

1 **Texas Career Signing Day**
2 **Discussion Paper**
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4 **Background**

5 Texas' first ever Career and Technical Education (CTE) Signing Day event was held on
6 Tuesday, March 5, 2019 after HR 241 by Representative James White was adopted by the House
7 of Representatives stating that, "Career and technical education is offering a path to success in
8 the 21st-century economy while helping to address the urgent need for skilled labor in high-
9 demand industries, and it is enabling numerous Texans to secure gainful employment and lead
10 productive, fulfilling lives." A signing ceremony immediately followed the resolution reading at
11 Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), and four students received scholarships and signed
12 Letters of Intent (LOI) reflecting their commitment to attend Lamar Institute of Technology.
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14 **Event Details**

15 Texas Career Signing Day is a proposed new statewide initiative that builds on the concept of a
16 signing day proclamation and provides an opportunity for TWC to recognize and celebrate high
17 school students choosing to enter career pathways leading to in-demand careers in targeted
18 occupations directly from high school. Texas Career Signing Day events will be held in
19 communities across Texas to celebrate students moving up and along a variety of career
20 pathways including entry into:

- 21 • the workforce as a result of completing career certifications towards targeted occupations,
 - 22 • an applied learning opportunity like an internship or apprenticeship,
 - 23 • a Career and Technical Education program,
 - 24 • or a combination of all of the above.
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26 Qualifying organizations participating in Texas Career Signing Day events are those
27 organizations that support the development of skills development for Texas youth poised to enter
28 the workforce in targeted occupations. Participating organizations may include Workforce
29 Boards, organizations serving high school students, and employers and local businesses in the
30 various communities who provide internships and apprenticeship programs in targeted
31 occupations. In addition, key partners will be invited to participate including P-Tech high
32 schools, Early College High Schools (ECHS), as well as local technical and community colleges
33 that support youth development.

34 The events will feature employers, educational institutions, and other sponsor organizations who
35 are hiring and recruiting these students for their talents and technical skills.

36 TWC is interested in encouraging qualifying organizations to host a Texas Career Signing Day in
37 May and June, 2019, and has invited them to participate in a webinar to launch the initiative on

38 April 18, 2019. Signing Days can be held as part of an existing event, or as a freestanding event.
39 In addition, participating organizations may want to consider local sponsors for the events.

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41 Participating organizations will work in coordination with TWC to identify students and
42 employers to participate in a Texas Career Signing Day as an opportunity to promote programs
43 connecting high school students and employers in their communities. Organizations that choose
44 to participate will receive a customizable, branded, and downloadable toolkit that includes
45 templates for invitations, frameable certificates, media relation guides, and event planning
46 checklists. Participating organizations will ensure participating students are high school seniors
47 finishing high school with post-secondary certificates or industry-recognized certifications in
48 targeted occupations and are eligible to be hired by employers, entering apprenticeships, or any
49 other career pathway programs.

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51 TWC will cross promote local signing day events using social media channels such as Careers in
52 Texas Industries, Jobs Y'all, Texas Internship Challenge, Texas Reality Check, and Texas Career
53 Check. In addition, TWC will arrange for TWC representatives to attend signing day events as
54 schedules permit.

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56 Finally, TWC will gather lessons learned from piloting this initiative in 2019 and share this
57 information with Commissioners for further discussion about any needed changes for this
58 initiative going forward.

59 **Decision Point**

60 Staff seeks direction on piloting a new initiative, Texas Career Signing Day, in May and June of
61 2019 for all interested qualifying organizations that are willing to promote and celebrate Texas
62 high school seniors moving up and along a variety of career pathways and secure gainful
63 employment and lead productive, fulfilling lives.

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