



President's Report to the WTC Board of Trustees

August 10, 2026

Western Texas College (WTC) continues to advance strategic initiatives that strengthen workforce development, expand educational access, enhance student support, and deepen regional partnerships. During the past month, the College has submitted multiple competitive grant proposals, expanded community collaborations, improved institutional operations, and continued implementing priorities outlined in *Serving Students Together*. The following updates highlight key developments.

I. Strategic Grants and Workforce Development

WTC continues to pursue external funding opportunities that align with institutional priorities and regional workforce needs.

- The College submitted a notice of intent to apply for the Greater Texas Foundation's Efficient Pathways at Texas Public Community & Technical Colleges initiative. If awarded, the grant would provide up to \$250,000, plus indirect costs, over an 18-month period to strengthen educational pathways that lead to living-wage careers and seamless transfer opportunities for students.
- WTC partnered with Per Scholas in the submission of the AI-DICE Alliance (Artificial Intelligence & Data Center Infrastructure Coalition for Employment) proposal through the U.S. Economic Development Administration's AI Upskill Accelerator program. The approximately \$25 million national initiative supports employer-led workforce systems that prepare workers with applied artificial intelligence skills for immediate use in AI-enabled industries. The proposal focuses on expanding workforce pipelines supporting the rapidly growing data center and critical infrastructure sectors while preparing both incumbent workers and new entrants for high-demand, high-wage careers.
- The College received encouraging news from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board regarding the regional Texas Innovative Adult Career Education (ACE) Grant proposal, for which Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas serves as the fiscal agent and Western Texas College is a key workforce training partner. Due to the availability of additional program funding, the partnership has been invited to increase the proposed project budget from \$500,000 to \$654,571. The partners are currently reviewing the associated matching fund requirements. If funded, the expanded award will significantly strengthen workforce education and career pathway opportunities for adult learners throughout the service area through WTC's Integrated Data Center Operations Technician program and related workforce initiatives.
- WTC recently submitted a proposal through the Perkins State Leadership Grant Program to establish the West Texas CTE Educator Recruitment and Retention Network. The proposed initiative would create a regional model for recruiting, preparing, mentoring, and retaining Career and Technical Education faculty across West Texas while strengthening instructional capacity in high-demand workforce programs and expanding opportunities for students to earn industry-recognized credentials.
- The College submitted its application for the 2026 Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board STAR Award, showcasing WTC's "Workforce Pathways and Economic Mobility Initiative." The application highlights the College's strategic commitment to expanding access to affordable, workforce-focused education through strong employer partnerships, stackable credentials, experiential learning, and continuous improvement driven by student and workforce outcomes. The initiative demonstrates WTC's success in preparing students for high-demand careers, increasing long-term earnings potential, and advancing economic mobility while meeting the workforce needs of West Texas.

II. Regional Partnerships and Community Engagement

Regional collaboration continues to be a cornerstone of WTC's strategic priorities.

The College received official notification from Region 14 Education Service Center that the Rural Pathway Excellence Partnership (R-PEP) Planning Grant has been awarded. This collaborative initiative brings together Western Texas College, Region 14 ESC, six partner school districts, Workforce Solutions of West Central Texas, and additional regional partners to expand dual credit opportunities, workforce-aligned educational pathways, and college and career readiness for rural students. Region 14 will finalize grant negotiations with the Texas Education Agency before convening project partners to begin implementation planning.

Development of a Memorandum of Understanding with Cogdell Memorial Hospital and Clinics is also underway to expand access to medical services for WTC students and employees while strengthening local healthcare partnerships.

On July 30, the College hosted its Agricultural and Rodeo Complex Stakeholder Listening Session, bringing together representatives from agriculture, industry, education, economic development, and community organizations. Feedback gathered during the session will continue informing long-range planning and implementation strategies for this important institutional initiative.

III. Student Success and Community Wellness

The College continues expanding initiatives that strengthen student well-being and remove barriers to educational success. As part of WTC's Community Wellness Initiative:

- A \$50,000 grant proposal was submitted to United Supermarkets to support community wellness programming.
- Donor conversations continue with county-based businesses to secure local support for the National Fitness Court initiative.
- A donor has committed funding to outfit a dedicated behavioral health space supporting the College's partnership with Cogdell Memorial Hospital.

In addition, WTC submitted the Campus Closet & Student Resource Room Powered by Whataburger proposal requesting \$5,000 to expand student access to food assistance, hygiene products, school supplies, and professional clothing. The initiative is expected to serve approximately 500 students annually by addressing basic needs barriers that impact persistence, completion, and workforce success.

The College also received a \$30,000 grant from the Helen Jones Foundation supporting the Helen DeVitt Jones Scholarship Program. This investment expands scholarship opportunities for students and strengthens access to higher education by reducing financial barriers to enrollment, persistence, and completion.

IV. Institutional Operations and Student Services

Several operational improvements have been completed in preparation for the 2026–2027 academic year.

- The 2026–2027 College Catalog has been finalized and published.
- Student housing applications, contracts, and related processes have been comprehensively updated. A new housing handbook has been developed, centralizing information and providing clearer expectations and procedures for residential students.
- The College has clarified institutional processes associated with serving as a Continuing Professional Education (CPE) provider, improving consistency and compliance.
- Temporary building numbering has been implemented to support improved campus navigation during the ongoing transition and future campus planning efforts.