



# Texas Southmost College

TRADITION • INNOVATION • OPPORTUNITY

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 7, 2014

Contact: Max Roca

956.295.3376

max.roca@tsc.edu

### **Texas Southmost College to Serve as ECHS Higher Education Partner**

**(BROWNSVILLE) March 7, 2014** – Texas Southmost College (TSC) will be serving as a higher education partner in collaboration with the Brownsville Independent School District (BISD) as it moves to implement five early college high schools.

The Texas Education Agency’s (TEA) Commissioner of Education Michael Williams recently announced final approval of Early College High School (ECHS) designations for the 2014-2015 school year, including five within the BISD: Homer Hanna, James Pace, Lopez, Simon Rivera and Veterans Memorial.

Through a joint proposal submitted to TEA, the BISD will be partnering with TSC to provide dual credit opportunities for high school students, at no cost to students. High school students will have the opportunity to earn a high school diploma and either an associate degree or up to 60 college credits. This initiative will increase college awareness and participation, while reducing barriers to college access.

“We are very excited to learn of these expanded higher education opportunities. TSC has been offering dual credit opportunities to high school students attending the BISD, and other school districts located within the College’s service area, since the opening of the College in the 2013 fall semester—at no cost to students because TSC has chosen to waive tuition for dual credit courses,” stated Dr. Lily F. Tercero, President of Texas Southmost College, “This model will create an increased college-going culture at the BISD that will benefit students, their families and the community-at-large.”

The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board’s (THECB) rules generally limit enrollment in dual credit courses to students in the eleventh and/or twelfth grade (if the student meets certain eligibility requirements) and limits high school students to enrollment in no more than two dual credit courses per semester. According to the Texas Education Agency, designated ECHS campuses may request an exemption through the THECB for these dual credit restrictions, after the ECHS has received approval from TEA. If the exemption is granted, high school students have the opportunity to enroll in more than

two dual credit courses per semester and to enroll in dual credit coursework with freshman or sophomore standing.

TSC will continue to work closely with the BISD in the coming months as it moves to formalize its newly designated Early College High Schools.

**About Texas Southmost College**

Originally established in 1926, [Texas Southmost College](#) currently offers the first two years toward a bachelor's degree, along with career and technical education leading to certificates and associate degrees, college preparatory studies to prepare students for college-level work, workforce training, and continuing education. TSC is in the process of terminating a 20-year contractual arrangement with the UT System and became independently operational in the fall of 2013