

Tech Prep is College Prep for Technical Careers!

Tech Prep is a way to start a college technical major in high school. In a Tech Prep program, you begin your course of study in high school and continue in a community or technical college. The result is a certificate or associate degree in a career field.

Tech Prep programs combine the academic courses needed for success in college AND technical courses that begin to prepare you for a career.

Students in Tech Prep programs can earn college credit through:

- Content-enhanced articulated courses (statewide articulation and/or local articulation);
- Dual credit (concurrent enrollment); and/or
- College Board Advanced Placement (AP)

Program and Course Articulation

A key component of Tech Prep is program articulation, which is a planned process linking educational institutions and educational experiences to assist students in making a smooth transition from one level of education to another without experiencing delays or duplication in learning.

A program articulation agreement is a signed document that indicates the specific responsibilities of the secondary school, the postsecondary institution, and the student. The agreement also includes an outline of a [Recommended High School Graduation Plan](#) and a two-year degree or certificate. Together these are called a 6-year or Tech Prep plan.

Within articulated Tech Prep programs are articulated courses, high school courses that contain the same course content as an equivalent college course, and for which a postsecondary institution has agreed to award college credit if the student meets requirements outlined in the course articulation agreement, either through the Statewide Articulation Program or in a local articulation agreement.

What options are available to high school Tech Prep program participants after high school graduation?

Tech Prep in secondary schools is a college-preparatory program for technical careers that prepares high school participants for success. Tech Prep provides:

- A head start in a two-year associate of applied science degree or apprenticeship program;
- A solid basis for baccalaureate study; and
- The ability to apply technical skills for immediate entry-level employment after high school while also attending college.



How are Tech Prep programs different from other career and technical programs?

The main difference is that all Tech Prep programs are college-preparatory, designed to prepare students to continue in a related program of study at a two-year college. Tech Prep high school course sequences prepare students for continuation in many related postsecondary Tech Prep associate of applied science degree programs.

Tech Prep is college prep for technical careers.

Other career and technical course sequences may prepare students for college or may prepare students to enter the work force or the military after high school graduation.

Tech Prep and High School Graduation Plans

Graduation Plan	Minimum Program	Recommended HS Program (RHSP)**	Distinguished Achievement Program (DAP)**
Tech Prep	Not recommended	Recommended A Tech Prep student should complete as many courses in the RHSP as possible.	Encouraged Most Tech Prep articulated courses* with a grade of 3.0 or higher count as DAP advanced measures.

*Statewide-articulated courses may be academic (for example, Principles of Technology) or technical (Career and Technology courses). In specific instances, colleges may award academic transfer credit for statewide-articulated courses.

**Tech Prep students completing the RHSP or DAP also meet criteria for recognition as Texas Scholars.

Tech Prep Legislation

Tech Prep is a federal education initiative described and funded by the Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act. Initially authorized in 1990, the Tech Prep Education Act was reauthorized in 1998, and in the following year the Texas state legislature passed HB 2401, which describes Tech Prep in Texas.

Tech Prep legislation calls for the development of secondary and postsecondary programs of study that are linked and that provide opportunities to prepare for employment in jobs that require highly skilled two-year college graduates.

The legislation is in response to advances in technology that have changed the workplace in a dramatic way. Students graduating from high school need highly technical skills to be competitive in the job market – and up to 85% of all jobs will require at least two years of education beyond high school.

- [Federal legislation](#) (reference Public Law 105-332)
- [State legislation](#) (reference HR 2401 76th Regular Session 1999)

- [Tech Prep Fact Sheet](#) (US Dept. of Education)
- [Dual Credit information](#) (US Dept of Education)

Texas has [26 regional consortia](#) that provide information to students, and coordinate Tech Prep program development and related services among school districts and two-year colleges. Federal funds flow to consortia of schools and colleges from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in partnership with the Texas Education Agency.

Tech Prep includes the following key components:

- 6-year educational plans composed of secondary programs of study articulated with technical programs at two-year colleges;
- Academic and technical concepts taught in context;
- Career guidance and counseling;
- Joint staff development activities for secondary and postsecondary teachers, counselors and administrators;
- Joint state agency approval process for Tech Prep programs (6-year plans); and
- A high school transcript code for articulated courses (letter "A") and a PEIMS code to identify secondary students electing to participate in Tech Prep programs.

Tech Prep Programs (6-year educational plans)

Tech Prep programs prepare today's youth for high-demand technical careers by offering a focused, sequenced program of secondary and postsecondary study consisting of a four-year high school graduation plan, based on the [Recommended High School Program](#), and a two-year associate of applied science (AAS) degree plan (or two-year postsecondary apprenticeship program).

Known as 6-year plans (4+2), Tech Prep educational plans may also include provisions for continuation for a baccalaureate degree (4+2+2) and/or enhanced opportunities in military service.

The high school graduation plan includes two or more career and technology courses totaling three or more high school credits. One or more of these career and technology courses is eligible for college credit either through course articulation or dual credit.

- Click here to see a [sample Tech Prep program \(PDF\)](#).
- Click here to see a comparison of [ways to earn college credit in high school \(PDF\)](#).

The 6-year program of study is supported by career guidance and counseling and teacher and counselor staff development activities to help ensure success of Tech Prep program participants. Sample programs of study can be found at [AchieveTexas.org](#).

Tech Prep Program Approval Process

Tech Prep programs are developed jointly by participating high schools and colleges and are approved by the Texas Education Agency and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

The Tech Prep program approval process is described in the Coordinating Board's [Guidelines for Instructional Programs in Workforce Education \(GIPWE\), Part II \(PDF\)](#). Schools and colleges should contact your [regional Tech Prep consortium director](#) for assistance in this process.