Established in 1883, the Blinn College District offers academic transfer, workforce training, and continuing education courses for approximately 19,000 students. With a variety of online courses and five unique campuses, Blinn builds stronger communities in its 13-county service area by providing quality, comprehensive education and empowering students to achieve excellence in their educational careers and personal goals.

According to the College District’s most recent economic impact study released in Fall 2020, Blinn provides a $370.1 million economic benefit to its service area, the equivalent of 6,010 additional jobs each year. This includes $242.1 million in added income for Blinn students who enter the workforce with newly acquired knowledge and skills.

ACADEMIC SUCCESS

• According to Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board data, Blinn’s academic transfer rate of 45.4% ranks No. 1 in the State of Texas and exceeds the state-wide average of 23.1%.

• Blinn is a partner with The Texas A&M University System at the RELLIS Campus in Bryan, Texas. At this one-of-a-kind campus environment, students can complete their freshman- and sophomore-level courses at Blinn, then transfer seamlessly into one of the Texas A&M System regional university bachelor’s degree programs located at RELLIS.

• Blinn has partnered with The Texas A&M System and the Texas A&M University Department of Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communications to open the RELLIS Agriculture and Workforce Education Center, a 38,000-square-foot complex where students prepare for high-demand careers in secondary education and the construction industries. To coincide with the opening of the new facility, Blinn has introduced four new Associate of Applied Sciences degrees in carpentry, facilities maintenance, HVAC, and water purification. Each of these degrees lead to high-demand leadership positions in their fields and transfer to related bachelor’s degrees.

• Established in 2001, the Texas A&M-Blinn TEAM Program allows students to co-enroll at Blinn and Texas A&M. Students who complete the program become fully admitted Aggies. Admission to this program is offered to freshman applicants by the Texas A&M Office of Admissions.

• The Texas A&M Engineering at Blinn Program allows students to co-enroll at Blinn and the Texas A&M College of Engineering. Students take their Texas A&M engineering courses at the Texas A&M campus and their math and science courses at Blinn’s Walter C. Schwartz Building at the RELLIS Campus. Admission to this program is offered to freshman applicants by the Texas A&M Office of Admissions. For info: www.blinn.edu/engineering-academy-bryan.

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The Texas A&M Engineering Academy at Blinn-Brenham allows students to co-enroll at Blinn and the Texas A&M College of Engineering while participating in a living-learning community. Students reside in Mill Creek Hall on the Blinn-Brenham Campus and take their first-year math, science, and engineering courses together. Texas A&M engineering courses are taught on the Blinn-Brenham Campus by Texas A&M faculty. For info: www.blinn.edu/engineering-academy-brenham.

Just as Blinn’s engineering partnerships serve to meet the state’s growing demand for engineering graduates, Blinn’s Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Program partnered with the Sam Houston State University School of Nursing in 2019 to meet the growing demand for nursing graduates. Through this collaboration, Blinn ADN students can co-enroll at Sam Houston State and reduce the time necessary to complete their bachelor’s degree by up to six months.

Blinn has won national recognition (The President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, Carnegie Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching) for its Service Learning Program, which combines community service with classroom instruction.

About the Blinn College District

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• Blinn has won national recognition (The President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll, Carnegie Classification from the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching) for its Service Learning Program, which combines community service with classroom instruction.

AFFORDABILITY

• According to information compiled by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, out-of-district students at Blinn save 44% in tuition and fees compared to state residents at the average Texas public university.

• The Blinn College Foundation offers more than 200 endowed scholarships available to incoming and returning students from a wide range of backgrounds, majors, and experiences.
• According to information provided by the Texas Association of Community Colleges, 47% of all students currently enrolled in public higher education in Texas attend a community college. Further, 70% of all freshmen and sophomores enrolled in Texas are at a community college, including 72% of all minority freshmen and sophomores.

• According to the Texas Association of Community Colleges, 92% of all dual credit opportunities and 93% of all career and technology education is provided by community colleges.

• To meet statewide demand for educational services, Texas community colleges must receive strong state support or pass the costs of expanding programs and services on to students.

• With this in mind, Texas community colleges request $1.833 billion in overall state funding for the operations of the 50 Texas community college districts in the 2022-2023 biennium.

• Texas community colleges continue to advance programs and strategies that improve student success on multiple metrics. In order for the student success points system to effectively reward institutions for improvements in student success, the biennial rate for Success Points should be increased to $215 per point. Further, the Blinn College District supports maintaining the clarification in the definition of a transfer student in relation to student success points adopted in the 86th Legislative Session.

RECOMMENDATION
The Blinn College District supports the overall state funding level for community colleges adopted by the Texas Association of Community Colleges and the Community College Association of Texas Trustees.
The Texas Association of Community Colleges supports the Texas Reskilling & Upskilling through Education (TRUE) initiative, and specifically seeks statutory authority to create a state fund to support the program. To achieve the dual goals of workforce and economic recovery, TRUE recommends the following:

- Design sustainable talent pipelines to fill critical workforce needs and provide ongoing support to Texas businesses and the state’s economic recovery.

- Expand employer-informed micro-credentials and short-term certificates that will enable displaced and underemployed workers to lead fulfilling and economically self-sufficient lives by getting them work-ready in as little as a few weeks to six months.

- Identify high-demand, short-term credentials to be recognized as a part of the state’s 60X30TX Plan for Higher Education.

Further, the Texas Association of Community Colleges and the Small Business Development Centers (SBDCs) recommend transitioning the SBDCs within the General Appropriations Act from Article III (Education) to Article VII (Business and Economic Development), specifically within the Texas Workforce Commission’s (TWC) appropriation. Currently, SBDCs are funded as non-formula support items at select institutions of higher education. Under the recommendation, administration of the SBDCs would remain at the current institutions of higher education with funding flowing through the TWC.

**RECOMMENDATION**

*The Blinn College District supports the workforce and economic development policies adopted by the Texas Association of Community Colleges and the Community College Association of Texas Trustees.*
• In 1969, House Bill 634 of the 61st Texas Legislature transferred oversight of the Star of the Republic Museum (the Museum) to the Blinn College District. The Museum is located at the Washington-on-the-Brazos State Historical Site.

• In the 86th Legislative Session, Senate Bill 2309 transferred the operations of the Museum from Blinn College to the Texas Historical Commission (THC) effective January 1, 2020. SB 2309 stated that Blinn maintained ownership of the Museum building. Further, House Bill 1422, also in the 86th Session, transferred possession of the Washington-on-the-Brazos Historical Site to the THC.

• Since that time, Blinn College and THC have partnered to transition the operations of the Museum in a smooth and efficient manner. Through this process, it has become apparent that transferring ownership of the Museum building from Blinn College to THC will aid in this process.

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**RECOMMENDATION**

The Blinn College District requests that the Legislature pass a bill that transfers ownership of the Star of the Republic Museum building from the Blinn College District to the Texas Historical Commission.
• The Hazlewood Act is a State of Texas benefit that provides qualified veterans, spouses, and dependent children with an education benefit of up to 150 credit hours of tuition exemption, including most fee charges, at public institutions of higher education.

• The Blinn College District Veterans Services Office provides services for more than 600 active duty service members, veterans, and their families as they work to achieve their academic goals. Veterans Services staff and advisors provide assistance in identifying and applying for available military educational benefits.

• Each year, Hazlewood Act exemptions cost Texas community colleges approximately $20 million.

• In 2009, the Texas Legislature established the Hazlewood Legacy Act, which permits eligible veterans to assign unused hours to their child. Eligible dependents must be a veteran’s stepchild, biological child, adopted child, or claimed as a dependent; be less than 26 years old at the time he/she uses the exception; and meet financial aid satisfactory academic progress requirements.

• In Fiscal Year 2020, the amount of Hazlewood Act exemptions awarded to Blinn College students increased to approximately $1.91 million. This represents an increase of 210% over the $617,598 in Hazlewood Act exemptions awarded to Blinn College students in Fiscal Year 2012.

• Blinn College’s total number of Hazlewood Act exemptions has increased from 347 to 625 between FY 2012 and FY 2020.

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**RECOMMENDATION**

The Blinn College District requests that the Legislature support additional state funding to offset the rising expenses imposed upon community colleges associated with Hazlewood Act exemptions.