



SMITH • COUNTY

# 2015 EDUCATION REPORT

Unify | Nurture | Empower | Transform



TYLER AREA  
**PARTNERSHIP**  
4 EDUCATION

Unify | Nurture | Empower | Transform

[tap4e.org](http://tap4e.org)





# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 4 Who We Are
- 6 Why We Exist
- 8 How We Work
- 12 Smith County Profile
- 15 Focus Areas
- 21 Workforce
- 22 How to Get Involved







## Letter to the community

Did you know that the single greatest indicator of economic prosperity and quality of life in a region is the percentage of the population with a postsecondary credential or degree? In Smith County, too few high school graduates are truly prepared for college or enroll in college after high school. In addition, not enough industry certifications or college degrees are being earned to ensure that all students are workforce ready and prepared for a successful future.

Today, 35% of Smith County residents possess an associate degree or higher. Yet, according to the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, 65% of U.S. jobs will require some form of postsecondary education by 2020. While the percentage of attainment is slowly increasing nationwide, the progress is not rapid enough to ensure that the U.S. remains globally competitive.

To increase the percentage of Smith County residents possessing postsecondary credentials by 2025, the **Tyler Area Partnership 4 Education** was established to oversee a unified, cross-sector initiative to improve educational progress in our region. Representatives from Smith County public school districts, public and private higher education institutions, the business and faith-based communities, municipalities, philanthropic organizations, and non-profits have come together to implement collective strategies for a greater tomorrow. Our approach builds upon our community's existing strengths and assets to improve educational outcomes.

Education is a responsibility we all share. We must be diligent, steadfast, and engaged to improve the future for our young people, ourselves, and our community. We must set ambitious goals, implement bold and broad-ranging strategies, and demand rigor along the educational continuum. We must be humble enough to work across district and economic borders and transparent enough to acknowledge data trends. We hope you will find the information presented in our first education report card to be both thought provoking and actionable. Thank you in advance for your commitment to this important work. We hope you will join us in improving our community.

Mayor Martin Heines,  
City of Tyler

Christi Khalaf,  
Executive Director, Tyler Area  
Business Education Council





## Who We Are

With the support of the business and education communities, the Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce and City of Tyler established the Tyler Area Business Education Council in 2012. Since its inception, the Business Education Council has worked with partners in all sectors to elevate education as one of the region's most critical issues. The Council has served as an organizer of stakeholders and as a partner to businesses, schools, and colleges or universities in developing new programs, facilities, and events to assist area students and families and to ensure that local workforce needs are properly aligned with available educational programs and skills training.

### TYLER AREA PARTNERSHIP 4 EDUCATION COMMUNITY PARTNERS

- Arp Independent School District
- A.W. Riter Jr. Family Foundation
- Bright Horizons Family Solutions
- The Brookhill School
- Brookshire Grocery Company
- Bullard Independent School District
- Capstone College Advising
- Centene Corporation
- Chapel Hill Independent School District
- City of Tyler
- Congregation Beth El
- Delek Refining
- Department of Family and Protective Services
- East Texas Human Needs Network
- East Texas Medical Center
- Educate Texas
- Education Service Center, Region 7
- Fair Foundation
- Faulconer Scholarship Program
- John Soules Foods
- Lindale Independent School District
- Literacy Council of Tyler
- Lumina Foundation
- Mentoring Alliance
- Mentoring Minds
- Niños de Promesa
- North Tyler Day Nursery
- One New Creation
- Regions Bank
- Smith County Champions for Children

## Vision

**Advancing our community through unifying leadership to increase educational attainment from cradle to career, leading to economic prosperity and improved quality of life.**

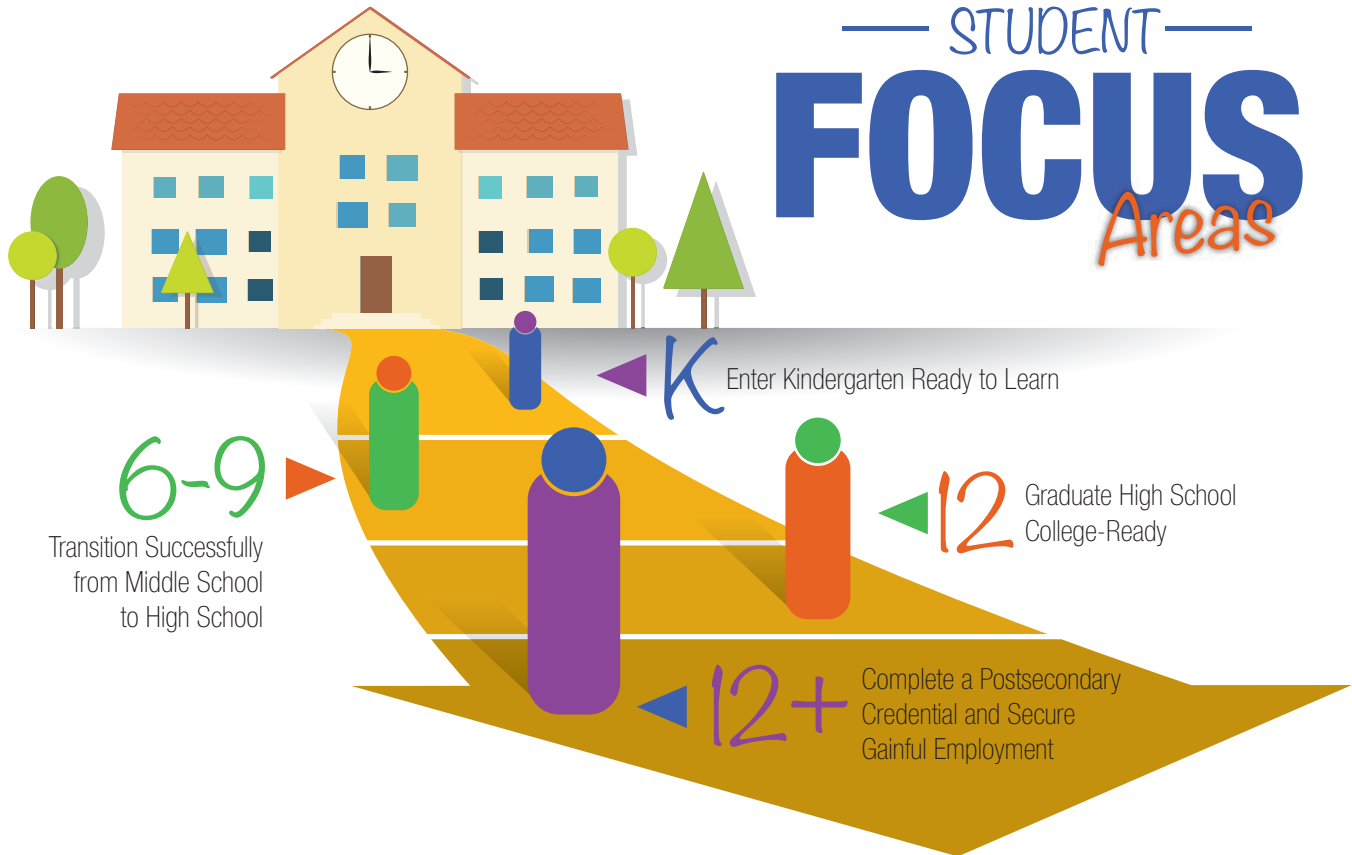
## Mission Statement

**Tyler Area Partnership 4 Education unifies diverse organizations in order to nurture, empower and transform our community through individual achievement of postsecondary credentials leading to success in career and life.**

- Stepping Stone School
- Suddenlink
- Texas College
- Texas College Access Network
- Trane Corporation
- Trinity Mother Frances
- Tyler Area Business Education Council
- Tyler Area Chamber of Commerce
- Tyler Economic Development Council
- Tyler Independent School District
- Tyler Junior College
- Tyler Pipe
- United Way of Smith County
- The University of Texas Health Northeast
- The University of Texas at Tyler
- The University of Texas at Tyler Ingenuity Center
- Whitehouse Independent School District
- Winona Independent School District
- Workforce Solutions East Texas

Across the country, a new way of solving complex community issues, Collective Impact, was being embraced by communities also working to drive student success and economic prosperity. The Business Education Council took note of this new way of doing business and the successes being realized across our state and country. In 2014, the Council decided to embark on a similar effort for Smith County by agreeing to serve as the backbone organization for a new education partnership, the **Tyler Area Partnership 4 Education**. As a result, over 40 organizations from across the community have come together to work collectively to improve the lives of Smith County residents.





**The partnership has identified 4 key focus areas in which to concentrate efforts to ensure students:**

- 1** Enter Kindergarten Ready to Learn
- 2** Transition Successfully from Middle School to High School
- 3** Graduate High School College-Ready
- 4** Complete a Postsecondary Credential and Secure Gainful Employment

**This cradle to career focus ensures that work is happening along the educational pipeline, starting with early childhood and ending with employment. Our tagline, “Unify, Nurture, Empower, Transform,” embodies our four core values and ultimate outcomes.**

The **Tyler Area Partnership 4 Education** is learning from best practices in our state as well as across the nation. A partnership with Educate Texas and participation in the Texas Collective Impact Network and Texas College Access Network (TXCAN) all provide valuable resources and contacts across Texas. A recent grant from Lumina Foundation, the “Community Partnership for Attainment,” is providing the partnership with funding and technical assistance from organizations across the country. Tyler is one of only 75 other cities from around the United States that will work closely with Lumina and national experts to execute actions focused on increasing the percentage of high-quality degrees or workforce credentials held by community residents.

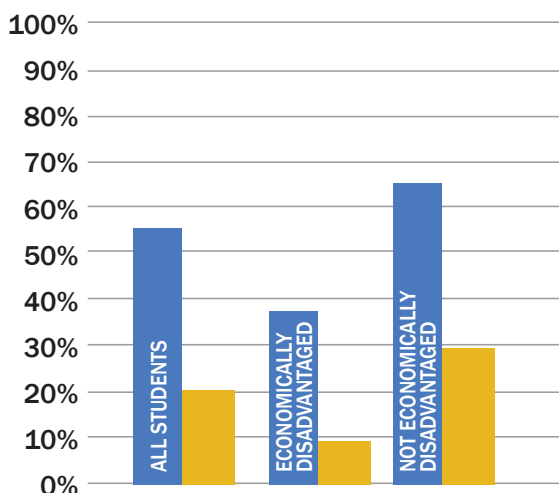
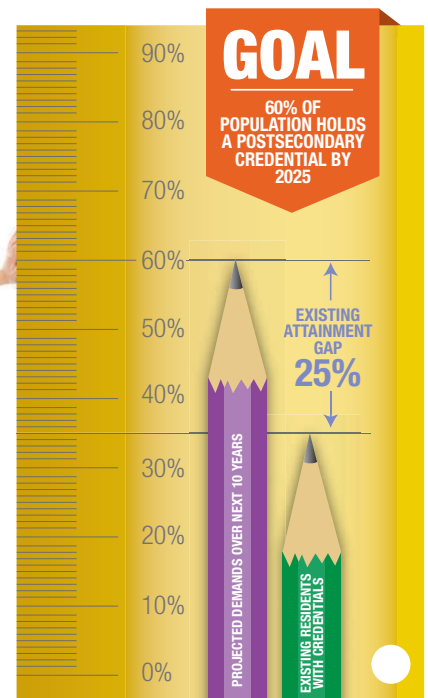


## Why We Exist

The **Tyler Area Partnership 4 Education** was formed to work on educational outcomes from cradle to career in an effort to ensure that Smith County young people and adults are better prepared for the demands of the global economy. The goal of the Partnership is to increase the number of Smith County residents possessing a postsecondary credential or degree to 60% by the year 2025. This would include individuals with any education beyond a high school diploma from an industry certification to an advanced degree.

Today, only 35% of the adult population, ages 25 and over, hold an associate's degree or higher.

For the younger generation, the trend looks to be even less promising. Research conducted by the Houston Endowment and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board followed eighth grade students through high school and six years post high school graduation to determine their level of postsecondary education completion. These studies reveal that only 20% of all Smith County students are successfully earning a postsecondary credential. The most startling statistic, however, is that less than 1 out of every 10 economically disadvantaged students complete any type of formal education beyond a high school diploma. These are the students who are eligible for free or reduced lunch and, they account for over half of the students in our county.



Source: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and Houston Endowment 2014  
([www.texastribune.org/education/public-education/8th-grade-cohorts](http://www.texastribune.org/education/public-education/8th-grade-cohorts))

## The Leaky Pipeline

Percentage of Smith County Students Enrolled in Eighth Grade in 2001 that Completed Postsecondary Education

Enrolled in postsecondary education  
Completed postsecondary education

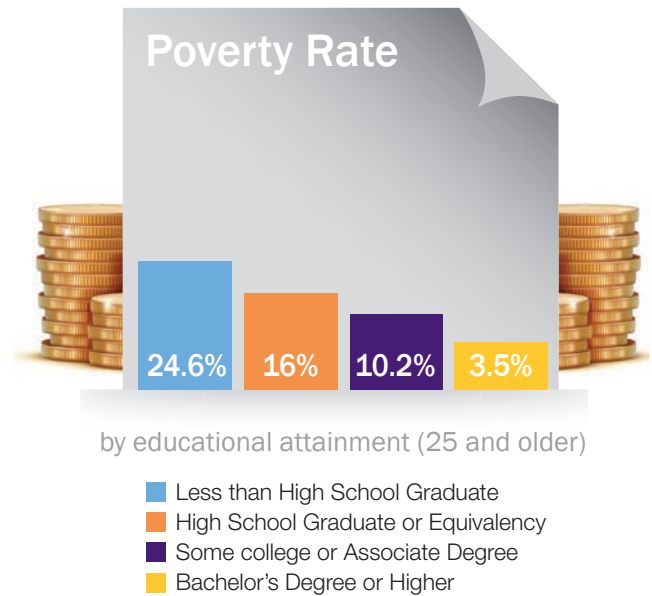






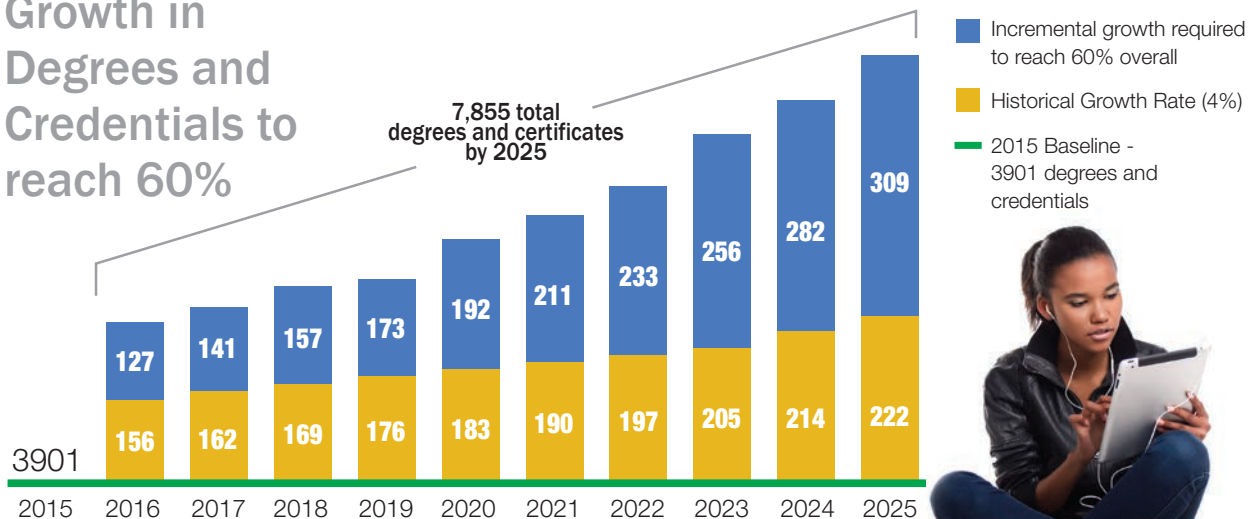
In 2014-2015, Smith County high schools and higher education institutions awarded nearly 4,000 industry certifications or degrees. Assuming that all things remain the same, the percentage of adults earning a postsecondary credential over the next 10 years would fall short of the 60% goal. The good news is that Smith County high schools and higher education institutions are providing innovative solutions to assist more students along their path toward success. By working together in support of our schools to award 2,000 additional credentials and degrees over the next 10 years, we are certain to reach the goal and remain a strong community with a prosperous economy and an enhanced quality of life for all.

**As the level of education rises in a community, the poverty and incarceration rates go down, health improves, and involvement in elections and other community efforts increases.**



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

## Growth in Degrees and Credentials to reach 60%



Notes: If that normal growth continues and the educational mobility of the county remains the same (i.e. the number of individuals with a postsecondary credential moving out of Smith County is essentially the same as the number moving in), the percentage of adults with postsecondary credentials would fall short of where we need to be to reach 60%.

Source: Region 7 Education Service Center Perkins Grant report, Institutional research centers at Tyler Junior College, UT Tyler, Texas College 2014 and U.S. Census Bureau educational mobility study



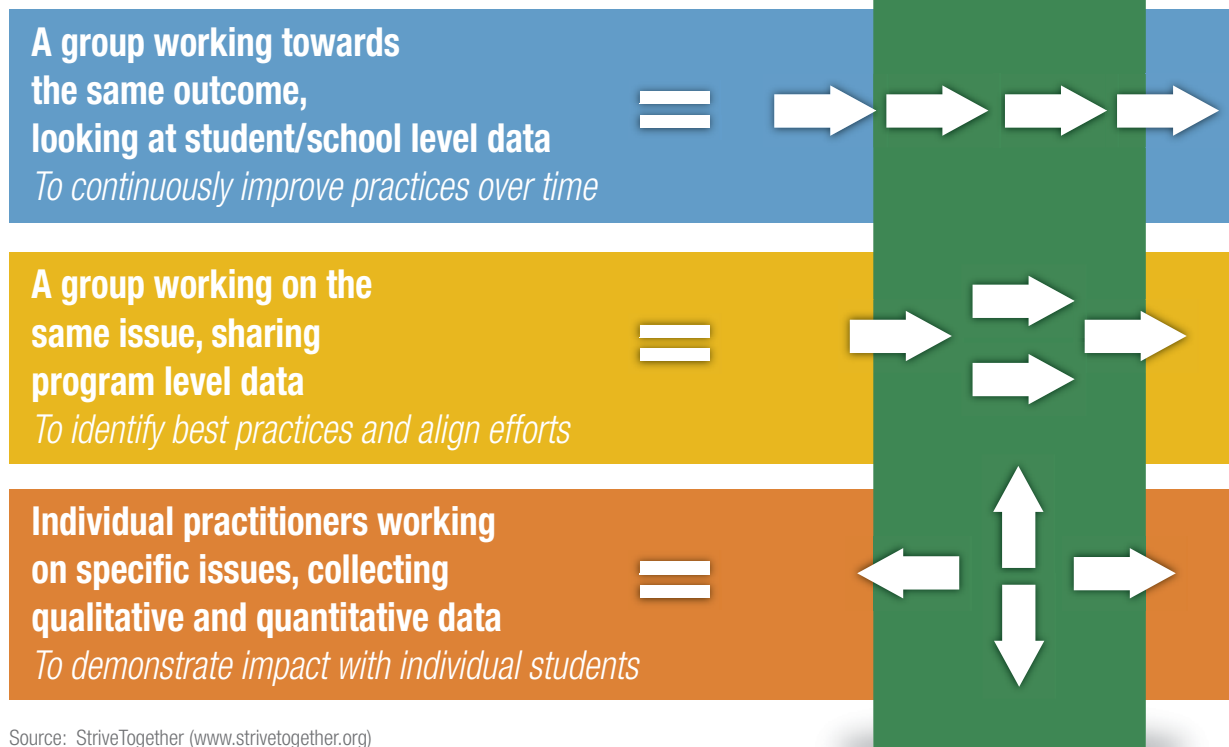


## How We Work

The **Tyler Area Partnership 4 Education** strives to promote student achievement in Smith County, from cradle to career, by leveraging data, community expertise, and collaboration. These pillars comprise what is commonly known as “Collective Impact.”

Collective Impact is the commitment of a group of stakeholders from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem, using a structured form of collaboration. The approach of collective impact is placed in contrast to the normal state of affairs when organizations primarily work alone to solve social problems.

### From Individual Action to Collective Impact



Source: StriveTogether ([www.strivetgether.org](http://www.strivetgether.org))





Collective Impact has emerged nationally as a model for addressing long-standing challenges in reaching community-level educational goals. There are five conditions for Collective Impact:

- 1 Common agenda:** All partners involved share a common vision for change that is jointly developed.
- 2 Shared measurement:** All partners agree on how success will be measured and agree to share data and participate in timely analysis of the data.
- 3 Mutually reinforcing activities:** All partners coordinate actions to support the common agenda. Each executes its activities differently based on its role or organization type, but all activities support the goals of the partnership.
- 4 Continuous communication:** All partners communicate openly and honestly, building trust and shared accountability for results.
- 5 Backbone support organization:** An independent staff ensures that the partnership moves forward every day.

Source: Stanford Social Innovation Review 2011

Collective Impact asserts that organizations should form cross-sector coalitions in order to make meaningful and sustainable progress on social issues. It operates best when the group consists of representatives from all aspects of the community.



Source: Educate Texas ([www.edtx.org](http://www.edtx.org))



The **Tyler Area Partnership 4 Education** Leadership Council is the governing body of the partnership and drives the work through constant data analysis. The Data Support Council was established to compile and analyze data from across the cradle to career continuum. The core work is accomplished through Community Action Networks which align to the Partnership's focus areas as follows:

- **Kindergarten Readiness**
- **Middle School to High School Transition**
- **Postsecondary Readiness**
- **Postsecondary Access and Success**

## Leadership Council

Rev. Gilberto Avila – One New Creation  
Gloria Bell – Early Childhood Expert  
Ed Broussard – City of Tyler  
Jackie Cannon – Smith County Champions for Children  
Dr. Willie Champion – Texas College  
Dr. Donni Cook – Chapel Hill Independent School District  
Dr. Marty Crawford – Tyler Independent School District  
Daniel DuPree – Whitehouse Independent School District  
Christina Fulsom – East Texas Human Needs Network  
Susan Guthrie – City of Tyler  
Mayor Martin Heines – City of Tyler  
Rabbi Neal Katz – Congregation Beth El  
Dennis Kutach – Workforce Solutions East Texas Board/  
Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services  
Michael Lujan – Mentoring Minds  
Rev. Orenthia Mason – Tyler Independent School District  
Board of Trustees  
Juan E. Mejia – Tyler Junior College  
Nan Moore – United Way of Smith County  
Fred Peters – Tyler Junior College  
Todd Schneider – Bullard Independent School District  
Dr. Ross Sherman – The University of Texas at Tyler  
Donna Spann – Capstone College Advising  
Stan Surratt – Lindale Independent School District  
Dwight Thomas – Arp Independent School District  
Wiley Vonner – Winona Independent School District

## Data Support Council

Dan Alee – City of Tyler  
Mary Beeler – Workforce Solutions East Texas  
Susanna Campbell – Whitehouse Independent School District  
Dr. Willie Champion – Texas College (Leadership Council Member)  
Steve Clark – Chapel Hill Independent School District  
Jaime Ealey – City of Tyler  
Tom Elder – Tyler Junior College  
Christina Fulsom – East Texas Human Needs Network  
(Leadership Council Member)  
Leslie Garikani – Lindale Independent School District  
Max Gregory – Tyler Independent School District  
Jan Hill – Bullard Independent School District  
Anita Luff – Education Service Center, Region 7  
Dr. Scott Marzilli – The University of Texas at Tyler  
Oscar Rendon – Winona Independent School District  
Dr. Joy Rousseau – Arp Independent School District  
Lee Sleeper – Bullard Independent School District  
Karen Wilkerson – Community Volunteer





## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



**TYLER AREA BUSINESS  
EDUCATION COUNCIL**

The backbone organization, comprised of executive level leaders representing their respective institution or business, responsible for providing key staff support and championing the work of the partnership throughout the community.

**COMMUNITY  
ACTION NETWORK**

A network of individuals operating collectively within their given area of expertise to set goals and build action plans to improve educational outcomes in their respective area of the cradle to career continuum. Co-chairs of each network are represented on the Leadership Council.

## TAP4E LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Community leaders representing business, education, non-profit, civic, and faith-based organizations who are appointed by the Business Education Council to manage the operations of the Partnership through the work of the Community Action Networks and Data Support Council.

**DATA SUPPORT COUNCIL**

Data experts from educational entities and business, government and community-based organizations that respond to the data requests of the Leadership Council and Community Action Networks.





## Smith County Profile

In Smith County, Pre-K-12 public and private schools serve over 40,000 students each year. There are eight public school districts in the county, ranging from the small and rural to the large and urban. Enrollment in the four institutions of higher education - Tyler Junior College, Texas College, The University of Texas at Tyler, and The University of Texas Health Northeast - is above 20,000 students. Both K-12 and higher education are growing and changing rapidly.



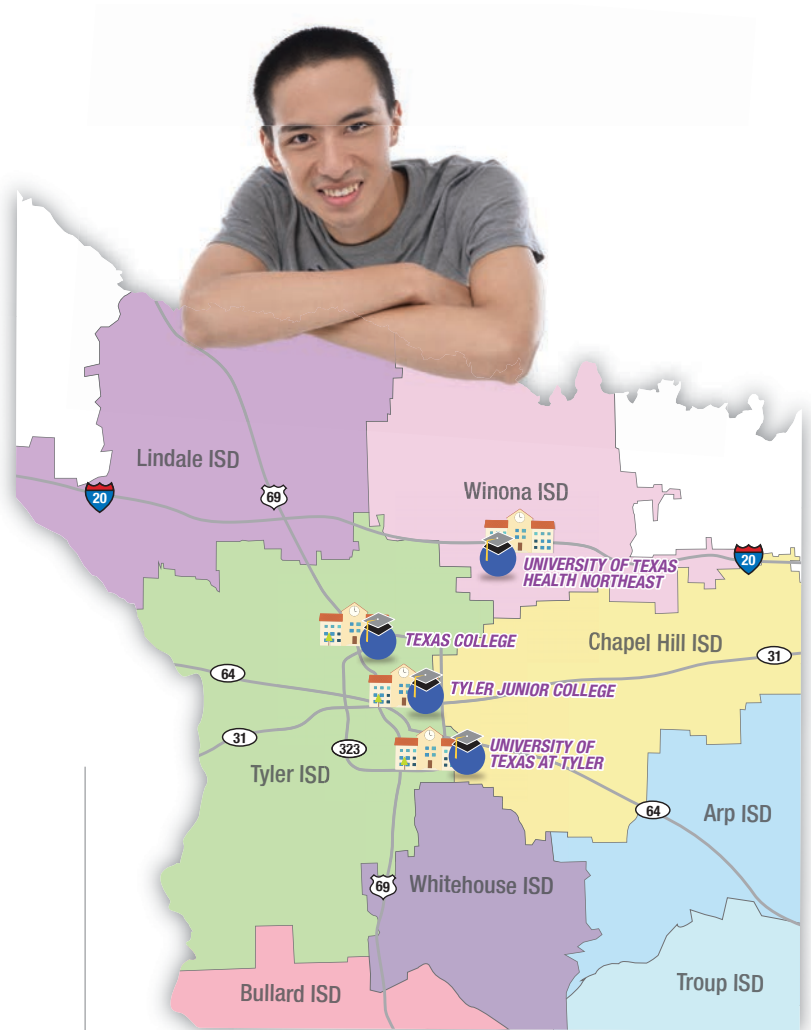
Number of K-12 Students

Tyler ISD .....	18,252
Private/Charter Schools.....	~5,700
Whitehouse ISD.....	4,745
Lindale ISD .....	4,007
Chapel Hill ISD.....	3,643
Bullard ISD .....	2,481
Homeschool .....	~2,000
Troup ISD .....	1,106
Winona ISD .....	1,048
Arp ISD.....	839

**Total 43,821**

Source: Smith County Independent School Districts, Private Schools, Charter Schools, Tyler Area Homeschoolers (as of September 2015)

~Approximate numbers



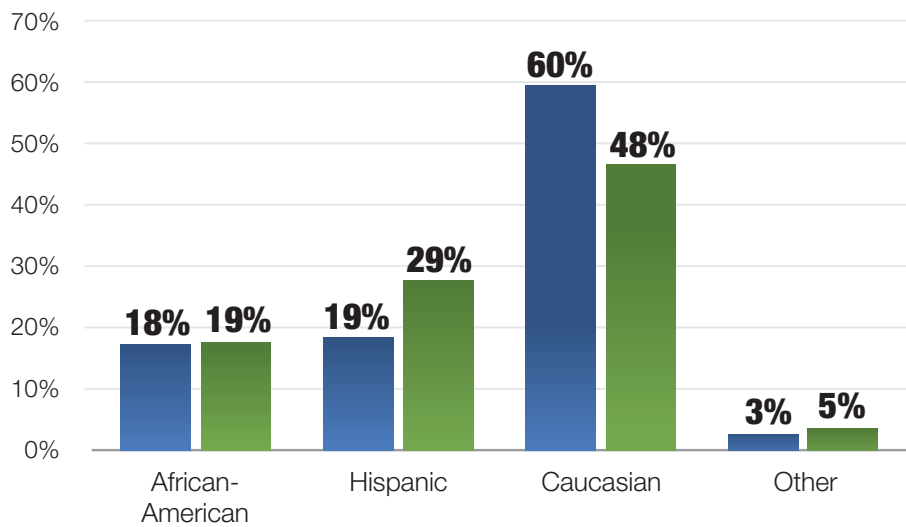
## Smith County at a Glance

- Population: 218,000
- Median Income: \$47,432
- College/University Enrollment: ~20,000
- Child Population: 55,000
- Public School Enrollment: ~35,000





Data collected during the 2010 U.S. Census revealed that 60% of residents in the immediate Tyler area are Caucasian, 18% are African-American, and 19% are Hispanic. Enrollment data from the county's eight independent school districts, however, reflect the changing demographics of East Texas. While the African-American student population closely mirrors the adult population, the Hispanic student population is growing rapidly and the Caucasian student population is declining.



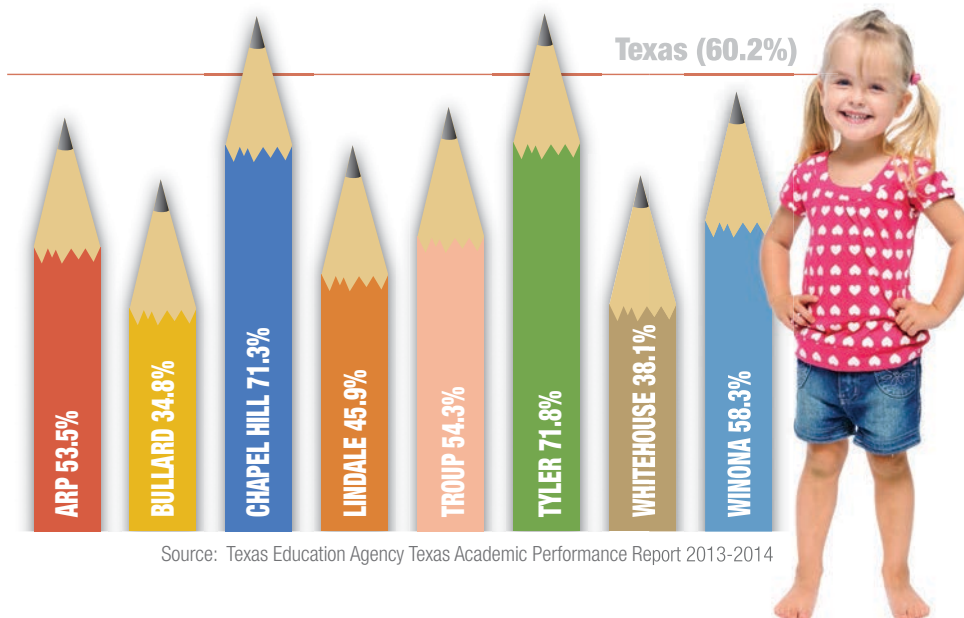
## Smith County Demographics are Changing

Enrollment demographics from the county's eight independent school districts reflect the changing environment of East Texas

■ Total Population  
■ Child Population

Source: U.S. Census Bureau  
([www.quickfacts.census.gov](http://www.quickfacts.census.gov)) and  
Kids Count Database  
([www.datacenter.kidscount.org](http://www.datacenter.kidscount.org))

In addition to changing demographics, more and more students qualify for free or reduced lunch each year and are considered economically disadvantaged. In Smith County, 56% of all students meet this criteria.



Source: Texas Education Agency Texas Academic Performance Report 2013-2014

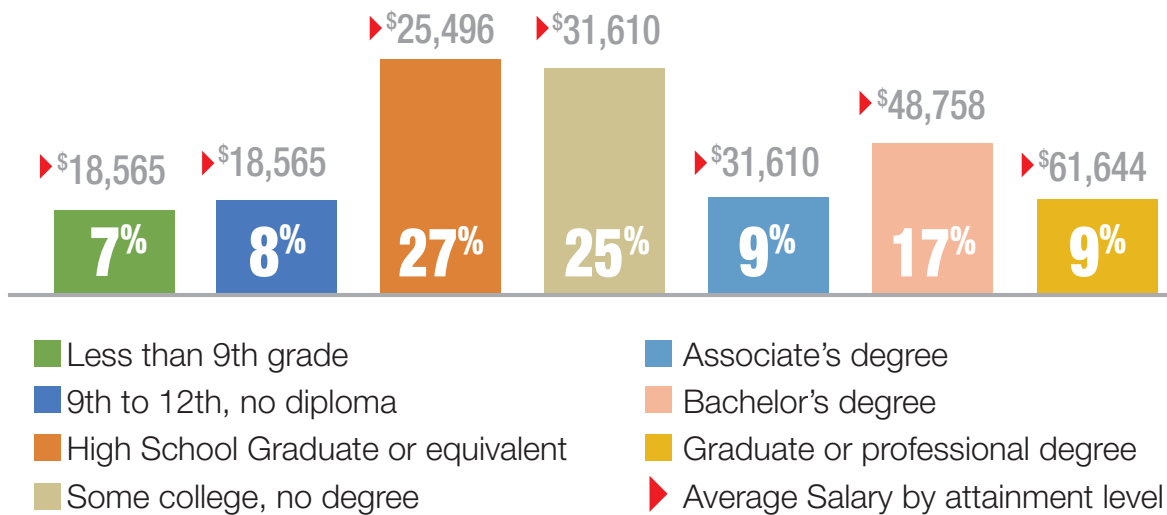
## % Economically Disadvantaged

Research shows that economically stable students are twice as likely to earn a postsecondary credential when compared to economically disadvantaged students.

Note: Economically disadvantaged defined by eligibility for free and reduced lunch



## Average Salary Rises with Education Level



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2009-2013 5-Year American Community Survey

Statistics show that earnings are closely tied to educational levels. In Smith County, 42% of residents have a high school diploma or less and 25% have attended some college but have not earned a degree. According to the Georgetown Center on Education and the Workforce, a college graduate will earn \$1 million more over his or her lifetime than a high school graduate.







# Focus Areas | Kindergarten Readiness

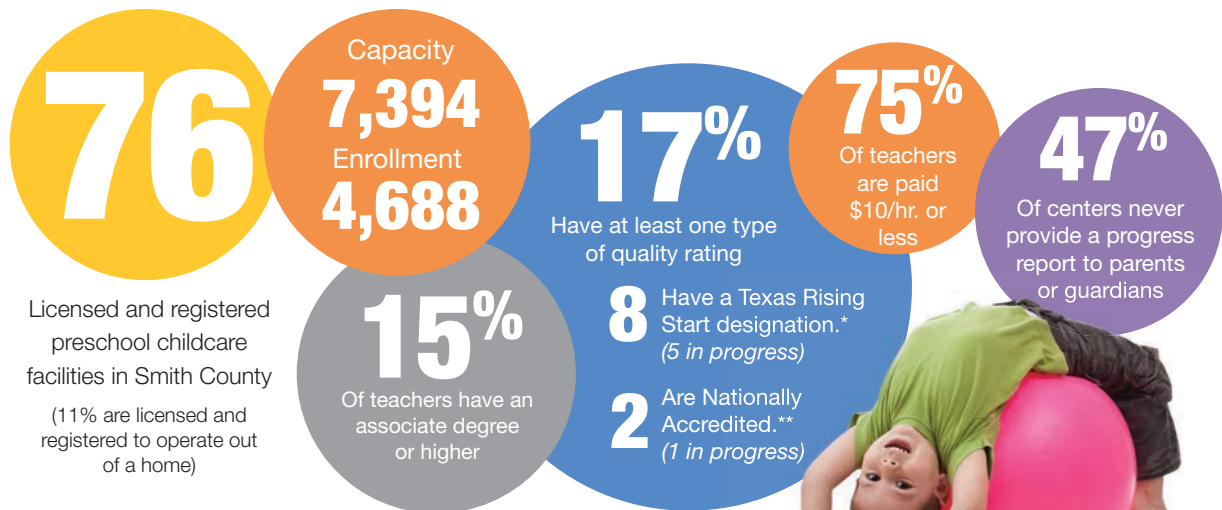
Did you know that 90% of brain development occurs during ages 0-5? National studies show that children exposed to high quality early childhood education are 40% less likely to need special education or be held back a grade. They are also 70% less likely to commit a violent crime by age 18.

The Kindergarten Readiness Community Action Network has evaluated the current environment of early childhood education in our county by conducting surveys and gathering publicly available data. Smith County Head Start programs, state or district funded pre-kindergarten programs and private early childhood centers, excluding PK-12 private schools, are all included in the analysis.

## Smith County Early Childhood Education Snapshot

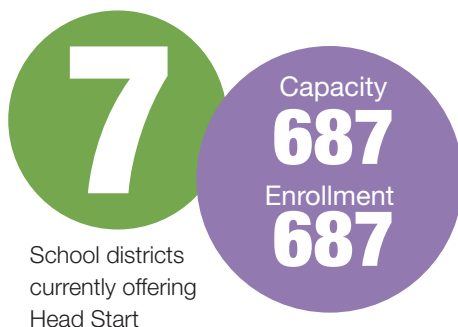
Data Collected via Survey from July-September 2015

### PRIVATE EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTERS

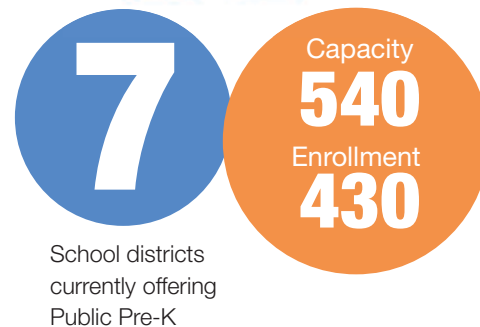


Note: Excludes Head Start, state funded Pre-K programs and PK-12 private schools in Smith County

### HEAD START - ALL FULL DAY



### STATE/DISTRICT FUNDED\*\*\* PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAMS 5 FULL DAY - 2 HALF DAY



\*A Texas Rising Star Provider agrees to serve Texas Workforce Commission subsidized children and voluntarily meets requirements that exceed the State's Minimum Licensing Standards for child care facilities.

\*\*National Accreditation Commission for Early Care and Education Programs (NAC) and National Private Schools Accreditation.

\*\*\*State pays for half day Pre-K and public school districts fund the remainder for full day programs.

Source: Smith County Champions for Children Survey 2015, Texas Education Agency 2014



All school districts in Smith County offer Head Start or state/district funded Pre-K. Students are eligible for these programs only if they meet specific age and household income or language qualifications. All teachers in these programs have a bachelor's or higher degree and the programs themselves are held to strict quality standards set by the federal and state governments. While the number of available spaces in Head Start programs are federally mandated based on funding, state funded Pre-K programs have the ability to educate a greater number of qualifying Smith County children.

Private early childcare facilities in Smith County are licensed by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services. Only 17% of these 76 centers have quality ratings that exceed the state's minimum licensing standards. Eight centers have earned the Texas Rising Star designation and two centers have earned national accreditation. These accreditations offer early childhood leaders the opportunity to demonstrate and document quality performance using research-based criteria and evidence-based practices.

## Network members

Annamarie Alberts – Bright Horizons Family Solutions  
Carol Allen – Whitehouse Independent School District  
Connie Barnes – Tyler Independent School District  
Gloria Bell – Early Childhood Expert (Leadership Council Member)  
Pam Borel – Education Service Center Region 7  
Camille Brown – Stepping Stone School  
Octavia Brown – Texas College  
Jackie Cannon – Smith County Champions for Children (Leadership Council Member)  
Carla Curtis – Tyler Junior College  
Lisa Gardner – United Way of Smith County  
Laurie Greathouse – Tyler Independent School District  
Ann Valdez Haines – Workforce Solutions East Texas  
Michelle Hurst – Bullard Independent School District  
Sandi Jones – Whitehouse Independent School District  
Wendy Kaufman – Arp Independent School District  
Darlene Marshall – Mentoring Alliance  
Stacy Miles – Tyler Independent School District  
Helyn Morris – Chapel Hill Independent School District  
Sherilyn Oliver – Department of Family Protective Services  
Brenda Orbaugh – Tyler Independent School District  
Valencia Ray – Whitehouse Independent School District  
Robyn Renick – Chapel Hill Independent School District  
Cindy Sherman – The University of Texas at Tyler  
Lynn Sitton – Tyler Junior College  
Cassidy Smith – Winona Independent School District  
Astilma Vargas – Niños de Promesa  
Lisa Williams – Bullard Independent School District

## Goals

- 1 Increase quality ratings of Smith County childcare centers from 10% to 48% of centers securing Texas Rising Star or national accreditation by 2020
- 2 Increase percentage of early childhood teachers with postsecondary education from 15% to 30% by 2020
- 3 Distribute Kindergarten Readiness Checklist to all early childhood centers, community officials, faith-based organizations, Chamber of Commerce, health clinics, libraries and recreation centers by 2017.

## Strategies

- 1 Promote importance of state and national accreditations
- 2 Assist with early childhood center director and teacher training
  - a. Develop new or promote existing training programs
  - b. Provide rewards and recognition for completion of training
  - c. Foster partnerships between public and private centers to share best practices and resources
- 3 Provide Smith County families with information needed to evaluate pre-kindergarten programs and to ensure that their children are ready for Kindergarten.
  - a. Development of Kindergarten Readiness Checklist
  - b. Develop universal progress report for Kindergarten Readiness
- 4 Increase Kindergarten readiness of all Smith County four year olds
  - a. Determine common measure of Kindergarten Readiness
  - b. Launch campaign on importance of Kindergarten Readiness





# Focus Areas | Middle to High School Transition

While most college and career readiness efforts have traditionally been focused on high school students, research shows that middle school is a critical time for students. Grades, attendance patterns, and engagement at the middle school level are among the strongest predictors of high school graduation and college-going rates. According to ACT College Readiness research, the level of academic achievement that students attain by eighth grade has a larger impact on their college and career readiness by the time they graduate from high school than anything that happens academically in high school.

**The Tyler Area Partnership 4 Education** has identified three key standardized test measures that will be tracked to ensure that Smith County students are ready for high school and beyond: 7th grade Writing, 8th grade Math and Science, and 8th grade Reading and Social Studies. The goal is to raise the percentage that receive an Advanced Score for each, indicating that more students are well prepared for the next grade and are highly likely to be successful in that grade.

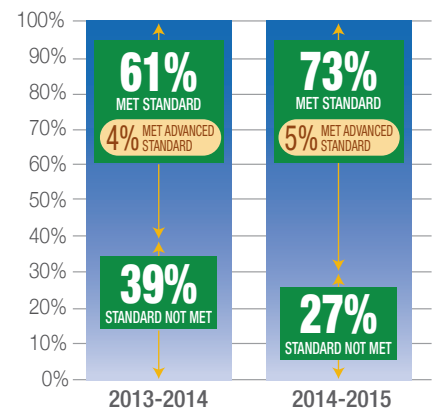
An action network will be launched in 2016 and will use the data as well as additional metrics to ensure a successful middle to high school transition for all students. This network will support the numerous efforts already underway in our schools that assist students and families in making informed plans about high school, college, and career.

**The Tyler Area Partnership 4 Education Leadership and Data Support Councils have agreed upon a few select measures as indicators of High School readiness as follows:**

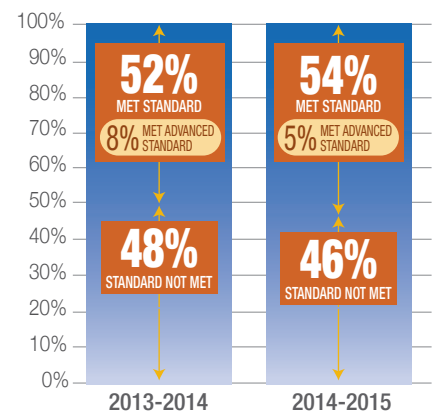
- 1** Percent scoring advanced on 7th Grade Writing STAAR
- 2** Percent scoring advanced on 8th grade STAAR in both Reading and Social Studies or percent scoring advanced on 8th grade STAAR in both Mathematics and Science

## Smith County State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR) Results

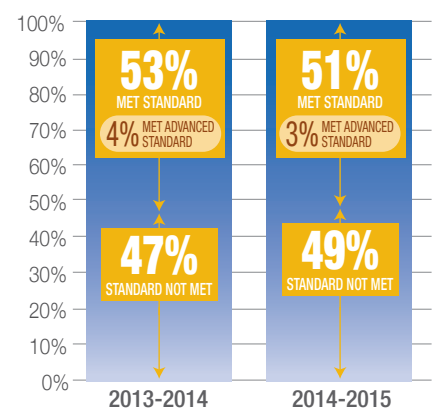
### 7th Grade Writing



### 8th Grade Reading and Social Studies



### 8th Grade Math and Science



"Source: Texas Education Agency and Smith County Independent School Districts (2014-2015)  
Note: Data provided reflects scores of 73% of Smith County 8th grade students



# Focus Areas | Postsecondary Readiness, Access, and Success

Smith County high school graduation rates have climbed in recent years to well above the state average; however, college readiness and college-going rates of students have remained unchanged. Currently, only 56% of all Smith County students are considered college-ready and 58% enroll in a college or university in Texas within six months of high school graduation.

The Postsecondary Readiness, Access, and Success networks are working together to make certain that students are adequately prepared for education beyond high school. In addition, the group network seeks to ensure that all students have access to higher education and have the tools necessary to be successful. To ensure that the common agenda remains intact, the following definitions have been developed to drive the work:



## **COLLEGE AND WORKFORCE READINESS**

Students graduate high school able to enter college in credit bearing courses or advanced industry certification programs, equipped with soft and technical skills.



## **COLLEGE ACCESS**

All students and adults have opportunities to take full advantage of their education.



## **COLLEGE PERSISTENCE**

Students proceed through a postsecondary program, from semester to semester, until attainment of a certificate or degree.



## **COLLEGE COMPLETION/EMPLOYMENT**

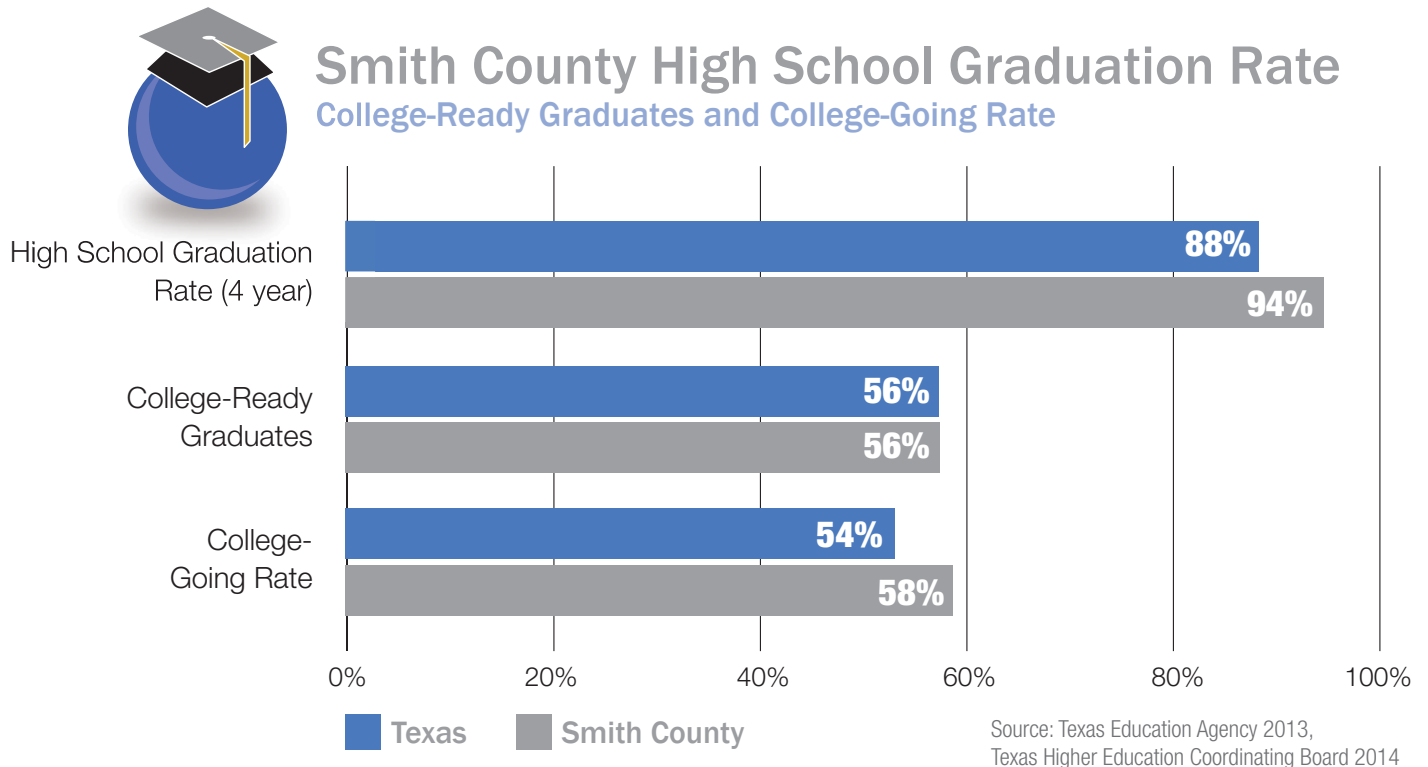
The attainment of knowledge, marketable skills, and a credential or degree that leads to gainful employment or the ability to continue education at a higher level.

Data is being collected and tracked on numerous academic indicators to college readiness such as standardized test scores, enrollment in advanced placement or dual credit courses, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) participation, and SAT/ACT performance. In addition, the network is coordinating county-wide participation in the National Student Clearinghouse, a data service that allows high schools to accurately measure the college enrollment and success of their graduates.





Over half of Smith County high school graduates enroll in a local institution of higher education – Tyler Junior College, The University of Texas at Tyler, or Texas College. Therefore, efforts to work together across our local educational pipeline are critical to the success of the partnership.



## Network Members

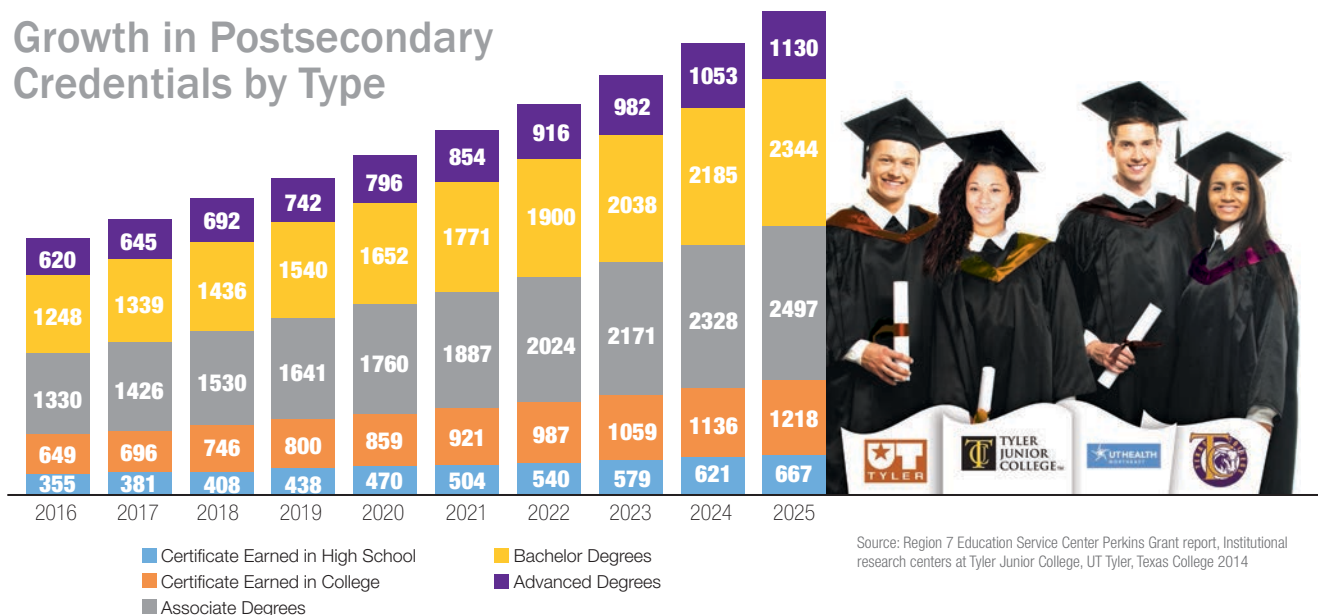
Jan Adams – Tyler Junior College  
 Marilyn Albert – The University of Texas at Tyler  
 Gary Allen – East Texas Council of Governments  
 Shannon Arrington – Arp Independent School District  
 Leigh Anne Barber – Tyler Independent School District  
 Karen Beam – Bullard Independent School District  
 Sarah Bowdin – The University of Texas at Tyler  
 Greg Branch – Arp Independent School District  
 Katy Buerger – The University of Texas at Tyler  
 Janna Chancey – Tyler Junior College  
 Dr. Joe Coburn – Tyler Independent School District  
 Tamica Collard – Winona Independent School District  
 Nancy Crawford – The Literacy Council of Tyler  
 Marsha Cummins – Tyler Independent School District  
 Francine Durr – Brookshire Grocery Company  
 Scott Franks – Bullard Independent School District  
 Delsenna Frazier – Tyler Independent School District

Dr. Kenneth Gay – Tyler Independent School District  
 Victoria Gordon – Texas College  
 Dr. Lisa Harper – Tyler Junior College  
 Leanne Jamison – Whitehouse Independent School District  
 Donna Lowery – Arp Independent School District  
 Richard Palmer – Chapel Hill Independent School District  
 Fred Peters – Tyler Junior College (Leadership Council Member)  
 Matthew Ramirez – Faulconer Scholarship Program  
 David Ramsey – Lindale Independent School District  
 Misti Rasure – Tyler Independent School District  
 Pam Rodriguez – Postsecondary Readiness Expert  
 Donna Spann – Capstone College Advising (Leadership Council Member)  
 Celia Tucker – The Brook Hill School  
 Tambelynn Wallace – UT Tyler Ingenuity Center  
 Ashley Ward – The University of Texas at Tyler  
 Sherri Wright – Education Service Center Region 7



Historically, the annual increase in degrees and certificates for colleges and universities in Smith County has been 4%. If that normal growth continues and the educational mobility of the county remains the same (i.e. the number of individuals with a postsecondary degree or credential moving out of Smith County is essentially the same as the number moving in), the percentage of adults completing education beyond high school would fall short of where we need to be to reach 60%. An additional 2,000 postsecondary certificates or degrees over the next 10 years would ensure that Smith County remains economically competitive. These credentials could be earned in high school career and technical programs, in a community college, or at a university.

## Growth in Postsecondary Credentials by Type



## Goals

- 1 By 2025, 74% of Smith County students will graduate high school college ready
- 2 By 2025, 70% of Smith County high school graduates will enroll in a postsecondary education program within 6 months of graduation
- 3 By 2025, Smith County high schools and higher education institutions will have awarded 7,850 certificates and degrees

## Strategies

- 1 **READINESS:**
  - a. Plan community-wide postsecondary awareness efforts
  - b. Provide college and career advising support, including workforce data and college/career events
  - c. Develop consistent high school transcript protocol
- 2 **ACCESS:**
  - a. Assist with college application boot camps and blastoff campaign
  - b. Lead FAFSA completion efforts
  - c. Support Tyler Area College Night as a community event
- 3 **SUCCESS:**
  - a. Organize adult workshops
  - b. Promote seamless transition of students from TJC to UT Tyler ("Patriot Pathways")
  - c. Support completion initiatives such as promoting 30 hours per year to complete a degree on time and restructuring developmental education



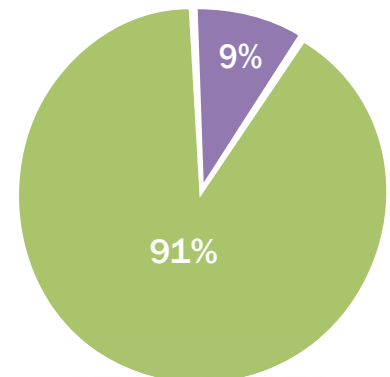


# Workforce

All students should have the opportunity to complete the education required to seek the best job possible. It is not only important for personal success and fulfillment, but it also ensures that our region, state, and national economies continue to thrive. Postsecondary education greatly increases job choice and earnings.

With intentional effort placed on growing the number of degrees and credentials in Smith County, the **Tyler Area Partnership 4 Education** has also gathered metrics that reflect the effectiveness of postsecondary education. As shown previously in this report, those who complete postsecondary education are more likely to earn higher wages and are less likely to live in poverty. Earning a postsecondary credential is now a precondition for upward mobility. For those who do not pursue education beyond a high school diploma, the chances of earning a living wage are diminished.

**2013 High School Graduates Directly Entering Workforce and Earning a Living Wage**



■ No ■ Yes

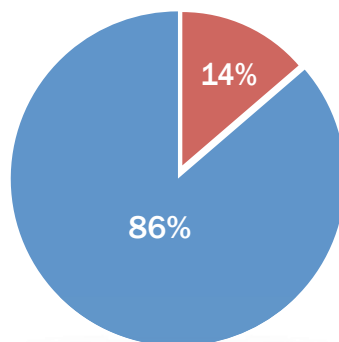
Source: Source: Education Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin; Living wage for Smith County, 2014, - \$21,916 (livingwage.mit.edu)  
Note: Earnings calculated by adding four quarters of earnings beginning in Fall of 2013

The Texas workforce system is charged with developing strategies to target high-growth, high-demand, and emerging occupations that are critical to the state and local economies. Commonly referred to as “Target Occupations,” these lists of occupations are determined by Workforce Development Boards based on a number of economic indicators and local wisdom regarding employers and industries. Very few high school graduates are able to secure employment in one of these occupations. For those with an industry certification or college degree, the chances are much greater.

**2013 Smith County High School Graduates Employed in an East Texas Target Industry within 1 Year of Graduation**

■ No ■ Yes

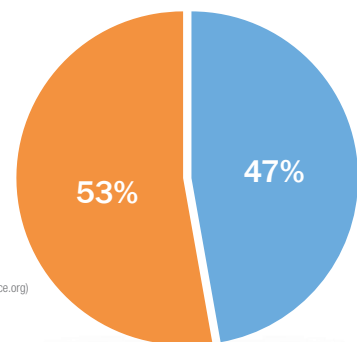
Source: Education Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin; Workforce Solutions East Texas (www.eastexasworkforce.org)  
Note: Data compiled from students directly entering the workforce after high school.



**2013 Smith County College Graduates Employed in an East Texas Target Industry within 1 Year of Graduation**

■ No ■ Yes

Source: Education Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin; Workforce Solutions East Texas (www.eastexasworkforce.org)  
Note: Graduates tracked from Tyler Junior College, Texas College and The University of Texas at Tyler



The importance of linking education and workforce has never been more critical. The community must come together to ensure that local students are pursuing postsecondary degrees and credentials that will enable them to fill the high demand and high wage jobs of the future.

Note: The conclusions of this research do not necessarily reflect the opinions or official position of the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, or the State of Texas.



# How you can get involved

## What are some of the most important things that we can do to help our kids?

### As a parent

- Provide a variety of reading materials in your home and read regularly to your child.
- Help your child with homework or find a family member or friend who can help each day.
- Substitute TV watching with conversation, physical activity, reading, and educational games.
- Make sure your child goes to school ready to learn every day by having a proper breakfast beforehand.
- Talk with your child's teacher on a regular basis to find out how your child is doing and see if there are any areas that need improvement.
- Make sure your child attends school regularly.
- Find a tutoring or mentoring organization that can help your child, if necessary.
- Talk to your child about the importance of postsecondary education and the impact it will have on their future.
- Seek opportunities to expand your own education.
- Seek assistance in developing a financial plan for your child's education, including learning more about financial aid and scholarships.
- Make sure your child receives regular checkups from a pediatrician or family doctor.

### As a teacher

- Help parents understand how their child is doing and how they are meeting proficiency standards across all grade levels.
- Warmly greet young people when and wherever you encounter them.
- If you are an experienced teacher, consider being a mentor or coach for a teacher new to the profession.
- Join a professional learning community to share your knowledge and expertise with others.
- Find opportunities to learn more about college and career preparation and create a college-going culture in the classroom.

### As a volunteer

- Help create a community conversation around the importance of literacy in the early grades and about the importance of postsecondary education.
- Become a tutor and help children in kindergarten through third grade learn to read.
- Become a mentor and help high school students graduate and move on to college or other training.
- Invite TAP4E representatives to talk to your church group or social group.
- Mentor a young person.
- Donate books to early childhood programs.





### **As a business owner**

- Promote the advantages of high quality early childhood education to your employees.
- Encourage your employees to become tutors or mentors.
- Provide scholarship assistance or summer employment to college students who attended a Smith County high school.
- Provide internships, apprenticeships and job-shadowing opportunities for youth.
- Share your career expertise with students by participating in local career fairs and events.

### **As a church member or church leader**

- Host meetings to encourage discussion about education within your congregation.
- Provide information and a link to the TAP4E Report in your church bulletin.
- Encourage school-age children to attend school regularly and, if needed, to get connected to mentors or tutors.
- Encourage adults to become more involved in the education of the children in their lives.
- Encourage high school students to apply for college and for financial aid and scholarships.

### **As a policymaker**

- Make sure preschool programs and Pre-K-12 education are adequately funded, across all qualified early care providers, and across all schools. Ensure that all are held to the highest standard of accountability.

### **As a taxpayer**

- Contact your elected officials and make sure they understand that funding education is a top priority. Make sure that education is adequately funded and all schools meet high academic standards.

### **As a philanthropist**

- Fund what has proven to work in boosting academic achievement and postsecondary success.





Unify | Nurture | Empower | Transform

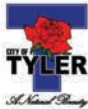


## Community Partners

Individuals from over 40 local organizations have lent their time and talents to ensure that the **Tyler Area Partnership 4 Education** is off to a successful start! Without the steadfast support of these community partners, we would not be where we are today!







A W Riter Jr Family Foundation







Unify | Nurture | Empower | Transform

# Thank you!

On behalf of the **Tyler Area Partnership 4 Education**, we appreciate your support as we work together to improve educational outcomes in our community. Please visit our website at [www.TAP4E.org](http://www.TAP4E.org) or on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/tylerareapartnership4education](https://www.facebook.com/tylerareapartnership4education) for updates on the work and opportunities to get involved.









