



Testimony

Interim Charge 3

Texas House Higher Education Committee

by Erin Davis Valdez

Chair Turner and Members of the Committee:

My name is Erin Davis Valdez, and I am a policy analyst with the Texas Public Policy Foundation. I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide information for interim charge 3. Question 3 of the interim charge reads:

Is there legislative action that could help expand work-based learning?

The best career and technical education programs are those that include work-based learning opportunities.¹ The Texas Education Agency recognizes this by including practica, which can include internships and co-ops, in the 3rd and 4th years of many of the [approved, state-wide programs of study](#).

The Foundation recommends that the Legislature pass legislation that [allows secondary CTE allocations](#) to be used by school districts to outsource to the community paid internships and apprenticeships that serve as practica within a program of study. It should also consider increasing the amount of the allotment that school districts are required to spend on CTE programs from 55% to 85%. HB 3 set the minimum at 55% (Texas Education Code [§48.106\(c\)](#)).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this information, and I look forward to future discussions. ★

¹ For additional information see *Closing the Middle-Skill Gap: High School Internships* by Erin Davis Valdez and Josey Theale, Texas Public Policy Foundation, April 2019 (<https://files.texaspolicy.com/uploads/2019/04/12170905/2019-04-PB-Valdez-Theale-CIE-Middle-Skill-Gap.pdf>), *Improving Outcomes for Texas Career and Technical Education Students* by Erin Davis Valdez, Texas Public Policy Foundation, December 2019 (<https://files.texaspolicy.com/uploads/2019/12/10142130/Valdez-Improving-Outcomes-for-CIE.pdf>), and *Mismatch? Aligning Secondary Career and Technical Education with Regional Workforce Demand* by Erin Davis Valdez and Sam Johnson, Texas Public Policy Foundation, May 2020 (<https://files.texaspolicy.com/uploads/2020/05/05112536/Valdez-Johnson-Workforce-Demand.pdf>).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Erin Davis Valdez is a policy analyst at the Texas Public Policy Foundation. She has been passionate about the transformational power of education all her life, having been given the gift of being homeschooled. She taught for over a decade in Austin-area schools and served as an assistant principal at a charter school in Lewisville. These experiences have given her the opportunity to see first-hand how students can thrive when they have excellent options.

Since joining the Foundation, Valdez has conducted research on career and technical education at the secondary and post-secondary levels, civics education, and welfare to work programs in Texas.

Valdez earned an MA in classics from the University of California, Santa Barbara and a BA in classical studies from Hillsdale College.

About Texas Public Policy Foundation

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