A LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

More than 150 people move to the Austin area each day because of its dynamic economy, low crime, healthy housing market and quality school options, not to mention the overall great quality of life. That quality of life is reflected in the businesses that grow here, from Whole Foods and Seton Family of Hospitals to Samsung and Hanger Orthopedics to a slew of new entrepreneurial ventures.

But our workforce opportunities can be no stronger than our existing pool of talent. For almost a decade, the Greater Austin Chamber of Commerce has partnered with business groups and school districts to encourage more Central Texas graduates to directly enroll in post-secondary education.

Our region has had years of improving scores and higher graduation rates, but direct-to-college enrollment has stalled. That’s a challenge we must address.

Now we’re taking that discussion one step further. Even as we see gains in college readiness in Central Texas, we also see the number of high-demand, high-pay jobs rise in the region. As of mid-January, we had 33,000 Central Texas job openings, in areas like IT and healthcare. One in five jobs were in computer science, even though few students indicate an interest in the field.

The time has come to talk to our students not only about pursuing post-secondary education, but also about choosing fields that can give them life-long careers.

We’ve included two charts in our report that capture the mismatch: One chart shows our regional job openings. The other shows graduating senior aspirations. Our job is to minimize the gap between openings and aspirations.

Catherine Morse
General Counsel and Director of Public Affairs, Samsung Education Progress Report Task Force Chair
**THE LOCKHART ISD PATH TO COLLEGE**

- 83%* completed financial aid
- 57% took the SAT or ACT
- 68% applied via Apply Texas
- 51% of students are college ready

38% of the students in the class of 2012 directly enrolled in college by the fall after graduation.

* Class of 2014

Sources: Available at http://austinchamber.com/edureports
THE ROAD TO HIGH SCHOOL

Initial passing standards on the new State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness, STAAR, were set to “meet the students where they were” three years ago but will continue to rise to a final passing standard aligned with a path to career- and college-readiness.

The final STAAR passing standard, which will not arrive before 2016, is considered aligned to post-secondary readiness. The goal of the Austin Chamber and its business partners, however, is to look to the Advanced performance level on STAAR, which is a standard considered best prepared for college and career. This standard is beyond both the current and final STAAR passing standards for the state, but it is best aligned to Central Texas workforce needs.

Lockhart ISD has made some respectable gains on the fifth- and eighth-grade percentage passing in the second STAAR test administration. The school district also has set a goal of 90 percent passing rate on all sections of the fifth- and eighth-grade tests. But scores at the highest level, the career and college ready standard, are still low, especially given the growing percentage of students taking Advanced Placement and dual credit courses. For this report, the best prepared standard for career and college readiness is determined by Advanced performance on the new state assessment. Last year, 34 percent of Lockhart 8th graders were enrolled in a high school Algebra I course, and 12 percent of those students scored at the Advanced level on the high school test. A total of 96 percent of 8th grade students who took the Algebra I test passed it. We encourage Lockhart to keep its eye on increasing the percentage of students at that highest performance level, which is reflective of the best prepared path to career and college readiness.

In efforts to increase the level of instructional rigor, in 2013-2014 mathematics teachers are implementing blended learning strategies and flipped learning where teachers are using technology to provide multiple pathways for learning difficult concepts.

During the summer of 2014, teachers and central office administration will continue to collaborate to revise and redesign curriculum and benchmark assessments to tightly align to the level of rigor of the new state assessment. In 2014-2015 Career and Technology Education (CTE) foundation courses will be expanded at both the Junior High School and the M.L. Cisneros Freshman Campus to move start dates earlier for students as they enter the wide range of Programs of Study offered in Lockhart to prepare students for college and careers.
Were 8th Grade Students on the Path to Being Career and College Ready?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Passed the Test</th>
<th>Met Final Passing Standard (College &amp; Career Ready)</th>
<th>Met Advanced Level (Well Prepared for College &amp; Career)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>88%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Science</td>
<td>77%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Note: Students were allowed two opportunities to pass the math and reading assessments. All other levels are based on first administration. 34% of Lockhart 8th grade students took the Algebra I test, not included on this chart.

2010
Spring open house to emphasize college and careers

12% increase in college-ready graduates in English Language Arts and 8% increase in college-ready graduates in mathematics

2011
Received 5-year AP Strategies Grant

Increased professional development sessions for secondary teachers. Increased number of students enrolled in Advanced Placement Courses at High School

2013
 Implemented Campus2Careers mentor & internship program

Increased number of students enrolling in CTE courses and developing professional achievement profiles with a purposeful focus on college and career
Were 5th Grade Students on the Path to Being Career and College Ready?

### The Lockhart ISD Task Force
- Supports programs, policies and personnel that close the gap between economically disadvantaged students and their peers on academic measures
- Encourages the expansion of dual credit, AP and IB courses that can better prepare students for college and career readiness and can defray the cost of post-secondary education
- Encourages the district to set goals for FAFSA completion rates and encourage students to take advantage of programs such as the Austin Chamber’s Financial Aid Saturdays
- Supports programs and initiatives that will boost student test scores to the college- and career-ready level and those programs that will improve writing scores in the district
- Encourages early awareness of college and career options for students, especially the need to apply for FAFSA by March 15 in order to get the most advantageous financial aid packages

Source: Texas Academic Performance Report and Pearson Assessment

Note: Students were allowed two opportunities to take math and reading assessment for passing rate. All other levels are based on first administration.
COLLEGE, CAREER, AND BEYOND

Lockhart ISD is the enviable position of having growth of almost 30 percentage points in the area of college and career readiness over the last five years. If considering only Apply Texas college application data, that growth has yet to be reflected in direct-to-college enrollment. Many Lockhart students take the initiative for continued learning by joining the military, attending trade school, or working for a year. Others enroll in out-of-state universities, such as MIT, which is not reflected in the state admissions application data.

While the district enrollment trends are toward more economically disadvantaged students, Lockhart ISD has all but closed the achievement gap between all student sub-groups. The on-time graduation rate and the percentage of those students who pass the exit-level TAKS tests on time are either close, or identical, for all students. In addition, all student groups are proportionately represented in dual credit and advanced academic courses.

Asked about the trends, district leaders reflect that students, even those who are prepared to enter college, tend to wait to enroll in post-secondary education. Lockhart is a close-knit rural community of second- and third-generation families. So it’s not unusual for graduates to find a job close to home for a year or two before heading off to college or the military.

District leadership has made a point of expanding access to AP and dual credit courses, a move we applaud in school districts where the high-cost of college may be a burden for families. In addition to saving families significant costs associated with college attendance, college credits from high school dual credit courses prompt students to continue with college after high school.

The direct-to-college enrollment rate for Lockhart ISD was 38 percent for the Class of 2012, but 51 percent of students were ready to go to college, 57 percent took the ACT or SAT and 52 percent completed the Apply Texas applications and FAFSA forms. Lockhart ISD works collaboratively with local businesses to provide internships and mentoring experiences for students in their fields of interest utilizing an online matching program, Campus2Careers.

We continue to encourage the school district to pursue additional AP and dual credit courses, while also exploring additional avenues to direct students to pursue some of the unfilled high-demand jobs in the region, especially in IT and health care by expanding the CTE Programs of Study to include rigorous health care endorsement pathways.

Lockhart’s city leaders are actively seeking new business partners for the community. Lockhart, which has been a low-growth school district to date, has maintained a low tax rate, and we encourage strategic spending to increase options both on the campuses and in partnership with higher education.

How Many Graduates Went Directly to College Upon Graduation?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fall Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: National Clearinghouse Data, UT Ray Marshall Center

Percentages indicate students who have enrolled in at least one credit-bearing course at a community college or degree-granting institution for the first time in the fall following graduation, in Texas or out of state.
How Many Graduates Were Ready for College or a Career?

Source: Texas Academic Performance Report

Career- and college-readiness is measured by the SAT, ACT or the exit-level Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills. Students who fail to meet set standards must enter college taking remedial classes.
How Many Graduated in Four Years?

- 20%
- 40%
- 60%
- 80%

All Students
African American
Hispanic
White
Econ. Disadvantaged

2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013

Source: Texas Academic Performance Report

How Many Completed All Graduation Tests on Time?

- 100%

All Students
African American
Hispanic
White
Econ. Disadvantaged

2007 2008 2009 2010 2011 2012

Source: Texas Academic Performance Report

How Did Students Perform on EOC Tests?

- ELA II Writing: 2% 23% 48%
- ELA II Reading: 10% 54% 75%
- ELA I Writing: 2% 30% 58%
- ELA I Reading: 7% 44% 70%
- Biology: 8% 49% 89%
- Algebra I: 7% 30% 92%

Source: Texas Academic Performance Report

How Many Graduated in Five Years?

- 2009: 7%
- 2010: 92%
- 2011: 92%

Graduated in 4 yrs
Add'l graduates in 5 yrs

Source: Texas Academic Performance Report
In addition to the actions on the Road to College, the UT-Austin Ray Marshall Center has identified a combination of six student actions which, if completed, indicate that a high school senior has the “best odds” for direct enrollment in some form of postsecondary education. This is not a multiple choice exercise: to ensure the vast majority of Lockhart ISD graduates directly enroll in college, we encourage completion of all six actions by seniors before graduation. Below is the percent of Central Texas seniors who reported doing each of the six actions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discussed college plan/process with school staff</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited college or technical school</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents filled out FAFSA</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plan to pay with loans</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Took prep class for SAT or ACT</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thought aid process was easy</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visited college or technical school</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The higher the percentage on these activities, the more likely we will move the needle on college enrollment.

Source: Regional Data, Ray Marshall Center

FROM THE LOCKHART CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Since 1935, the Lockhart Chamber of Commerce has worked diligently in partnership with its local business community to strengthen the economic environment and promote the well-being of all its citizens. There are many areas of focus in these efforts, but advocacy for local education has always maintained a priority status throughout our history.

The Chamber maintains a Lockhart ISD representative on its Board of Directors in order to foster strong communication between member businesses and local education efforts. Additionally, the Chamber’s Business and Economic Development Committee keeps local education as one of its focal points. The Lockhart Community as a whole has always been a proud supporter of its local school district. In 2013, Lockhart High School graduates received more than $220,400 in college scholarships from locally directed efforts.

Lockhart is a wonderful community with a proud history and a unique quality of life. Situated directly on the newly constructed SH130 toll road, Lockhart is 35 minutes from downtown Austin and 50 minutes from downtown San Antonio. No other community can offer the same access to major business centers with such distinctive small town charm. What a great place to raise a family and grow your business!

Becki Womble
President & CEO
Lockhart Chamber of Commerce

“Best Odds” for Direct College Enrollment

Becki Womble
President & CEO
Lockhart Chamber of Commerce
This is ninth year the Austin Chamber of Commerce has produced the education progress reports. The chair of this year’s task force effort is Catherine Morse, General Counsel and Director of Public Affairs at Samsung. Dawn L Jones, external affairs manager, Intel-Texas, serves as vice chair of the task force and chair of the launch event.

**LOCKHART ISD**

Janie Wright, Interim Superintendent

Pam Johnson, Director of Secondary Curriculum and Instructional Technology

**LOCKHART CHAMBER OF COMMERCE VOLUNTEERS**

Ken Doran, Branch Manager, Sage Capital Bank

Rebecca Pulliam, Agent, State Farm Insurance

Todd Smith, Texas Quail Farm Inc.

Rudy Ruiz, Community Development Management Co., Inc

Patrick Davis, Harrison Partners Realty

Becki Womble, CEO/President, Lockhart Chamber of Commerce

For more information about Lockhart Independent School District: www.lockhartisd.org

The Lockhart Chamber of Commerce can be found at www.lockhartchamber.com

To learn about the Austin Chamber’s progress reports and download electronic versions of each report, visit www.austinchamber.com/edureports or call Senior Vice President of Federal/State Advocacy and Education/Talent Development Drew Scheberle at 512.322.5628.