

Education

A well educated and trained population is the foundation for having a responsible, highly developed, and prosperous community. Brownsville is no stranger to this valued piece of truth, which is why it continuously strives to raise the standards and improve the quality of its education system.

The **Brownsville Independent School District (BISD)** is the largest employer in the Rio Grande Valley, with approximately 7,434 employees working for 55 schools serving 48,617 students. In 2008 BISD was the winner of the **Broad Prize for Urban Education**, an annual \$1 million award that honors school districts across the U.S. making the greatest progress in raising student achievement.

Through the hard work and loyal commitment of our educators, 41 schools were awarded **Exemplary and Recognized** honors by the Texas Education Agency in 2009, and now 84% of all BISD schools are rated either Exemplary or Recognized.

In order to more adequately prepare high school students for their next step in life, BISD high schools have integrated six magnet programs in criminal justice, education, engineering, health professions, international business, and fine arts.

Brownsville also has 12 private schools, which include elementary, middle, and high school and which together comprise a student population of 3,356.

Brownsville's private schools also offer an excellent education, with exceptional staff and extraordinary opportunities.

BISD Quick Facts:

- 36 elementary schools, 3 of which just opened for the 2009-2010 school year
- 10 middle schools, plus one under construction expected to open August 2010
- 3 alternative schools, which provide individualized instruction and academic/occupation skills programs for students experiencing difficulties in a traditional secondary school setting
- 5 high schools, including the Early College HighSchool, which enables students to simultaneously earn 60 tuition-free college hours and/or an Associate's Degree and a high school diploma in just four years
- BISD's 6th high school, Veterans Memorial, is currently under construction and is expected to be ready for occupancy in August 2010

The **Brownsville MSA** provides three institutions of higher education and training: *University of Texas at Brownsville*, *Texas Southmost College*, and Texas State Technical College at

Harlingen. One of Brownsville's greatest assets is the University of Texas at Brownsville & Texas Southmost College.

The university and college entered into a partnership in 1991, which ignited an exponential growth in the enrollment for higher education. This institution is the engine of our educated and highly skilled workforce. There was a time when Brownsville residents had to travel elsewhere to pursue a higher education, but that is no longer the case.

Now, people from across the border, as well as other parts of the country, are coming to the southern tip of Texas for the estimable and affordable educational opportunities available here.

UTB/TSC Quick Facts:

- More than 130 undergraduate programs offering certificate, associate, or bachelor's degree
- 24 graduate programs for master's and doctorate degrees
- According to The Hispanic Outlook in Higher Education, UTB/TSC ranks sixth nationally in the number of associate degrees, 25th in number of bachelor's degrees, and 74th in master's degrees awarded to Hispanics
- UTB/TSC is also one of the city's top employers
- Provides educational resources and training to a growing student population of more than 19,000 students
- Since 2000, UTB/TSC's enrollment has experienced an outstanding growth of over 90%, almost doubling the state's university/college growth rate and tripling the national rate