



PBIZ

PERMIAN BASIN INNOVATION ZONE

Annual Report

2024-2025

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New Leadership, Renewed Vision

A Message from Jordan Clack

Director of the Permian Basin Innovation Zone (PBIZ)

I am honored to introduce myself as the new Director of the Permian Basin Innovation Zone. My name is Jordan Clack, and I am thrilled to step into this role, joining a community that is deeply committed to creating transformative educational and workforce opportunities for our students.

I come to PBIZ with a strong background in both education and industry. For over eight years, I taught a range of subjects at Crane Independent School District, including agriculture, welding, and ESL, where I witnessed firsthand the impact that career-connected learning can have on students' futures. Before transitioning to education, I worked at Key Energy Services, where I gained valuable experience in operations, safety, and management. This experience has shaped my understanding of what it takes to prepare students for careers in our region's key industries.

But more than my professional background, my connection to the community truly fuels my passion for this work. I live in Crane, and I've dedicated my career to helping students discover pathways to success that align with the unique opportunities available here in the Permian Basin.

As we embark on this new chapter, my focus will be on:

- **Expanding opportunities:** The Permian Basin Innovation Zone (PBIZ) is designed to give students meaningful exposure to high-wage, high-demand, high-skill career pathways right here in the Permian Basin. Our four college- and career-focused pathways are carefully aligned with regional workforce needs, ensuring students are preparing for real opportunities in their communities. Through partnerships with industry experts, PBIZ students begin engaging with hands-on, real-world experiences as early as their first year in the program. This early exposure not only builds relevant skills but also helps students better understand the career paths their chosen field can offer.
- **Family & Student Engagement:** Gaining parent support is a top priority for the continued success of PBIZ. I strongly believe that when parents are actively involved in their child's education, students are more likely to thrive. To help foster that connection, I plan to host PBIZ Parent Nights in each district early in the school year. These events will give families a chance to learn more about the program, connect with educators, and actively engage in their student's learning journey—all while deepening their understanding of what PBIZ offers.
- **Fostering Collaboration Across PBIZ Districts:** For the Permian Basin Innovation Zone (PBIZ) to thrive, it's essential that all partner districts are fully engaged and committed to building a shared culture of innovation. To support this, I plan to host monthly meetings with district leaders to ensure open communication, alignment, and transparency across all PBIZ initiatives. Each district plays a vital role and has ownership of its pathway(s), and it's important that every partner feels valued, heard, and empowered to shape the direction of the program.

I am excited to meet each of you, learn from your insights, and work together to build on the strong foundation already established. **Thank you for your continued support of PBIZ and for your unwavering commitment to the future of our students and our region.**

Warm Regards,

Jordan Clack

Jordan Clack



Who We Are

Launched in Fall 2023, the Permian Basin Innovation Zone represents a groundbreaking collaboration aimed at transforming educational and career opportunities for students in the Permian Basin. Created in collaboration with the Education Partnership of the Permian Basin (EPPB), the PBIZ is dedicated to creating high-quality college and career pathways that align with regional workforce needs for rural students in the region.



As the coordinating entity, the Education Partnership of the Permian Basin (EPPB) plays a central role in convening stakeholders, aligning strategic priorities, and sustaining the regional vision of PBIZ.

With deep ties to local school districts, higher education institutions, workforce leaders, and philanthropic partners, EPPB ensures that PBIZ remains rooted in community needs while driving innovation across rural West Texas. EPPB supports the cross-sector collaboration, manages implementation logistics, and stewards the long-term sustainability of this regional effort.

Our Mission

To build a space where small, rural districts working together, embodying the heart and strength of rural Texas, to compete, prepare and support students, educators, and communities in the creation of a vibrant and successful Permian Basin regional economy.

Our Vision

Opportunity, Access, Experience and Outcomes for All

The Academies

Career Pathways of the PBIZ



Spark Up

Advanced Manufacturing Academy

- **Hosted by:** Crane ISD, GFR ISD
- **Instructors:** Buck Love, Magnum Cates
- **Certifications:** AWS D1.1 - Structural Steel: 2F, 4F, AWS D9.1 - Sheet Metal: 2F, 4F, API 1104 Welding Pipelines and Related Facilities, Level 1 General Welder Certificate (upon completion of the six college courses)



Inspire Next

Education Academy

- **Hosted by:** Crane ISD
- **Instructor:** Daisy Jefferies
- **Certifications:** Education Aide I, Associate of Art in Teaching



Future Flow

Energy & Natural Resource Academy

- **Hosted by:** McCamey ISD
- **Instructor:** Kyle Hartman



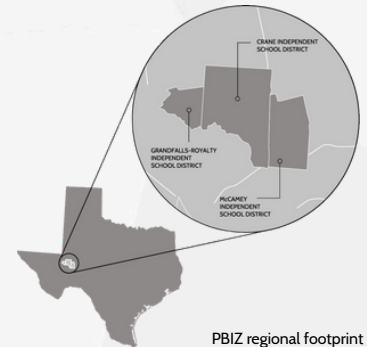
Future Med

Healthcare Academy

- **Hosted by:** McCamey ISD
- **Instructors:** Amanda Griswold, Brooklynne Barnes
- **Certifications:** Certified Nursing Assistant, ECG/EKG, Certified Medical Assistant

A Texas Rural Collaborative

PBIZ is a designated Texas Rural Pathway Excellence Partnership (R-PEP) located in the Texas' Permian Basin region. PBIZ received this designation in spring of 2023.



Collaborative Members

Coordinating Entity

- Education Partnership of the Permian Basin

K-12 Districts

- Crane ISD
- Grandfalls-Royalty ISD
- McCamey ISD

Institutions of Higher Education

- Odessa College
- Texas Tech Health Sciences Center
- University of Texas Permian Basin

Community Partners

- Blakely Construction
- Premier Energy
- McCamey County Hospital
- NextEra Energy

Agencies

- ESC Region 18
- ESC Region 15
- Permian Basin Workforce Development Board
- StartUp High
- ACCESS

Technical Assistance

- CareerCraft
- Empower Schools
- Steady State Impact

Who We Serve

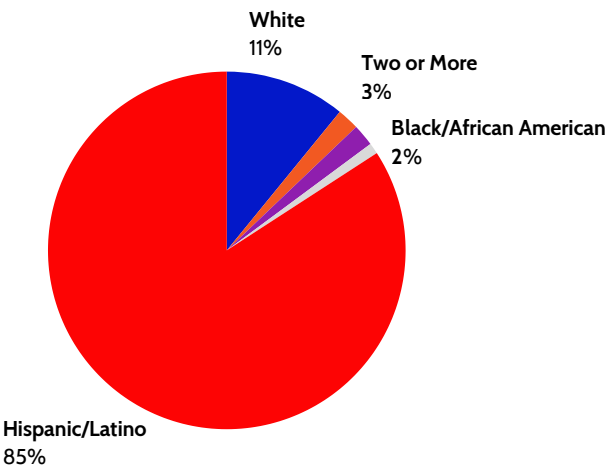
Economic Diversity

During the 2024-2025 school year, 54% of students enrolled in the PBIZ students were Economically Disadvantaged.

Race and Ethnicity

Crane ISD

Total District Enrollment:
1233

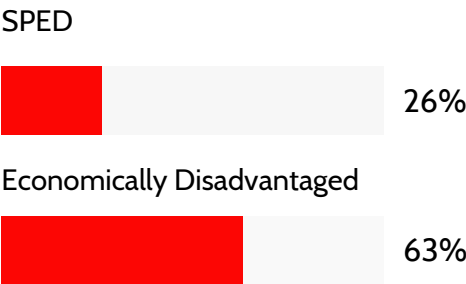
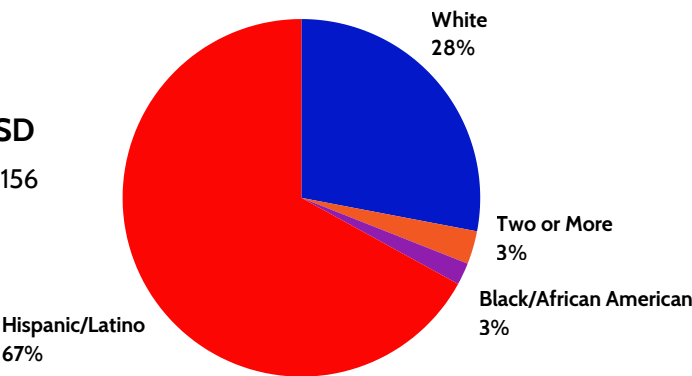


Special Populations



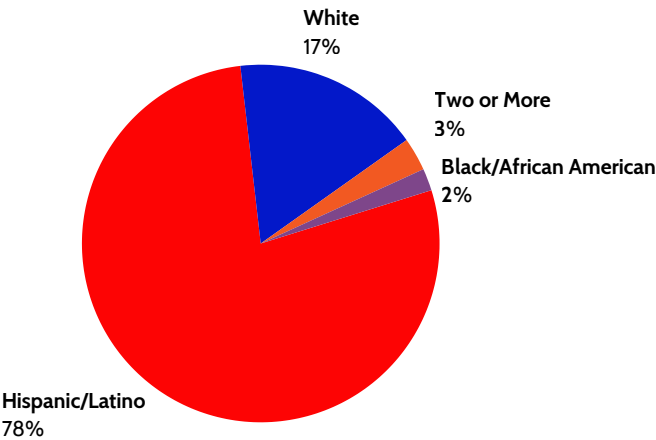
Grandfalls-Royalty ISD

Total District Enrollment: 156



McCamey ISD

Total District Enrollment:
480

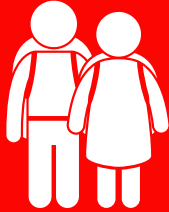


Source: txschools.gov
Note: The demographics above represent the entire student population of each district.

PBIZ By the Numbers

2024-2025 Impact in Focus

138



Total students enrolled in a PBIZ pathway

200+



Students engaged in work-based learning



\$500,000

In grants secured to fund the future of work in the Permian Basin

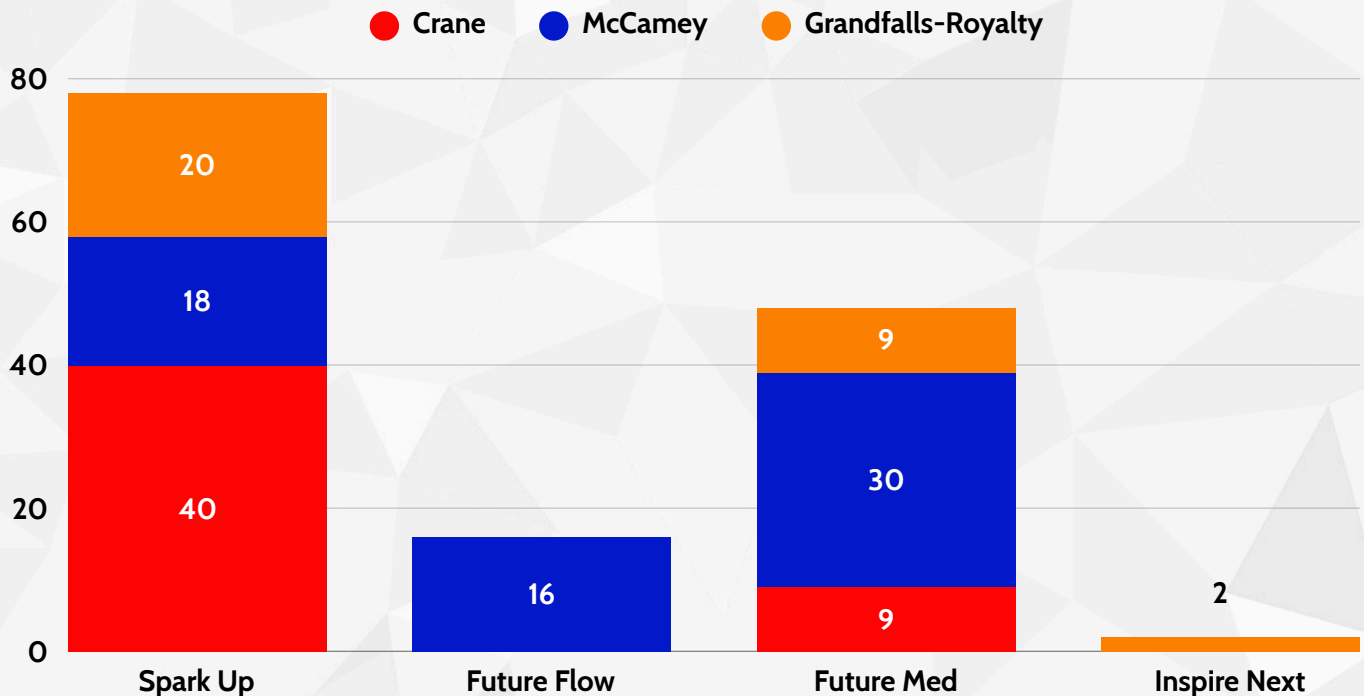
4

Industry-aligned pathways across multiple campuses

with the expansion of a new pathway this year

Looking Ahead: Enrollment for the Upcoming Year

2025-2026 Student Participation by District



Building the PBIZ

School Year 2024-2025 Momentum and Milestones



Major Grant Wins: Gates Foundation and Texas Regional Pathways Network (TRPN) Fuel Growth



New Pathway Launch: Future Flow Energy and Natural Resource Academy



Showcasing Innovation: October 2024 PBIZ Site Visit



National Recognition: Aurora Institute Presentation



Pathway Branding: Elevating our Identity



Powerful Partnerships: Collaborating with NextEra Energy



Connecting Classrooms to Careers: Industry Days and Student Recruitment



Leadership Update: Welcoming New PBIZ Director

Growing with a Purpose

How PBIZ strengthened and expanded programming.

Launch of Future Flow, the Energy and Natural Resource Academy

Preparing Students for High-Wage Careers in a Key Regional Industry

In direct response to the economic and workforce needs of the Permian Basin, PBIZ launched the Future Flow Energy and Natural Resource Academy (Future Flow) to prepare students for high-demand careers in the Energy and Natural Resource career strand. The academy curriculum introduces students to key aspects of the oil and gas industry, including economics, processing, refining, and distribution. Students complete a four-course sequence that begins with Oil and Gas Production I and concludes with a Practicum in Energy, providing them with both foundational knowledge and real-world experience. **Career options range from entry-level roles like refinery operator and rigger to high-wage careers such as petroleum engineers and chemical engineers, with some median salaries exceeding \$130,000 depending on education and certification levels.**

PBIZ is enthusiastic about the future of this pathway and is actively exploring new partnerships with local oil and gas employers. These collaborations will expand opportunities for mentorship, internships, and hands-on learning experiences. Working alongside industry leaders will help ensure that the Energy and Natural Resource pathway continues to evolve in alignment with regional needs and provides students with a strong launchpad into the workforce or higher education.

Strengthening Our Student Pipeline

Student Interest in Pathways

As PBIZ closes out the 2024–25 school year, enrollment numbers for 2025–26 show exciting momentum and growth across our partner districts. A total of 144 students are projected to enroll, with nearly 40 advancing into Welding 2 and Welding 3 and over 30 pursuing health science pathways such as CNA and Medical Terminology. These numbers demonstrate the strength of our existing programs and the increasing demand for pathways that connect students directly to regional workforce opportunities. With this strong foundation, PBIZ is well positioned to create even more opportunities for students in the year ahead.

Grant Investment

Gates and Texas Regional Pathways Network (TRPN) Grants Fuel Innovation

This year marked a major milestone in external investment, with PBIZ securing two transformative grants: the Gates Foundation grant and the Texas Rural Pathways Network (TRPN) grant. These funding opportunities not only reflect confidence in the PBIZ model but also provide critical resources to strengthen and expand its work.

The Gates Foundation grant, awarded to EPPB and supporting the PBIZ, focuses on two key strategies: building robust data infrastructure and improving the quality of student advising. These efforts will help PBIZ track student outcomes more effectively, inform continuous improvement, and ensure every student receives personalized guidance aligned to their goals. The TRPN grant, meanwhile, includes a strong focus on expanding Future Flow Academy, with targeted support to deepen work-based learning, industry engagement, and postsecondary alignment within the pathway. Together, these investments enhance PBIZ's capacity to deliver on its promise of preparing rural students for success in college, career, and life.

Rural Healthcare Day

Direct Admissions UTPB

UT Permian Basin is committed to serving this region and is focused on filling workforce gaps. Together, we can make a stronger impact in reaching these goals. We are grateful for our work with PBIZ, a truly innovative and dedicated partner.

-Dr. Becky Spurlock



Voices from the PBIZ

Student and Educator Impact



For Welding Pathway teacher **Magnum Cates**, the Permian Basin Innovation Zone has been transformative. *"PBIZ has helped pool resources from multiple school districts. That has allowed my program and students to flourish,"* he explained.

With access to better equipment and supplies, Cates has been able to reach more students and provide hands-on experiences that were once out of reach. He emphasized that the difference lies in PBIZ's structure: the model brings stronger funding and greater coordination than traditional classrooms or CTE programs.

One moment stood out this year as a clear reminder of PBIZ's impact. Through grant funding, his program was able to acquire multiple pieces of advanced equipment that were essential to teaching upper-level welding courses. **"We were only able to do that through the PBIZ funding,"** he shared.

The results speak for themselves: many of Cates' students have already earned industry-recognized certifications, a milestone that directly connects them to workforce opportunities. For him, PBIZ is not only about better teaching conditions. It's about ensuring his students are equipped with the skills and confidence to succeed beyond high school.

We could not afford to offer our students these incredible options due to our limited resources. The opportunity we have because of the partnership with other districts and PBIZ coordinating the districts' efforts is a great way for our students in small districts to gain access to a top-notch educational experience for a career and future employment.

-Carlos Contreras
Superintendent Grandfalls-Royalty ISD



Meet Maritza Tarin

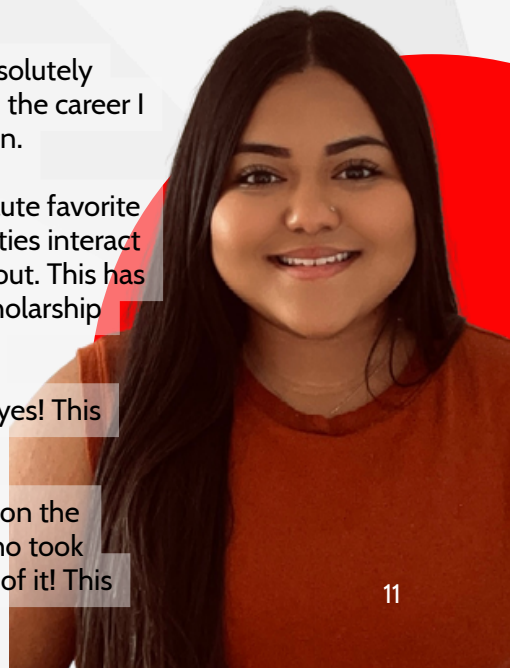
Crane ISD Student | Future Med Scholar

Being a part of this program has truly been a blessing in my life! The PBIZ pathway absolutely changed the way I view my future by giving me the opportunity to get a head start on the career I want to pursue. Also, this program allows me to see if this is truly what I'm interested in.

There are many parts of this program that have been my favorite, but I'd say my absolute favorite is being able to go to the career fairs, where organizations, colleges, and even universities interact with students to give more insight into what the career and college experience are about. This has helped me tremendously in deciding where I'd like to go to college, understanding scholarship opportunities, and gaining more knowledge about the specific field I want to work in.

If another student were to come and ask me about joining PBIZ, I'd automatically say yes! This program has so many benefits not only for now but also for your future.

There are so many moments I have had that made me proud of myself, but this year, on the second day of school, we had to go over some Medical Terminology. The few of us who took Principles of Health and Medical Terminology already knew the answers to quite a bit of it! This definitely made me proud of myself and my friends in the program.



Partnership and Engagement

Community in Action

PBIZ Site Visit Oct 9-10

Showcasing Innovation in College and Career Pathways

In October 2024, PBIZ hosted a two-day site visit that brought together more than 35 attendees including funders, district leaders, higher education representatives, industry partners, and state agency staff. The visit offered guests a first-hand look at the PBIZ model in action. Visitors toured classrooms, observed pathway instruction, and heard directly from students about their experiences in their pathways. One of the most powerful moments came during the student panel, where learners shared how their pathways shaped their confidence, interests, and future aspirations. Educators and district leaders also spoke about the design and evolution of PBIZ, including both the challenges faced and the progress made over the year.

This visit helped spark deeper interest in regional collaboration and affirmed the importance of sustained investment in rural talent development. The experience elevated PBIZ's visibility across the state and created opportunities for new partnerships. It also highlighted the strength of student voice and community leadership in shaping educational innovation in the Permian Basin.



Building a Movement

27

Visiting organizations came to learn from the PBIZ



Bringing the PBIZ to a National Audience

Aurora Institute Symposium

PBIZ had the honor of presenting at the 2024 Aurora Institute Symposium, a nationally recognized gathering focused on personalized learning and system transformation. The presentation spotlighted how the PBIZ model creates strong, aligned pathways from high school to college and career by combining district innovation, higher education alignment, and regional workforce partnerships. Presenters shared the PBIZ approach to dual credit, credential attainment, structured advising, and real-world learning experiences. The audience included educators and leaders from across the country who expressed strong interest in adapting aspects of the PBIZ model in their own communities.

Being selected to present at the Aurora Institute marked a key milestone for PBIZ, allowing the team to contribute to national conversations about rural innovation, equitable access, and cross-sector collaboration. The recognition also underscored the strength of the Rural Pathways Excellence Partnership (R-PEP) model and the promise it holds for small communities looking to create scalable, student-centered systems of support.



Elevating Student Voices



PBIZ Students Dora Parada and Jacelyn Vasquez

presented the session
*Empowering Rural Futures: Student Perspectives
on Equitable Solutions for Rural Education*

Industry Days

Connecting Students to Real-World Career Experiences

This year, PBIZ prioritized student exposure to real-world careers by hosting a series of Industry Days across participating campuses. These events connected students with professionals in fields like healthcare, welding, energy, education, and public service. Students rotated through hands-on activities, equipment demonstrations, and Q&A sessions with industry mentors. Many students reported that these experiences helped them understand what different jobs look like in practice and what steps they need to take to pursue them.

Industry Days are more than just a career fair. They are intentionally designed to bring local and regional workforce partners into the learning environment and to ground career exploration in authentic interaction. These events build student confidence, create connections between academic learning and future goals, and help employers see the potential in the next generation of talent. The success of this year's Industry Days has encouraged PBIZ to expand this effort and deepen employer partnerships moving forward.



Career Connected Learning

100



Students from across the Permian Basin participating in experiential learning experiences with regional employers

NextEra Energy Planning

Laying the Foundation for Renewable Energy Pathways

PBIZ began planning a strategic partnership with NextEra Energy, a national leader in renewable energy. The collaboration is focused on developing a Renewable Energy academy that will prepare students for careers in wind, solar, energy storage, and other sustainable technologies. This work reflects both the evolving energy economy of the Permian Basin and PBIZ's commitment to providing students with future-ready skills. Early conversations have focused on curriculum alignment, credential opportunities, and on-site learning experiences that reflect the latest advancements in clean energy.

As the need for renewable energy workers continues to grow, this partnership will help students understand both the purpose and potential of careers in sustainability. It also provides PBIZ the chance to lead in a new sector while continuing to build high-quality, hands-on programming tied to regional opportunity. The partnership is in its early stages, but the long-term vision is clear: to create a pipeline of students who are prepared to power the future.



Looking Ahead

What's Next for PBIZ

To strengthen engagement and increase visibility, PBIZ launched a rebranding initiative that introduces a refreshed look and feel across its programs. This effort includes updated logos, marketing materials, and a shift in language from “pathways” to “academies.” The term “academy” fosters a stronger sense of identity, belonging, and purpose, helping students see themselves not just as participants but as members of a focused learning community with shared goals and aspirations.



1

Reimagining Education

Rebranding and Rehousing the Education Pathway

The Education pathway has provided students with valuable early experiences in teaching and leadership. However, enrollment has remained lower than expected. To address this, the PBIZ is rebranding the pathway and changing its host campus to Grandfalls-Royalty.

The refreshed message will highlight the versatility of the program and its connection to multiple career fields, including education, psychology, human development, law, and youth leadership. We will also work with students, teachers, and counselors to better understand what draws students to this pathway and what might make it more appealing. The goal is to ensure the pathway reaches more students who are passionate about helping others and shaping the next generation.

A Fresh Look

Launching New PBIZ Pathway Branding

This rebrand is designed to deepen student connection, improve clarity in communication with families, and elevate the overall perception of each academy. As part of this initiative, PBIZ will also introduce Academy Ambassadors, student leaders who will represent their academies, share their experiences with prospective students and families, and support peer engagement. Together, these changes aim to build a stronger culture around each academy and reinforce the value of college and career preparation across the PBIZ.

2

New Look, Same Mission

School year 2025-2026 will introduce new ways for us to engage with students and build the PBIZ community. Academy Ambassadors will get the opportunity to make their mark by proposing student swag and materials that all PBIZ members can sport.



Powering Up

Exploring a Renewable Energy Pathway

The region is now embracing not only oil and gas but also wind, solar, and other sustainable energy sources. The PBIZ is exploring the development of a Renewable Energy pathway for the 2026–2027 school year to meet this growing demand. This new pathway would prepare students for high-demand careers in clean energy technologies, grid infrastructure, and systems engineering.

We have already begun early conversations with NextEra Energy, a key renewable energy partner in the region, to explore how students can gain real-world exposure to energy operations. These discussions will help shape the design of the pathway and ensure it reflects the skills and certifications needed by local employers. In the coming year, we will continue identifying potential industry partners, postsecondary credentials, and curriculum resources to lay the foundation for a successful launch.

3

4

Deepening Workforce Ties

Expanding Industry Partnerships

The PBIZ was created to bridge the gap between education and the workforce. As we look to the future, we will focus on expanding our network of industry partners across all four existing pathways, which include Education, Healthcare, Oil and Gas, and Welding. These relationships will provide more students with access to hands-on internships, mentorship

programs, job site visits, and career-informed instruction. We are reaching out to new employers who are interested in shaping the region's future workforce. By involving them in pathway development and classroom experiences, we can ensure that students graduate with skills and knowledge that lead to local career opportunities.

In Gratitude

Partners and Key Supporters 24-25

School Superintendents

Grandfalls-Royalty ISD: Carlos Contreras

Crane ISD: Roy Garcia

McCamey ISD: Michael Valencia

EPPB Executive Director

Shannon Torres

Institutions of Higher Education

Odessa College

University of Texas Permian Basin

Texas Tech Health Sciences Center

EPPB Board

Lorraine Perryman

Patrick Canty

Renee Henderson Earls

Christine Gentry Foreman

Brian Stubbs

Adrian Vega

Ashely Colquitt

Adrian Carrasco

Industry Partners

Blakely Construction

Premier Energy

McCamey County Hospital

NextEra Energy

Agencies

ACCESS

ESC 18

ESC 15

StartUp High

Permian Basin Workforce Development Board

PBIZ Advisory Board

Carlos Contreras

Roy Garcia

Michael Valencia

Amanda Griswold

JR Torrez

Dr. Becky Spurlock

Brian Stubbs

Technical Assistance Providers

CareerCraft

Empower Schools

Steady State Impact

Special Thanks

Thank you to our leaders who supported the PBIZ and led us through integral milestones, including launching our inaugural year. Congratulations on everything you have accomplished. We continue to count on your support as you lead the region in new and exciting ways.

Sara Saleem

Founding Director

Adrian Vega

Former EPPB Executive Director

Adrian Carrasco

Former EPPB Interim Executive Director

Our work would not be possible without the support of the members of the Crane ISD, Grandfalls-Royalty ISD, and McCamey ISD School Boards.

Thank you for partnering for a better Permian Basin.





EMBODYING THE HEART AND STRENGTH OF RURAL TEXAS

LEARN MORE

pbiz.org