

REGION VI HEAD START ASSOCIATION
Quarterly Reporting Form



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Position: THSSCO Director

Meeting Date: January 29, 2024

Organization: Texas Head Start State Collaboration Office

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1. President Lopez, Region VI HSA Board & Deana Howell

Reporting Information:

This report reflects the activities and engagement of the THSSCO that relates to activities of the THSSCO Since the October meeting:

PRIORITY 1: Collaborate with state systems to align early care and education services and supports for children and families prenatally to age 5.

Texas Early Learning Collaborative Symposium:

The THSSCO participated in the virtual 2023 Winter Texas Early Learning Collaborative Symposium (TELCS) on December 12 & 13, 2023. The THSSCO presented a power point overview of the work of the collaboration office, national and regional priorities, along with the work and engagement with local and state agency partners, etc. I recruited the Education Service Center, Region 20 Head Start Program to present a video recording on "The Day in the Life of a Head Start Program."

- The TELCS developed a Digital Notebook, which serves as an information and resource guide for the state agencies and programs involved in the symposium, and provided the recordings are resources shared at previous symposiums.

Texas Early Learning Council:

The THSSCO continues to participate as a governor appointed member of the Texas Early Learning Council, to continue to engage in the work of the current Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan and the work of the PDG-B5 grant. The latest meeting took place on January 19, 2024, to discuss and review the updated strategic plan which includes:

Goal 1: Family Access, Navigation & Engagement - Families can easily meet their basic needs and access the early learning services, programs, and resources they need, and are meaningfully engaged to provide feedback on services.

Goal 2: Workforce Recruitment, Retention & Support - The early learning workforce is well paid, trained and supported; can reach and obtain the professional development resources they need throughout their careers; and is large enough to meet Texans' needs.

Goal 3: Local Systems & Partnership Building - Local early learning systems are well-coordinated, appropriately resourced, and successfully support the children and families in their communities.

Goal 4: Integrated Data & System – State early learning system entities are collaborating to make family-and data-informed decisions to improve services, programs and resources for children and their families.

TELC Next Steps:

1. The full strategic plan will be posted on the Texas Early Learning Council website soon: <https://earlylearningtexas.org/>
2. Quarterly progress reports will be shared during Texas Early Learning Council meetings

Participates with the First3Years, Houston Infant Toddler Coalition as a collaborative to concentrate our efforts to focus on children birth to three, and to collectively develop and implement strategies for strengthening our system of programs and services to increase positive early experiences for infants and toddlers and to better meet the needs of the families with young children in Houston.

Participates in quarterly meetings with the Inter-Agency Deputy Director of Early Childhood Support Office of School Programs at the Texas Education Agency to work across state agencies. During the January 17th meeting, we were joined by the Early Childhood Education team at the Texas Education Agency which included the (Inter Agency Deputy Director, Program Director of early childhood, Family Engagement Director and the Early Childhood Division Director). We will continue to include them in our standing meetings to work together and to stay connected across programs to share tools, ideas, materials, etc. to support early childhood in Texas.

PRIORITY 2: Work with state efforts to collect and use data on early childhood programs to guide decision-making and improve child and family outcomes.

- **Learn The Signs/Act Early Texas** – The THSSCO serves as the Deputy Ambassador for Act Early Texas representing Head Start/Early Head Start. This engagement includes participating in meetings, supporting recruitment efforts, providing information, and ensuring that quarterly data collection takes place for participating programs. Quarterly reports for October – December/2023 are due at the end of January.
- The THSSCO participates in meetings with **Children at Risk** to provide Program Information Reports (PIR) and other data as requested to support state data needs.
- Participates in the **State Developmental Screening Workgroup** meetings, which focuses on state data discussion, including but not limited to; types of screenings, anecdotal evidence, pros/cons of different systems, cost of screenings, paper vs electronic screenings and research on a portal/platform.

PRIORITY 3: Support the expansion of and access to high-quality workforce and career development opportunities for staff.

The Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS):

The Children’s Learning Institute (CLI) Engage platform hosts many free online professional development courses for early childhood teachers, administrators, coaches, and others. The full Course Catalog, accessible from the CLI Engage Dashboard, allows users to enroll in over 200 hours of self-paced, online professional development courses. After completing an online course, CLI Engage users receive a certificate certifying their completion in either Continuing Professional Education hours (CPE) or Child Care Regulation clock hours. Some courses also provide opportunities to purchase continuing education units (CEUs).

Through integration with TECPDS, all completion certificates earned on CLI Engage can automatically transfer to a user’s personal Workforce Registry account for efficient storage and professional tracking.

If you reside in TEXAS, and you already have an account on TECPDS, you do NOT need to create a new account. You can submit a Help Ticket to ensure you are connecting your TECPDS account to the proper account on CLI Engage. You can also follow the steps in our How To Opt-in Guide to connect your accounts and enable automatic transfer of your earned certificates.

If you don’t have a CLI Engage account, sign up for a free account today by clicking the button below. Then complete the opt-in form when you first log in to CLI Engage as a new user.

T.E.A.C.H Advisory Committee:

The THSSCO serves on the Teacher Education and Compensation Helps (TEACH) Early Childhood Texas Scholarship Program Advisory Committee, to support the outreach and recruitment of Head Start/Early Head Start early childhood staff to apply for scholarships.

TEACH is an educational scholarship opportunity for early childhood educators who work in the licensed childcare setting across Texas.

The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) approved spring semester 2024 funding for those associate and bachelor scholars whose scholarships ended 12/31/23. There were 77 total scholars that were impacted. TEACH Scholarship recipients and their employers were notified of the funding.

Discussion points for the February meeting will focus on

- Funding / RFA potential scope
- TWC priority of apprenticeship models
- Annual survey data and distribution plans

PRIORITY 4: Coordinate with school systems to ensure continuity and alignment across programs, as appropriate.

The Family & Community Service Team at the Texas Education Agency is seeking to collaborate with the THSSCO to support them with transition to kindergarten and parent and family engagement in Texas.

OTHER:

The HSCO Annual Report was submitted to ACF on January 17, 2024 for the activities of the THSSO during 2023.

The THSSCO supported sharing the Pre-Solicitation Announcement to recruitment of Head Start/Early Head Start programs to apply for the “Supporting Mental Health and Resiliency in Texans (SMART) Innovation Grant Program.”

HHS 0013881- Texas Health & Human Service Commission Pre-Solicitation Announcement serves to inform the vendor community that HHSC intends to release an RFA to solicit Applications for community-based initiatives that promote identification of potential mental health needs and improve access to early intervention and treatment for Children and Families.

Much of the current mental health system is focused on crisis services, or treatment for those with serious mental illness or a serious emotional disturbance. While critical, these services treat the symptom. Early prevention efforts focus on addressing behaviors and mitigating risk to reduce the need for more intensive treatment services and later adverse outcomes for children, their families, and their communities.

The 88th Texas Legislature appropriated \$30 million to HHSC to establish a matching grant program for mental health early intervention and treatment, herein referred to as Supporting Mental Health and Resiliency in Texans (SMART) Innovation (Requisition Number HHS 0013881). The goal of this grant program is to develop, implement, and learn from innovative strategies that improve mental health outcomes for children and families and build healthy community foundations.

CONFERENCE /MEETINGS ATTENDED SINCE THE OCTOBER MEETING AND UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Winter Leadership Institute

January 22-25 | Crystal City, VA

HS Collaboration Directors’ Meeting

February 26-28 | Arlington, VA

NHSA Conference

April 15-18 | Portland, OR

2024 International Inclusion Institute

May 7-9 | Chapel Hill, NC



Board Action Items: None

Report Attachments (if any):

Signature(s): *Alferma Giles* **Date Submitted:** 1/23/24

THSSCO website: <https://texashssco.org/>