

TEXAS CITY INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TCISD opens county's first industrial trades center

TEXAS CITY – The Texas City ISD Industrial Trades Center is coming to life as nearly 200 career and technical education students continue their training in the new facility, which is the first of its kind in Galveston County. The community can tour the new building, test the simulators and talk to students on March 9 from 5 to 7 p.m.

Students at both La Marque High School and Texas City High School are learning trades at the ITC along with earning industry certifications. The passage of House Bill 5 by the Texas Legislature two years ago provided key flexibility to high school graduation requirements, allowing school districts to once again offer skilled craft training electives for students. This training in skilled crafts has been missing in public schools for more than two decades.

“Our goal in TCISD is to become the skilled craft training pipeline for Galveston County and the greater Gulf Coast areas,” said TCISD Superintendent of Schools Dr. Cynthia Lusignolo. “We are exceedingly thankful to be able to provide this level of training for our students. Our mission is to launch these students into high skill, high wage, high demand positions that will help secure a high quality of life for them and their families.”

The Texas City and Gulf Coast counties offer prime job markets for skilled workers in the manufacturing, petroleum, and maritime industries. With the high number of skilled laborers approaching retirement age, and a lack of skilled workers to follow, high school graduates with certifications from the TCISD ITC will help fill the workforce shortage within these prosperous industries.

While the building is just opening, students have been taking coursework using the NCCER (National Center for Construction Education and Research) core curriculum. Students have completed the necessary safety work and are more than ready for the hands-on instruction that will continue at the ITC.

The following trades and certifications are as follows: Maritime (OSHA, NCCER), Construction Trades (OSHA, NCCER), Welding (OSHA, NCCER, AWS), Pipefitting (OSHA, NCER), Instrumentation and Electrical (OSHA, NCCER) and Machinist (NCCER). All students in the programs will have an opportunity to receive certifications on heavy equipment simulators including mobile crane, excavator, bull dozer and fork lift.

The development of the ITC has been due to cooperation and partnership with local businesses, industry and community college. “The TCISD Industrial Trades Center is the result of a forward looking collaborative effort to prepare local high school students with the craft skills needed to pursue careers with many local industrial sites and contractor

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companies,” said Rich Hernandez, Marathon GBR General Manager and ITC Advisory Council Chairman. “We are blessed to live in an area with exciting job opportunities for craft workers with the right skill sets. The ITC will help its graduates start on the path to developing the skills needed to pursue these careers.”

Opportunities for students to jump start their college careers have been established for several years. Now the same types of opportunities are available for students to prepare them for entry into high-skilled, high-demand and high-wage jobs.

“The percent of TCISD students who are economically disadvantaged has been growing steadily over the past several years. Currently, over 70% of our students are classified as such,” said Dr. Lusignolo. “By launching our high school graduates into the lucrative trades, we will be assisting them in providing for the future financial needs of their families. Then, when their children enter our school district, they will not be living in poverty. This will benefit individual families and our community as a whole.”

During the past several years, TCISD has been able to set aside funds designated for capital improvements. Land purchase and construction costs for our new Industrial Trades Center (ITC) will total approximately \$14 million. Through sound fiscal practices, the District was able to move forward with the construction plans for this new facility without asking voters for a tax increase for funding. Community partners have already pledged more than \$750,000 toward startup costs and equipment. An additional \$170,000 per year has been pledged from local partners for maintenance and operations through pennies per man hour program. Additional partnership opportunities to help TCISD ITC students be successful include apprenticeships, job shadowing and student sponsorship, to name a few.

“We are charged with the responsibility for meeting the academic needs of all of our students, and this new facility is one more key component of what we offer as a very well-rounded education for students in TCISD,” said Dr. Lusignolo.

The TCISD ITC is located at 1400 Ninth Avenue North in Texas City. The public can view the programs at the Open House on March 9 from 5 to 7 p.m.