

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 Tuesday,
6 March 5, 2019 after HR 241 by Representative James White was adopted by the House of
7 Representatives stating that, "Career and technical education is offering a path to success in the
8 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 TWC hosted a Texas Signing Day webinar on April 18, 2019 for Local Workforce Boards (Boards)
15 and educational organizations. This webinar provided an overview of the program to include
16 detailed instructions and templates on how to conduct a signing day. A link was also created on
17 the TWC Webpage to provide access to all resources and capture signing day events and several
18 events were logged for 2019. The feedback has been very positive, but most educators,
19 workforce specialists, and Boards have requested advance notification for the 2020 Texas
20 Career Signing Day to properly prepare and coordinate with school calendars.

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22 **Event Details**

23 Texas Career Signing Day is a statewide initiative that builds on the concept of a signing day
24 proclamation and provides an opportunity for TWC to recognize and celebrate high school
25 students choosing to enter career pathways leading to targeted occupation in-demand sectors
26 directly from high school. Texas Career Signing Day events will be held in communities across
27 Texas to celebrate students moving up and along a variety of career pathways including entry
28 into:

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- 30 • the workforce as a result of completing career certifications towards targeted
31 occupations,
 - 32 • an applied learning opportunity like an internship or apprenticeship,
 - 33 • a Career and Technical Education program,
 - 34 • or a combination of all of the above.

35 Qualifying organizations participating in Texas Career Signing Day events are those
36 organizations that support skills development for Texas youth poised to enter the workforce in
37 targeted occupations. Participating organizations may include Workforce Boards, organizations

38 serving high school students, and employers and local businesses in the various communities
39 who provide internships and apprenticeship programs in targeted occupations. In addition, key
40 partners will be invited to participate including P-Tech high schools, Early College High Schools
41 (ECHS), as well as local technical and community colleges that support youth development.

42 The events will feature employers, educational institutions, and other sponsor organizations
43 who are hiring and recruiting these students for their talents and technical skills. Signing Days
44 can be held as part of an existing event, or as a freestanding event.

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46 TWC is interested in encouraging qualifying organizations to host a 2020 Texas Career Signing
47 Day event April through June, and staff will host a webinar in November to re-launch the 2020
48 initiative. TWC will cross-promote local signing day events through related career awareness
49 initiatives such as Careers in Texas Industries, Jobs Y'all, Texas Internship Challenge, Texas
50 Reality Check, and Texas Career Check. In addition, TWC will also arrange for TWC
51 representatives to attend signing day events as schedules permit.

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53 Participating organizations will work in coordination with TWC to identify students and
54 employers to participate in a Texas Career Signing Day as an opportunity to promote programs
55 connecting high school students and employers in their communities. Participating
56 organizations can access customizable, branded, and downloadable event materials including
57 flyers for the event, templates for invitations, frameable certificates, a sample press release,
58 and an event planning checklists at [https://twc.texas.gov/partners/texas-career-signing-day-](https://twc.texas.gov/partners/texas-career-signing-day-events)
59 [events](https://twc.texas.gov/partners/texas-career-signing-day-events).

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61 Participating organizations will ensure participating students are high school seniors finishing
62 high school with post-secondary certificates or industry-recognized certifications in targeted
63 occupations and are eligible to be hired by employers, entering apprenticeships, or any other
64 career pathway programs.

66 **Decision Point**

67 Staff seeks approval on re-launching the 2020 Texas Career Signing Day initiative to be held
68 from April through June of 2020 for all interested qualifying organizations that are willing to
69 promote and celebrate Texas high school seniors moving up and along a variety of career
70 pathways and secure gainful employment and lead productive, fulfilling lives.

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