

1 **Workforce Career and Education Outreach Specialist Program for 2020**
2 **Discussion Paper**

3 **Background**

4 The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) approved the “Workforce Career & Technical
5 Education Outreach Specialist Pilot Program” in July 2018, and an RFA was issued in May 2019
6 and awarded for \$4,374,948 to 7 Workforce Boards. The initiative is designed to ensure Texas
7 students get the exposure and awareness to career resources today that empower them to gain
8 degree certifications, graduate with marketable skills in the future. Currently, there are 30 local
9 Workforce Career Specialists working in 170 area middle and high schools (grades 6-12) to
10 provide career guidance and workforce information to approximately 300,000 students through
11 over 3,900 workshops regarding 1) high growth, high demand occupations; 2) opportunities and
12 training in middle-skills jobs; 3) Registered Apprenticeship training programs; 4) internships;
13 and 5) community and technical colleges.

14 TWC staff are working closely with the grantees and meeting monthly to learn more about how
15 the program is working in each local area and providing technical assistance, as needed.

16 **Issue**

17 Based on keen interest from Boards and their community stakeholders, TWC is interested in
18 issuing a second RFA for Workforce Career and Education Outreach Specialists with slightly
19 modified parameters. Because the funds are largely used to hire and retain Workforce
20 Specialist staff, TWC is proposing that Boards partner with community stakeholders who will
21 be able to provide at least a 50% match to cover the personnel costs for 2 years. Two Boards
22 and their community stakeholders could be awarded \$300,000 each (\$150,000 per year) to
23 pilot this concept. Community stakeholders that would be eligible to partner with Boards
24 include Chambers of Commerce, Economic Development Corporations, community colleges,
25 community-based organizations, and any other organization that is committed to support the
26 dissemination of workforce development and career awareness resources to youth.

27 **Recommendation**

28 Staff seeks Commission direction and approval to develop and publish a 2nd Workforce Career
29 and Education Specialist RFA applicants using \$600,000 in TANF statewide funds for 2 years to

- 1 include the additional parameter of match funding through a community stakeholder and
- 2 award grants to 2 Boards in 2020.

DRAFT