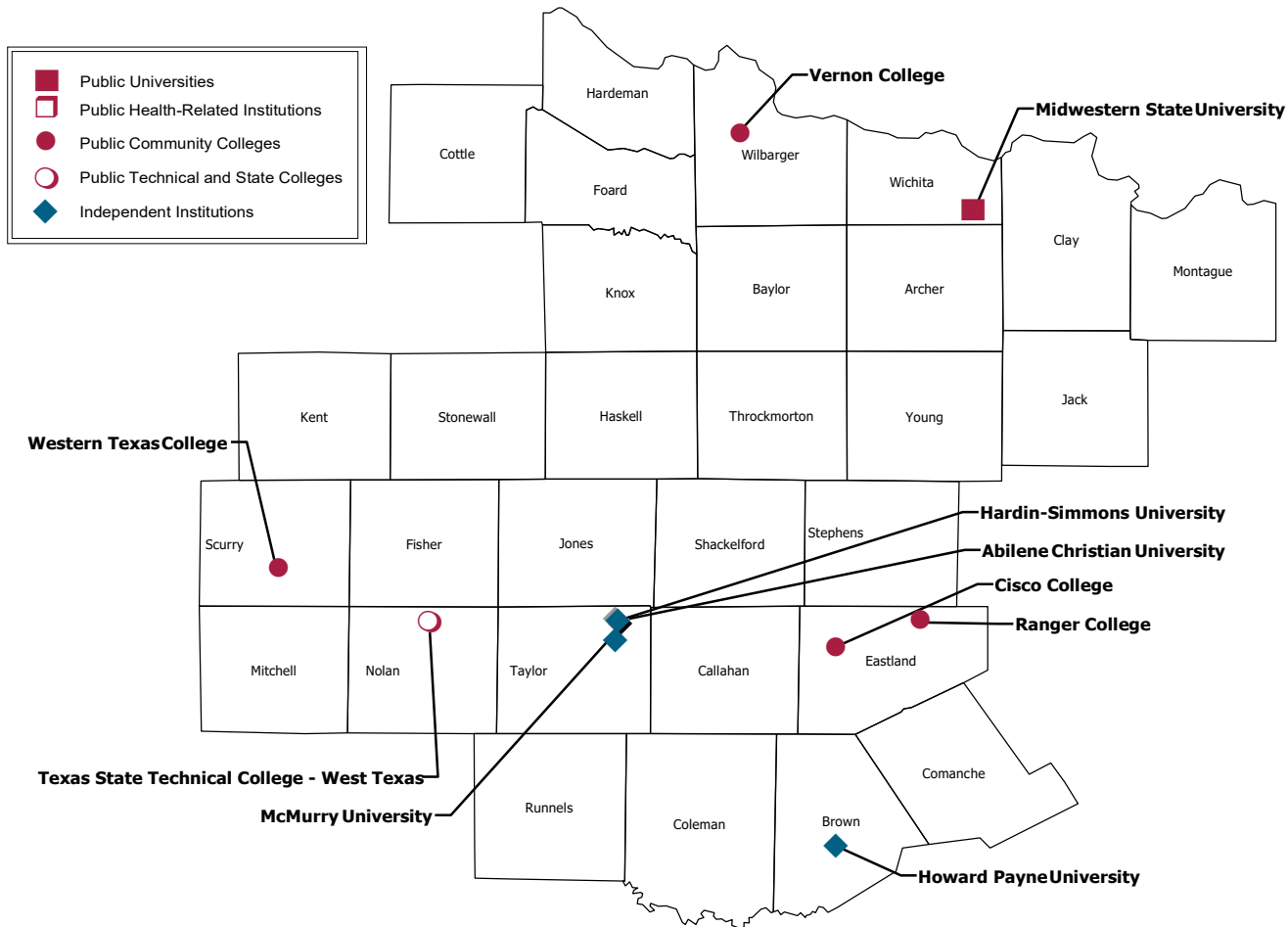
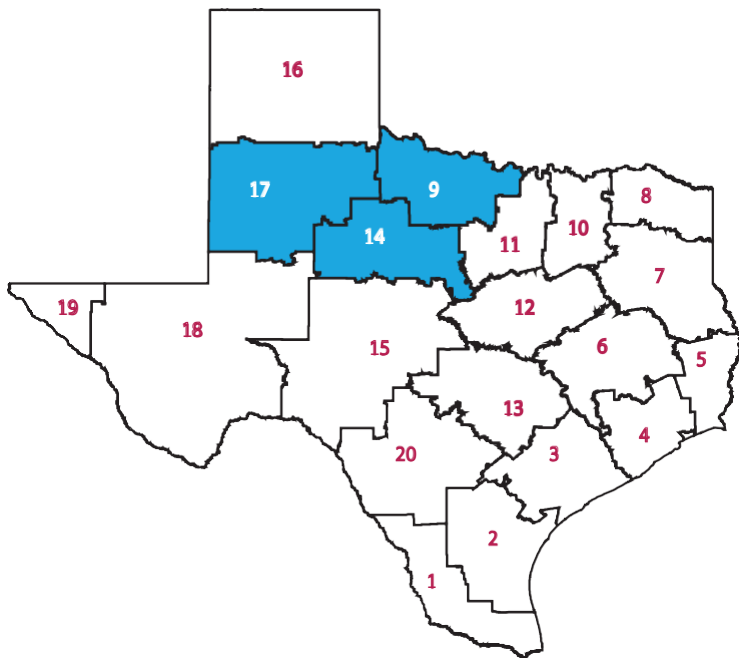


NORTHWEST 2019 – 2020 REGIONAL ACTION PLAN

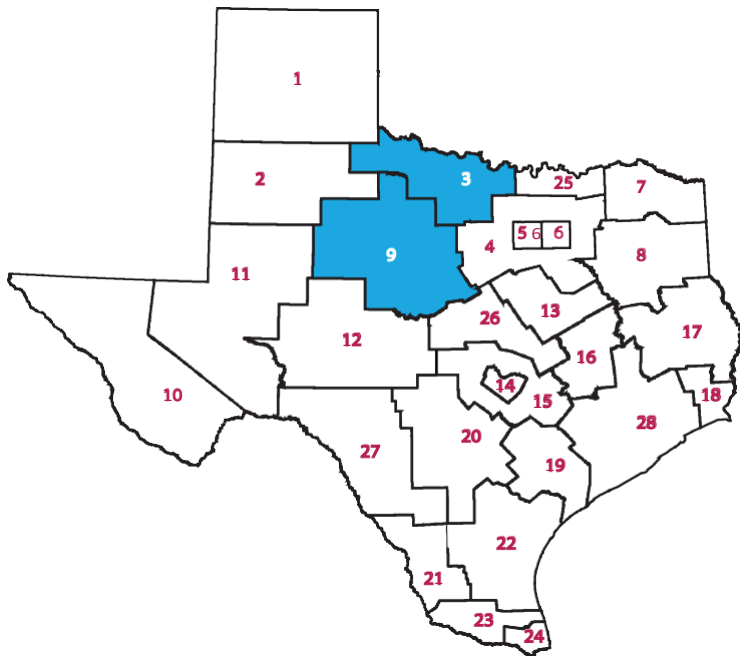
Higher Education Region



Education Service Centers (K12)



TWC Workforce Development Areas



Northwest Region

60x30: EDUCATED POPULATION

Completed Activities

Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas has acquired a grant to hire six Education Specialists who will be placed throughout the Region 14 ISD districts. They will be tasked to build relationships with ISD's and students about career planning beginning in the lower grades through high school. NW region colleges will provide printed materials, speakers, and tours to these students to promote the need for training to reach their career ambitions. NW region colleges are working with local government officials to identify key professions in the region and to outline educational requirements for each of those fields. Internships and experiential learning opportunities are being developed in the region. At least one advisory board has offered scholarships to outstanding graduates to purchase tools for their career upon graduation. More programs are being developed and more classes are being offered online with face-to-face options for labs or clinical courses along with some 100% online degree programs. The 60x30TX Strategic Plan was presented to area counseling interns in July to initiate communication about area post-secondary opportunities and request feedback from junior/high School as to what area students are interested in pursuing after graduating high school. Another presentation is scheduled for September.

2019 – 2020 Planned Activities

NW Higher Ed representatives will meet with the Education Specialists regularly and hope to have at least five tours during AY 2019-2020. Continuing expansion of 8-week term courses, HS Dual Credit courses, and online courses and programs is planned for AY 2019-2020. 60x30TX presentations to the Regional Service Centers will continue to facilitate communication on the HS to Higher Ed goals. The next presentation is planned for September 2019.

Insights Related to Educated Population Data Trends

2017 Educated Population 38.6%

2016 Educated Population 37.1%

2015 Educated Population 36.4%

The fact that the percentage offers very little change is likely due to rural area demographics. School districts are very small and the number of high school graduates continues to decrease. Intensely high poverty rates and location permanency present additional barriers to continuing post-secondary education/training. Also, the unemployment rate in this geographic area is currently at a historic low so many individuals are not coming to college for retraining.

COMPLETION

Completed Activities

- Automation reverse transfers from 4-year to 2-year is cumbersome as there is currently no way to automate the process. Small under-staffed offices have difficulty with more manual processes. However, regional colleges have created transfer pathways between 2-year and 4-year colleges for particular degree programs.
- Increased efforts in advising, tutoring, peer mentors, and student support activities have been the focus.

2019 - 2020 Planned Activities

- More Fields of Study will be implemented for AY2019-2020. Counselors will work on Pathways in order to better advise students and avoid unnecessary classes.
- A number of new pathways have been created and ongoing efforts at curriculum alignment between 4-year and 2-year colleges. 100% online degree programs are being expanded.

Insights Related to Completion Data Trends

2018 Completion 5,615

2017 Completion 5,374

2016 Completion 5,220

- The implementation of cohort advising has resulted in more graduates at some regional institutions of higher education.
- Increased efforts in student support services and identification/early intervention strategies have helped persistence to graduation.

HIGH SCHOOL-TO-HIGHER EDUCATION

Completed Activities

- Dual Credit offerings are being expanded to area high schools, including plans to allow students to be able to complete an Associate's Degree prior to HS graduation. This plan is being promoted to the ISD's. Meeting with the regional service center to provide information to counselors on the 60x30TX Strategic Plan and receive feedback on the regional employment needs, types of training/education required, and barriers to education in their local areas.
- NW regional IHEs are actively participating in a number of partnerships that identify lower income students and educate them on the financial assistance that is available, particularly in the Hispanic community. In the Wichita Falls area, Café Con Leche forums allow Latino students and parents to learn more about education and career opportunities. A partnership with Catholic Charities assists students that may fall into an at-risk designation whether through a financial situation or unfortunate events that could disrupt their academic pursuits. In the Taylor County area, Hispanic students/families receive academic support services that includes a bilingual transfer advisor who also provides translation support for financial aid.

2019 - 2020 Planned Activities

- Host more high school student tours. Continue to do FAFSA nights in rural school districts. Continuing efforts to streamline transfer processes.
- The next meeting with counselors at the Region 14 SC will be on September 17th.

Insights to High School-To-Higher Education Data Trends

2018 High school-to-higher education rate 49.4%

2017 High school-to-higher education rate 51.1%

2016 High school-to-higher education rate 50.7%

Students are getting jobs after high school as the job market is good right now. The population across the region is flat or declining so it is a challenge to recruit from HS to Higher Ed. High poverty rates, location locked population, and distance between institutional providers, are a few of the greatest barriers for the NW Region to overcome.

Organizational Structure

The organizational structure is unique as we have such a large geographic area. The Wichita Falls area will continue to do their work while collaborating with Abilene area higher ed colleagues. Communication is done through email, conference calls, and in person when feasible.

- Northwest Regional Action Team currently includes:
 - Sharon King, Cisco College-Cisco, TX
 - Carol Dupree, Cisco College-Abilene, TX
 - Pam Morgan, Midwestern State University
 - Cynthia Rutledge, McMurry University
- Meet 2 to 3 times per term to organize and plan for annual initiatives
- Meet annually with NW Regional Stakeholders (community, industry, educational, etc.) to listen and understand each stakeholder's needs and ability to support post-secondary training/education.