



ACCSS

Alliance for College and
Career Student Success

*Commit. Collaborate.
Create. Celebrate.*



2018-2024 IMPACT REPORT

Mission

ACCSS ensures that every student, regardless of background, can pursue their education and career goals by providing the academic resources, guidance, and support needed to earn post-secondary credits or workforce credentials.

Vision

Every student has the opportunity to pursue and achieve their desired post-secondary or career credentials creating a region where educational, vocational and career success knows no limitations.



Susie Shank
Director
ACCSS



Becky Garlick, Ed.D.
Executive Dean
Blinn College-
Schulenburg Campus



Jeff Harvey, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Fayetteville ISD
ACCSS Chair



Dear Partners & Supporters,

It is with great pride and deep gratitude that we share this Impact Report, an accumulation of over five years of design, dedication, and collective progress through the Alliance for College and Career Student Success (ACCSS) of South-Central Texas. This report reflects the outcomes of our commitment to transforming lives through education - the lives of our students, their families, our staff, and others impacted by our work, such as leaders in regional industry and their employees. This work has always been about more than increasing access to dual credit or improving college and career readiness. It has been about improving life conditions in our rural communities by investing in strategic, student-centered education pathways that empower young people with the tools, skills, and support they need to succeed. Guided by our unifying theme—"Commit. Collaborate. Create. Celebrate."—this journey has been a testament to what can be accomplished when partners from across sectors unite around a common vision. We have committed to equity, collaborated across systems, and created opportunities that didn't exist before. Now, we take a moment to celebrate the progress and impact we have made together. Thank you for being a part of this movement. Your continued partnership fuels our momentum, and we look forward to the continued positive impact on our rural communities as the ACCSS program continues to be enhanced and expanded to serve more of our region.

With appreciation,

Alliance for College and Career Student Success



When we looked at the data, it was clear why we needed to act. Of the 8th grade classes in Fayette and Colorado counties in 2011:



15%

Participated in dual credit



53%

were matriculating to higher ed



27%

earned a college or career credential



14%

of 8th graders were not graduating high school

These numbers told us something had to change.

(The Texas Tribune, Higher Ed Outcomes)

By 2031, 72 percent of jobs in the US will require postsecondary education and/or training. Between 2021 and 2031, there will be 18.5 million job openings per year on average, and some 12.5 million of these annualized openings will require at least some college education. After Everything: Projections of Jobs, Education, and Training Requirements through 2031 includes a national overview of job projections and their educational requirements across industries, occupational clusters, and detailed occupational groups. These latest projections demonstrate the central role postsecondary education plays in preparing the workforce of the future.

(<https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/>)

Responding to a Growing Gap in College and Career Readiness

The Alliance for College and Career Student Success (ACCSS) started with a simple but powerful question from local educators and leaders in Fayette and Colorado, counties: **Are we doing enough to help our students succeed during and after high school?**

Additionally, there was and still is a teacher shortage. Encouraging students to explore education as a pathway was a driving force. Supporting the hiring of local young educators may help with the ongoing retention issues faced by our schools.

While most students in our area graduate from high school, far fewer go on to earn a college degree or career credential. That matters not just for students, but for the future of our entire region.



“What began as a bold initiative to tackle the teacher shortage through the ACCSS program has evolved into a powerful engine for workforce transformation in our region. Today, ACCSS is not only preparing students to meet critical local needs—from classrooms to clinics to construction sites—but also empowering them to shape their futures with confidence—whether that means entering college ahead of the game or stepping directly into high-quality, high-paying careers. It’s more than a program; it’s a pathway to possibility.”

Dr. Becky Garlick

Executive Dean, Blinn College-Schulenburg Campus

Insights That Shaped Our Planning and Work

In Years 1 and 2, site visits and stakeholder engagement helped shape ACCSS's strategy. Innovative school models, strong partnerships, and student feedback informed efforts to expand dual credit and college pathways. A shared vision emerged, focused on ensuring all students are prepared for post-secondary and career success. To support these initial steps toward implementation, the Greater Texas Foundation awarded a planning grant in the amount of over \$55,000.

Key Takeaways | Year 1

Insights from the College for All Conference in Pharr-San-Juan-Alamo, TX



Innovation Observed Firsthand

The ACCSS leadership team saw how early college high school models and bold school design strategies are working in real-world classrooms to support student success.



Partnerships in Practice

The experience proved the importance of partnerships. Educators, college staff, and community leaders collaborated, demonstrating that student success relies on effective teamwork.



Student and Teacher Voices Matter

When students and educators presented in breakout sessions, they provided valuable insights into what's working and what must improve to create effective college and career pathways.



Connecting Pathways to Purpose

Discussions with South Texas College highlighted how dual credit and early college strategies can better align high school experiences with post-secondary goals.



Vision Built Through Shared Learning

Year 1 built a shared vision to prepare all students for college and career success.

Planning Year 2



Early 2020 Pandemic Begins

Covid-19 causes delays, but progress continues through virtual planning sessions.



Leadership Unites

Regular online meetings sustain collaboration despite travel limits.



Consultants Engage

Experts in school design and collective impact strategies join the ACCSS Team.



Mid-2020 Site Visits To Texas Models

Leaders tour rural programs to gain insights into effective practices.

Year 3 Pre-Implementation: A Year of Strategic Progress

The ACCSS signing ceremony marked the official launch of the Alliance, bringing together leaders from education, workforce, and philanthropy. This milestone event signaled a shared commitment to rural student success. The **Greater Texas Foundation** and ACCSS formalized their partnership by investing in three years of collaborative work through an \$842,000 grant to expand opportunities and reduce barriers for underserved students across Central Texas.



Q1

ACCSS Signing Ceremony

A big milestone event brought together leaders from education, workforce, and philanthropy



Q2

Hiring Key Staff

ACCSS hired key staff, including the first Director and Student Success Coach



Q3

Building Systems

Work began on developing tools to track student progress and assess the impact of new programs of study



Q4

Initiating Student engagement

Partner districts began identifying student groups who would benefit from support

ACCSS built a strong foundation by creating a governance manual, setting meeting schedules, and securing partner agreements. Leadership and staff trained to define roles, improve teamwork, and stay focused on helping students succeed in college and career across all participating communities.



- 

Leadership Governance Manual

Partners were aligned through the development and approval of governance documents and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)
- 

Professional Development

Professional development supported staff growth
- 

Meeting Calendar

Regular, in-person conversations developed rapport and commitment to the mission of the alliance.
- 

Building A Shared Vision

These actions ensured clear roles, strong collaboration, and a shared commitment to helping students succeed in college and career pathways across all participating communities.

Years 4–5 Implementation: Advancing Student Strategies

ACCSS scaled student-centered strategies to boost college and career readiness by expanding personalized advising, work-based learning, and dual credit participation.

Support systems for first-generation and rural students were strengthened to ensure all learners had the guidance, resources, and opportunities needed for postsecondary success.



“Getting to attend the Blinn Schulenburg campus and do hands-on learning made a big impact and boosted my confidence for college. I think more students should take advantage of these opportunities—it’s a great way to get ahead and figure out what you really want to do.”

Jasmine Abdelbagi
Flatonia ISD

“Being part of the ACCSS Leadership Team has shown me the true impact of collaboration. Through ACCSS, our students and staff receive consistent support, valuable college prep resources, and guidance that directly strengthens academic success and postsecondary readiness.”



Chris Sodek
Flatonia ISD Superintendent

Igniting College and Career Interest Early

Each year, over 500 fifth graders have the opportunity to build a life-size house using real tools. The HammerBuild provides an educational day that students will never forget. Students work together using hammers, drills, tool belts, and safety equipment to build a house large enough that the entire class can get inside. This experience transports students out of the classroom to an on-the-job experience. Throughout the build, students learn the value of math application, goal setting, teamwork, and workforce development skills. Students also explore future careers with the Texas Career Check program.

By eighth grade, Career Quest at Blinn College–Schulenburg involves 600+ students in hands-on sessions like welding, healthcare, and agriculture. Guided by industry representatives and Blinn College faculty, these experiences connect skills to education and lifestyle goals, helping students plan for careers considered high demand and high wage for the region. ACCSS provides these early recruitment opportunities as these same 8th graders will be making decisions that impact their high school career soon after they attend Career Quest events.



IF I HAD A HAMMER®



College Ready: Preparing Students Through TSIA and Summer Bridge

TSIA2 program support provides ACCSS students with free English and math test prep, on-campus boot camps, mid-year refreshers, and testing, all aimed at improving placement scores and boosting confidence. Students receive hands-on help in areas they need most. ACCSS has also offered a 3-day Summer Bridge program focused on study habits, time management, literacy, and mental wellness. Whether preparing for dual credit, college, or simply aiming to improve, students walk away with stronger academic skills and a clearer path forward. Together, these initiatives are creating more prepared, confident, and college-ready students across rural communities.



“The ACCSS TSI Boot Camps gave me the skills and confidence to succeed in dual credit classes. I passed the TSI, earned 24 college credits in high school, and now feel ready to begin my nursing journey at Texas A&M”

Taylor Smith
Weimar ISD

**ALLIED HEALTH, CONSTRUCTION,
EDUCATION, WELDING,
AND AGRIBUSINESS.**



Enrollment and completion have surpassed

15% baseline since 2018, particularly for low-income and first-generation students.

ACCSS HAS CREATED PATHWAYS TO POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND HIGH-SKILL CAREERS

Creating College Momentum Through Dual Credit:

The Bridge from High School to Higher Ed

ACCSS has opened college-level opportunities in high-demand fields, offering pathways for students with limited access to higher education. As more students engage in dual credit, they gain both college-level knowledge and the confidence needed to transition smoothly into higher education. This increased readiness has led to higher immediate college enrollment rates. The expansion of dual credit programs not only provides valuable college credits and industry certifications but also boosts persistence in higher education, ensuring long-term academic and career success.

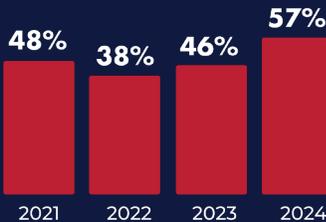


6,196
College Credits Earned



97%
Dual Credit Passing Rate

Seniors Graduating With Dual Credit



\$65,000
Dual Credit Student Scholarships Awarded

56% 61% 61%
2022 2023 2024
Enrolling In College Anytime Within First Year After School



2024 - 2025 CNA Cohort Complete!
Weimar, Schulenburg & Flatonia



“As a senior, ACCSS has been a game-changer for me, especially with the scholarship I got that covered my pharmacy tech program while I was still in high school. It saved me so much time and money, letting me take college-level classes without stress. I’m super thankful for everything ACCSS has offered, it’s made me feel way more confident about becoming a pharmacist in the future.”

Emma Klozik
Flatonia ISD

“ACCSS gave me a huge jumpstart—I graduated high school with my Associate degree, feeling more prepared for college and my future in medicine. Dual credit boosted my GPA and got me ahead, especially since my school doesn’t offer AP or honors classes. The support from my ACCSS Student Success Coach and counselor helped me stay on track and reach my goal of becoming an expedition doctor. I believe all students should take advantage of ACCSS—it opens up so many opportunities.”



Reagan Moreau
Fayetteville ISD

Voices of Impact: Connecting Classroom to Careers

Through a summer internship and hands-on experiences, 19 students worked 1,795 hours alongside local employers to gain real-world insight and build essential employability skills. These partnerships bridged the gap between classroom learning and career readiness, allowing students to explore future pathways while contributing meaningfully to their communities and industries.



“My son, Devyn, gave up athletics to take the HVAC and Construction Safety classes, and it was worth it. They helped with books, tools, and tuition. This allowed him to prepare for his future in HVAC. Now he works at Leon’s Electric and Plumbing, getting real hands-on experience. We’re so thankful for this program.”

Serena Bradley
Schulenburg ISD, Parent



Jim Sanders
General Manager
Cavender Auto Country

“As a school board member and general manager of a car dealership, I see the challenges students face in high school and in making career decisions. Hosting ACCSS interns at the dealership was a great experience and our team enjoyed it. Students gained on-the-job employability knowledge and showed real interest in this career path“



Ron Langhamer
President
Leon’s Electric & Plumbing

“High school students need to learn real skills like electrical and plumbing work. These jobs will continue to be needed in every community, and I tell them, come back and serve your hometown. With my generation of skilled craftsmen at retirement age, we need young people ready to take over and keep these services going strong.”

“The summer internship through ACCSS really helped me see what a future in architecture and construction could look like. Working at the building supply store taught me so much about materials and tools, and it made me more confident in choosing this career path. It even got me thinking about leadership roles in the field, like being a supervisor one day. I’m super grateful for the chance to get real-world experience while still in high school—it made me more excited for college and my future.”



Damien Benitez
Columbus ISD

Future-Focused: Strengthening Partnerships and Expanding Our Reach



The Greater Texas Foundation and Trellis Foundation awarded ACCSS over \$900,000 to continue supporting student college and career readiness efforts. This funding also enables the expansion and enhancement of student support services, dual credit access, and operational capacity, further strengthening pathways to postsecondary and workforce success.



GREATER TEXAS FOUNDATION



The ACCSS Strategic Fundraising Model

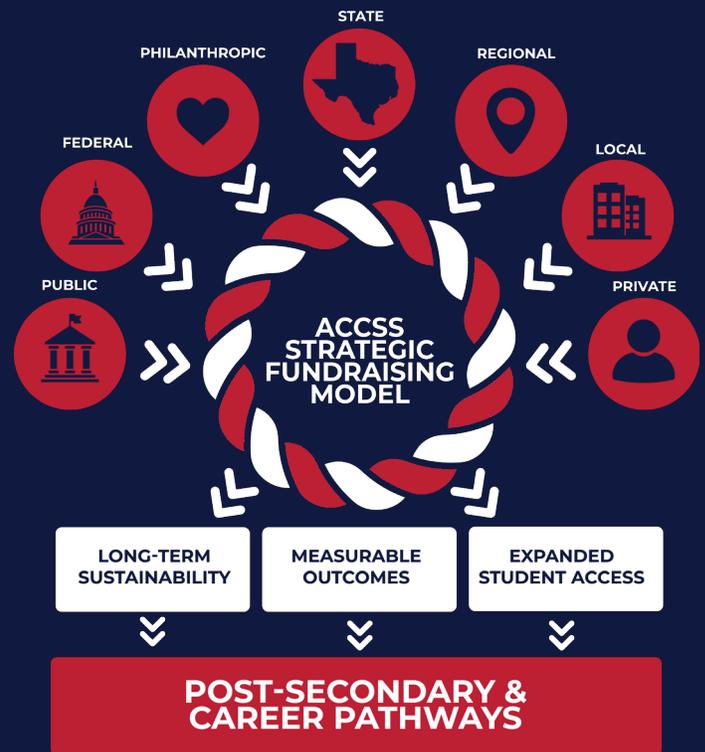
uses a braided funding model that brings together federal, state, local, philanthropic, and private sources. This coordinated approach sustains the work over time, supports innovation, expands services, and helps ACCSS respond to the changing needs of students and communities. By aligning funding with shared goals and outcomes, the model increases student access to education and career paths that meet workforce demands, especially in rural areas.

Prioritizing Data-Driven Decision Making

ACCSS uses data to drive decisions, measure outcomes, and identify areas for improvement ensuring our strategies are effective and responsive to student needs.

Building Strong Partnerships

We are strengthening partnerships across education, workforce, and philanthropy so that ACCSS becomes a shared investment with long-term support from multiple sectors.



Partners in Progress: Expansion as a Path to ACCSS Sustainability

Expanding to new counties and school districts strengthens regional impact, builds shared investment, and supports long-term sustainability of our ACCSS model.



MOULTON ISD



DIME BOX ISD



SEALY ISD

“Our goal is to build a model that lasts, developing tools and strategies that schools can adopt, adapt, and sustain well beyond the initial grant period. Additionally, partnering with local industry is a factor that ensures our students are prepared for the workforce and are prepared to serve the needs of our region.”



“Being able to support students with their goals is one of the best parts of working with ACCSS. I get to see students achieve some hefty steps on the road to fulfilling their dreams. Giving students the chance to thrive is what ACCSS is all about.”

Susie Shank
Director, ACCSS

Sarah Nickel
Success Coach, ACCSS

Looking Ahead: Sustaining Impact, Expanding Opportunity



As we reflect on the accomplishments detailed in this report, one message is clear: the Alliance for College and Career Student Success (ACCSS) is making a lasting difference in the lives of rural students across South-Central Texas. Through strong partnerships, strategic investments, and unwavering community support, students are earning college credit, gaining industry credentials, and accessing opportunities that were once out of reach.

With generous support from the Greater Texas Foundation, Trellis Foundation, and local philanthropic partners, ACCSS has built a scalable and replicable model that meets students where they are and helps them get where they want to go. This model is not only closing equity gaps—it’s opening new doors.

Looking ahead, our commitment remains strong. We invite you to continue supporting this vital work as we expand our reach, deepen our impact, and help shape a more equitable and prosperous future for all students, regardless of geography or circumstance.

LEARN MORE & CONNECT

Address

Blinn College
Schulenburg Campus
100 Ranger Drive
Schulenburg, TX 78956

Phone

Main Office:
(979) 743-5200

Website

ACCSS Program:
<https://myaccss.net/>

Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/ACCSS5>

Instagram

<https://www.instagram.com/myaccss5/>

X/Twitter

<https://x.com/myaccss5>

For more information on opportunities at Blinn College - Schulenburg Campus, please visit:

www.blinn.edu/schulenburg



“ACCSS has been an invaluable partner in providing our students with academic and technical course opportunities they would usually not have. As a result, students have been able to engage in classwork that meets their interests and expands opportunities for all students throughout our district. Our ACCSS partnership has directly contributed to some of our students graduating with their associate’s degrees from Blinn College before their high school graduation.”



- Jeff W. Harvey, Ed.D.
Superintendent
Fayetteville Independent School District