



To the Administrator Addressed

Commissioner Mike Morath

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DATE:	February 28, 2019
SUBJECT:	High School Girls Go CyberStart Initiative
CATEGORY:	Cybersecurity Continued Education and Scholarship Opportunity
NEXT STEPS:	Share with appropriate high school staff

Governor Greg Abbott has [announced](#) that Texas is partnering again with the SANS Institute in the Girls Go CyberStart Initiative (Initiative). The Initiative is designed to encourage young women to become involved in the field of cybersecurity.

The partnership focuses on recruiting female high school students in Texas to compete in the Girls Go CyberStart challenge for prizes and the opportunity for all students in their high school to play CyberStart, an online game for students to discover their talents in cybersecurity and learn more about computer security training.

A new companion program introduced this year, Cyber FastTrack, will allow both male and female college-level students to participate in a separate competition.

Students who excel in both the CyberStart Game and CyberStart Essentials (an online course that extends the learning of CyberStart Game) will be eligible to win \$2.5 million in scholarships for advanced cybersecurity training as well as receive introductions to employers for internships and jobs in the field.

Participating students do not need prior cybersecurity knowledge or IT experience. All that is required is a computer and an Internet connection. As a result of the Initiative's efforts last year, at least ten high school girls from Texas will be eligible this year to receive scholarships to help them pay for college.

Complete details may be found at girlsgocyberstart.org for Girls Go CyberStart and at cyber-fasttrack.org for Cyber FastTrack. High school girls may register for Girls Go CyberStart through March 20, when the games begin. College students may register for Cyber FastTrack through April 5, when the competition begins.

For more information, contact Frosty Walker, CISSP, TEA Chief Information Security Officer at Frosty.Walker@tea.texas.gov or (512) 463-5095.