



MEDIA ADVISORY

THECB recognized for excellence in data resource management

July 3, 2009 – Austin, Texas – Texas is one of only 10 states receiving an overall "Best Practice" rating for its higher education accountability system in a study conducted by an independent think tank, Education Sector, funded by the Lumina Foundation.

The June 30, 2009, report entitled "Ready to Assemble" graded states in 21 categories related to the data they collect and how they use the information to hold colleges accountable, a recent press release issued by the Education Sector said.

Some excerpts from the study's "report card" on the Texas Higher Education Accountability System are:

- Reports are comprehensive, current and feature multiple contextual measures
- Provides important context to policymakers, prospective students, and parents
- Does an excellent job tying institutional performance with state goals
- Reports are current and thorough, and include disaggregation by race/ethnicity and gender
- The focus on peers is intentional and thoughtful

The report by the Education Sector can be viewed in its entirety at http://www.educationsector.org/research/research_show.htm?doc_id=934393.

The Texas Higher Education Accountability System is used to track performance on critical measures that exemplify higher education institutions' missions. The system is modeled on the state's higher education plan, *Closing the Gaps by 2015*. Its major focus is on the four *Closing the Gaps* target areas of participation, success, excellence, and research.

Information from the system is available online at www.txhighereddata.org.

According to Texas Commissioner of Higher Education, Raymund Paredes, the THECB is very pleased to be recognized for its efforts to collect data on its college-going population and the institutions that serve them.

"Texas continues to be a national leader in its higher education initiatives, including the ability to collect and analyze data on the participation and success rates of students, as well as the quality of institutions," he said. "This recognition presents the opportunity for us to remind parents, students, and all sectors of the education community that a great deal of useful information is available to them online."

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Examples of other useful data include :

- ✓ How many graduates from a specific high school entered an institution of higher education in Texas.
- ✓ What Texas public colleges and universities offer degrees in a specific field, such as nursing or engineering.

David Gardner is the Deputy Commissioner for Academic Planning and Policy and Chief Academic Officer for the THECB. "The face of who once represented a traditional student in higher education continues to broaden to include many types of people. Different needs require different assessment tools. Now more than ever, we have to be able to identify the contextual factors that will lead to the increased participation and success of students. The Texas Higher Education Accountability System helps the THECB and institutions of higher education do just that," he said.

Dr. Gardner also said that another useful source of information on students transitioning from high school to college in Texas can be found in the *Quick Facts* section of the THECB website.

Quick Facts (<http://www.txhighereddata.org/Quick/default.cfm>) contain a number of frequently asked questions and data requests. Examples of topics of interest found under *Quick Facts* include comparisons of enrollment, degrees awarded throughout the state, enrollment numbers by institution, and other education facts compiled by the THECB.

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For more information about the THECB Higher Education Accountability System, please contact De J. Lozada, Assistant Director of Communications for the THECB, at 512/427.6119 or call External Relations at 512/427.6111.