

# TEA, THECB, and TG

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## PRESS RELEASE

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### Contacts:

Kristin Boyer, TG, (512) 219-4990  
Ray Grasshoff, THECB, (512) 427-6111  
Debbie Graves Ratcliffe, TEA, (512) 463-9000

## Education leaders formalize partnership to benefit Texas students

ROUND ROCK, TEXAS – The leaders of the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), Texas Education Agency (TEA), and TG executed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) today that will help Texas students receive information and support to continue education beyond high school. In signing this trilateral MOU, the organizations agree to work together to reach out to students and families about the opportunities and benefits of a college education. On Tuesday, Nov. 15, as a part of the THECB's summit, "Ensuring Academic Excellence: Developing Strategies of Success Campus by Campus," the leaders met to sign the agreement. Dr. Raymund Paredes, higher education commissioner, represented THECB; Dr. Shirley J. Neeley, education commissioner, represented TEA; and Sue McMillin, president and CEO, represented TG.

Today, 1.2 million Texans are enrolled in postsecondary institutions across the state. Texas' *Closing the Gaps* higher education plan, adopted by the THECB in October 2000, calls for enrolling 1.63 million students in college by 2015. To reach that goal, the state will have to increase its efforts in early outreach and college awareness, academic preparation and planning, and support services designed to help students navigate their college enrollment process.

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“If current and future needs are not addressed,” said Paredes, “it will lead to a drop in Texans’ educational levels, a consequent annual loss of billions of dollars in household income, and a narrowing of opportunity for millions of people. Hispanics will account for most of the state’s new workers in the future, and it’s especially alarming that we have not been able to enroll the number of Hispanics needed to close the gaps. Our staff, TEA, TG, public school officials, business and community leaders, elected officials, and others must expand and strengthen collaborations to meet this challenge.”

“These numbers illustrate the need to improve educational opportunities throughout the state, but particularly in communities where our students may be the first in their family to pursue higher education,” said Neeley. “All of our agencies are committed to achieving this goal, and we will work well together throughout the state.”

“We look forward to working collaboratively with TEA and THECB to help Texans realize their educational dreams,” said McMillin. “We know that by working in partnership we increase our likelihood of success. Texas students and families, whom we all serve, will benefit greatly from this renewed partnership,” declared McMillin.

Electronic copies of the agreements signed by TG, THECB, and TEA are available from the TG Newsroom at [www.tgslc.org](http://www.tgslc.org).