenges.



**Tarrant County College** is an Equal Opportunity Institution that provides educational and employment opportunities on the basis of merit and without discrimination because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation, or veteran status.

