

# Empowered for Success

A College and Career Newsletter for the Gulf Coast

Issue 34 | March 2013

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## Online Resources: AVATAR

Online Resources: AVATAR  
New K - 12 Classroom Resources

[AVATAR](#) (Academic Vertical Alignment Training and Renewal), a project funded by the [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board](#) (THECB) and implemented by the [North Texas Regional P-16 Council](#) and the [University of North Texas](#), has contributed additional K-12 resources to the TX CCRN website.

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**Initiatives & Resources**

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by Content Area

by Grade Level

### Initiatives and Resources: Region: Metroplex

Regional College Readiness Special Advisors: Barbara Lerner and Debra Kiesel

The resources presented on this page were submitted by AVATAR (Academic Vertical Alignment Training And Renewal): a project funded by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board and implemented by the North Texas Regional P-16 Council and the University of North Texas.

Resource	Content Area	Grade Level	Type/Description
"Why Students Fail in College" (PPT)	Science	Postsecondary	Article; submitted by AVATAR
ACCUPLACER HANDOUT	Math English/Language Arts	Postsecondary	Article; submitted by AVATAR
STAAR Chemistry Assessment (PPT)	Science	Secondary	Article; submitted by AVATAR

The

scope of some of the resources contributed by AVATAR includes the following:

- [Local Data Report: Amarillo, Canyon and Borger High School](#)
- [Osmosis Lesson Plan](#)
- [STAAR English III Assessment](#)

For a complete list, visit the [Metroplex Region](#) Resources on our website.

Do you have resources that your administrators or educators are using to prepare their students to be college and career ready? Add to them our archives. Email the resources and a brief description to TX CCRN Communications Officer [Amy Williams](#).

## Texas College and Career Readiness

### Profile Planning Guide

[The Texas College and Career Readiness Profile Planning Guide](#) is a tool designed to help educators cultivate a college- and career-ready culture among students. It was developed by a partnership between [Region XIII Education Service Center](#) (ESC) and [Austin Community College](#) and is supported, in part, by a [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board](#) College Readiness Initiatives Grant.

The Profile Planning Guide shows teachers, administrators, counselors and stakeholders what college and career readiness means, so that a basic framework of reference can be used and understood across the state. Data is gathered from each school or district to help determine college and career readiness standing and an effective plan is put in place to carry out college and career (CCR) readiness progress.

The Profile Planning Guide uses interactive questions or prompts that are answered by users who are directly in contact with students. This helps participating schools further assess the current level of their CCR standing. The information gained from the prompts helps identify gaps between perceived and actual CCR implementation within the school so that an appropriate action plan can be developed.

Regional College Readiness Special Advisor for regions 12 and 13, Gary Madsen, explains additional ways the Profile Planning Guide can be available: "ESCs are including the Profile Tool as part of a College and Career Readiness package for school districts. This seems to be the most popular at the present time and has generated the most interest from school districts."

Currently, there are 19 ESCs trained to offer the program to districts and schools, which has led to approximately 35 districts in Texas that are implementing the Profile Planning Guide.

For more information on the Texas College and Career Readiness Profile Planning Guide, visit [www.txccrn.uh.edu](http://www.txccrn.uh.edu) or contact your [ESC](#).

## University of Houston Partnership with Alief ISD



Over the past two years, much work has been done to increase the vertical alignment among independent school districts (ISD) and sister colleges in the greater Houston area. This goal was initiated by the [University of Houston](#) (UH) at the 2011 Education Leadership Summit.

Following the summit, UH, the [Houston Community College](#) (HCC) and the [Lone Star College System](#) (LSC) partnered with [Alief ISD](#) in an effort to continue furthering their goal. This spring, UH sent two professors to Alief ISD's [Kerr High School](#) to help teachers develop vertically aligned curriculum.

Leigh Hollyer, a UH math lecturer, has been working with Tyra Walker, Alief ISD director of the P-16 council, to equip Kerr High School math teachers with resources to teach curriculum that it is aligned with the entrance programs of colleges and universities.

In February, Hollyer met with math teachers to introduce [GeoGebra](#), an open-source software designed for students and teachers. The software combines Algebraic, Geometrical and Calculus concepts. She delivered a presentation that highlighted important aspects of the software. At the end of the presentation, educators had the skills to easily use GeoGebra as well as the knowledge to demonstrate to their students the benefits of using the software. GeoGebra is available to anyone for [preview](#) or [download](#).

Elizabeth Kessler, Ph.D., UH Department of English Lower Division Studies administrator, accompanied Hollyer to the Kerr High School meeting and met with the English department to answer an important question: How can teachers help students be better prepared to move into English at the community college and university levels .

Higher education and secondary English educators discussed the course syllabi used in the college entrance courses, English 1303 and 1304, in an effort to help identify differences of the learning outcomes and core curricula of the two groups. Senior high school courses focus on composition and literary-based writing. In contrast, university freshman courses focus on expository and narrative

essays, rhetorical analysis, critical thinking and the research paper. These differences were pointed out to both sides of the discussion, and copies of syllabi and a college freshman-level text were given to high school educators for resource purposes.

In the future, Kessler and the educators who met with her hope to further their work by organizing trips where high school teachers can observe what occurs in the college freshman classroom.

For more information about how entry-level college classes operate, please contact [Elizabeth Kessler](#). If you would like to learn more about GeoGebra, or would like to schedule a meeting where GeoGebra material is presented to educators in your area, please contact [Leigh Hollyer](#).

## Professional Development Calendar

### Region 4

April 11

[A Framework for Increasing Rigor in the Classroom \(TOT\)](#)

All Grades  
8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

April 18

[Developing Early Language Skills as a Route to Improved Reading](#)

Grades K – 3  
8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

### Region 5

April 9

[CSCOPE Plan: Math Planning Lessons with Alignment and Networking](#)

Grade 6 – 12  
8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

April 17

[CSCOPE PLAN: ELA/Social Studies Planning Lessons with Alignment and Networking](#)

Grades 3 – 5  
8:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

### Region 6

April 2

[CSCOPE – Free Apps and Websites for Teachers](#)

All Grades  
9 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

April 11

[CSCOPE Science Six Weeks Content Exploration](#)

Grades 9 – 11  
9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

*Empowered for Success* is a monthly newsletter focused on college and career readiness in the Gulf Coast region.

The newsletter is made possible by a University of Houston grant from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

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