



TEXAS HEAD START STATE COLLABORATION OFFICE

UPDATED NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT AND STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2024

Texas Head Start State Collaboration Office
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INTRODUCTION

The Head Start Act (as amended December 12, 2007) requires the Head Start Collaboration Offices (HSCOs) to conduct an annual needs assessment of Head Start and Early Head Start grantees. The purpose of the Head Start Collaboration Needs Assessment is to evaluate perceptions held by Head Start and Early Head Start programs to inform strategic planning for the year. The Office of Head Start does not specify the methodology or instrument used to collect information. The THSSCO Updated Needs Assessment Survey was distributed electronically using the online survey tool Qualtrics. The survey link was sent to grantee and delegate agency administrators on March 6, 2023 with a completion request date of March 31, 2023. The survey deadline was extended through April 10, 2023, to allow additional time for programs to respond.

The goal is to assess how Head Start and Early Head Start programs collectively respond to the activity areas identified during program year 2022-2023. The Texas Head Start Collaboration Office (THSSCO) Updated Needs Assessment is comprehensive of the data sources below, along with input from some of the members of the THSSCO Advisory Board.

1. The THSSCO Needs Assessment Qualtrics Survey results
2. 2023 Head Start Program Information Report (PIR)

The 2022-2023 Needs Assessment is an annual updated version that focuses on the three (3) Key Federal Priority Areas noted in bold front. The selections were based on identified program and state needs that occurred during the program year:

- 1. Health Care**
2. Children Experiencing Homelessness
3. Welfare/Child Welfare
4. Child Care
5. Family Literacy Services
- 6. Children with Disabilities and Their Families**
7. Community Services
8. Education (School Readiness, Head Start-K Partnership Development)
9. Head Start Transition and Alignment with K-12 (Education)
10. Professional Development
- 11. Early Childhood Systems Development**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

THE THSSCO extends a special thank you to the Communications Specialist at the Children's Learning Institute, for supporting the development and publishing of the Qualtrics Survey, preparing the data, creating the map of programs and the report cover page. Thank you to the Directors of Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegate Agencies, and those of you from the THSSCO Advisory Board, who

provided input and support in the preparation of the Needs Assessment Survey. I am so very appreciative of the time and effort that you dedicated in this process.

PURPOSE

The intent of this report is to understand the landscape of Head Start/Early Head Start programs in Texas, identify key findings that support ongoing collaboration, or the development of new collaborations as well as the development of recommendations, based on the data sources identified in this report. The recommendations included in the report will drive the work of the Head Start Collaboration in the upcoming year and will inform state and local partners about Head Start and Early Head Start perceptions and needs across the state.

HEAD START COLLABORATION OFFICES

The Head Start State and National Collaboration Offices (HSSNCOs) exist “to facilitate collaboration among Head Start agencies and entities that carry out activities designed to benefit low income children from birth to school entry, and their families. Collaboration directors provide a structure and a process for the Office of Head Start to work with State agencies and local entities to leverage their common interests around young children and their families to formulate, implement, and improve state and local policy and practice.

The Texas Head Start State Collaboration Office plays an important role in helping our state make progress in improving the lives of young children and their families. The Collaboration Office assists with relevant state initiatives and brings the support and perspective of Head Start to the development of a comprehensive early childhood system in Texas working in collaboration and partnership with other agencies.

The Texas Head Start State Collaboration Office (THSSCO), under the administration of Dr. Alferma Giles, is part of the Texas State Center for Early Childhood Development within the Children’s Learning Institute (CLI) at The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston.

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The methods by which Head Start Collaboration offices coordinate and lead efforts for diverse entities to work together:

- **Communication:** Convene stakeholder groups for information sharing and planning. Be a conduit of information between the regional office and the State and local early childhood system.
- **Access:** Facilitate Head Start agencies' access to, and utilization of, appropriate entities so Head Start children and families can secure needed services and critical partnerships are formalized.
- **Systems:** Support policy, planning, and implementation of cross agency State systems for early childhood, including the State Advisory Council, which include and serves the Head Start community.

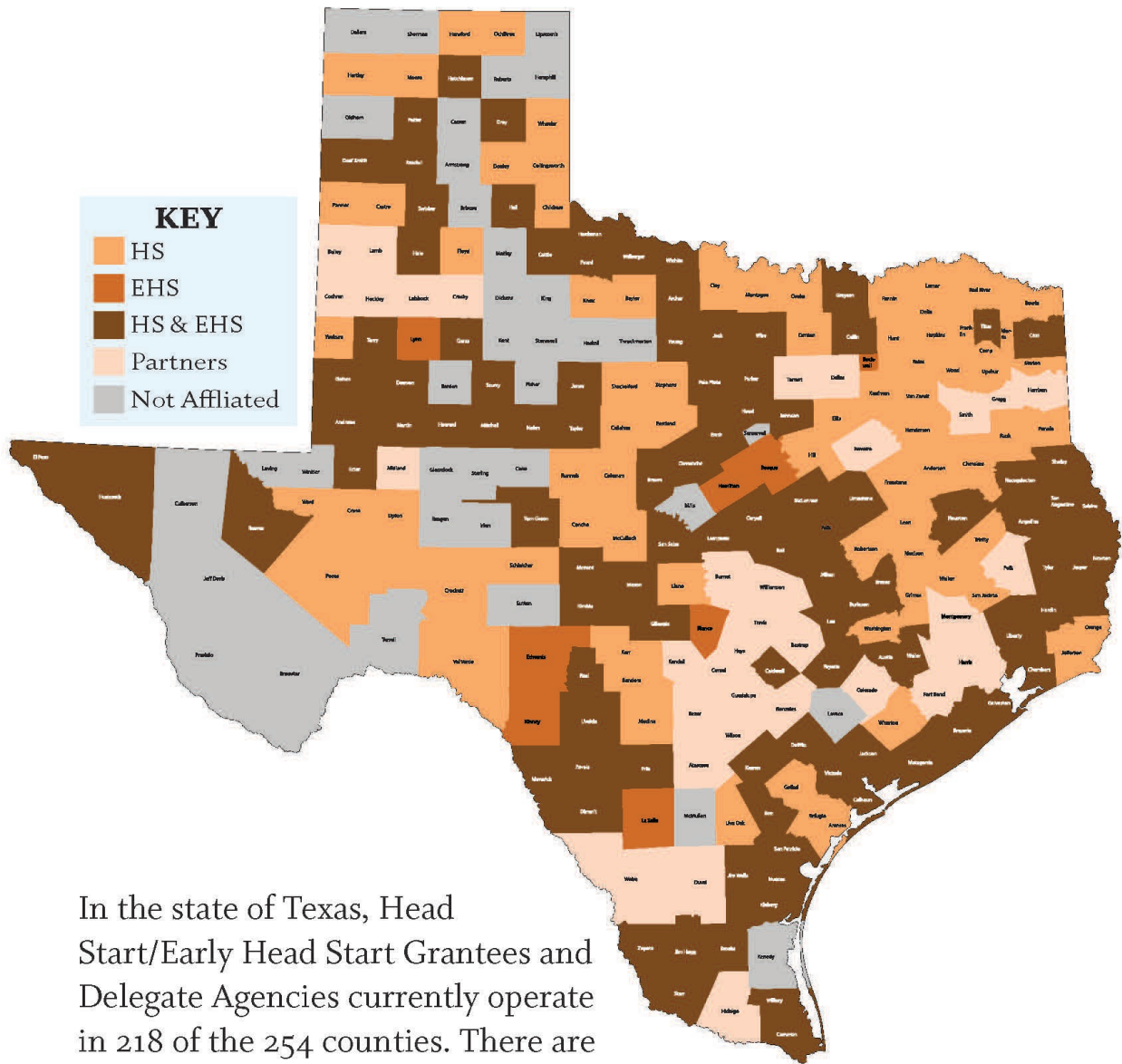
TEXAS HEAD START PROGRAM

Texas has operated Head Start programs since 1965, when the national program began. The Early Head Start Program, which began in 1995, focuses on expectant mothers and children from birth to age three.



CURRENT MAP OF 254 TEXAS COUNTIES:

Map of 254 TEXAS Counties



In the state of Texas, Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegate Agencies currently operate in 218 of the 254 counties. There are 33 partner locations and 36 counties in the state that are not affiliated with Head Start/Early Head Start.

NEEDS ASSESSEMENT – RESPONDING AGENCIES

The THSSCO 2022-2023 Qualtrics Needs Assessment Survey was sent to **Head Start Grantee and Delegate Agency Administrators**. There was a total of **39 responses** received, and there were **51 non- responding** programs.

RESPONDING AGENCIES

Grantee/Delegate Agency Name	Location
Aldine Independent School District	Houston
Ascension DePaul Services	San Antonio
Austin Independent School District	Austin
AVANCE - Houston, Inc.	Houston
AVANCE, Inc.	San Antonio
Beaumont Independent School District	Beaumont
Bonham Independent School District	Bonham
Cen-Tex Family Services Inc	Bastrop
Child Care Associates	Fort Worth
Child Inc.	Austin
City of San Antonio	San Antonio
College Station Independent School District	College Station
Community Action Corporation of South Texas	Alice
Community Action, Inc. of Central Texas	San Marcos
Community Council of South Central Texas, Inc.	Seguin
Community Services of Northeast Texas, Inc.	Linden
Cooper Independent School District	Cooper
Denton Independent School District	Denton
Detroit ISD Head Start	Detroit
Education Service Center Region 19	El Paso
Education Service Center Region XIV	Abilene
Economic Opportunities Advancement Corporation of Planning Region XI	Waco
Greater East Texas Community Action Program	Nacogdoches
Hidalgo County Head Start Program	McAllen
Hitchcock Independent School District	Hitchcock
Innovative Network of Knowledge	Fredericksburg
Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas	Eagle Pass
Lubbock ISD	Lubbock
Lutheran Social Service of the South, Inc. dba Upbring	Austin
Nueces County Community Action Agency	Corpus Christi
Opportunities for Williamson and Burnet Counties	Georgetown
Parent Child Incorporated	San Antonio

Grantee/Delegate Agency Name	Location
Plano Independent School District	Plano
Port Arthur Independent School District	Port Arthur
Region 10 Education Service Center	Richardson
Region 16 Education Service Center	Amarillo
Rolling Plains Management Corporation	Crowell
Webb County Commissioners	Laredo
West Orange-Cove Consolidated I.S.D.	Orange

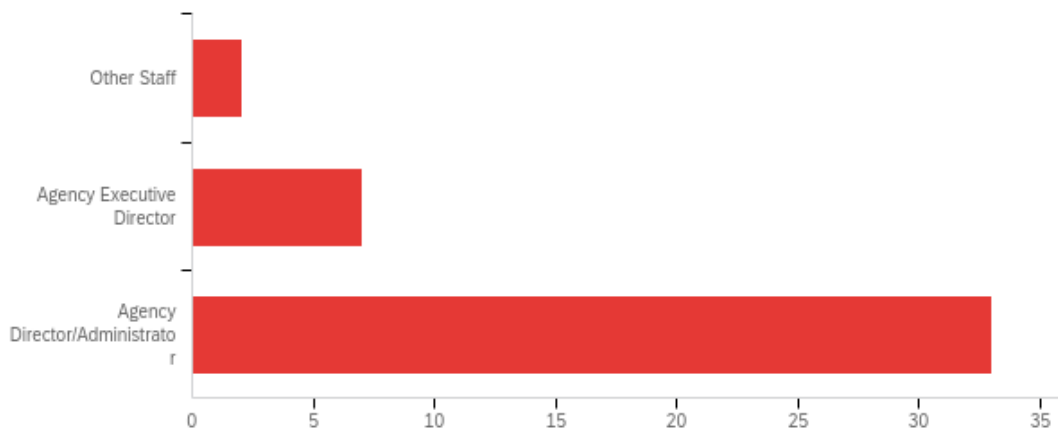
NON-RESPONDING AGENCIES

Grantee/Delegate Agency Name	Location
Abilene Independent School District	Abilene
Alabama Coushatta Reservation Tribal Council	Livingston
AVANCE-San Antonio, Inc.	San Antonio
BakerRipley	Houston
Brazoria County Head Start Early Learning Schools, Inc.	Angleton
Brazos Valley Community Action Program	Bryan
Center for Transforming Lives	Fort Worth
Central Texas 4C, Inc.	Temple
Central Texas Opportunities, Inc.	Coleman
ChildCareGroup	Dallas
Concho Valley Council of Governments	San Angelo
County of Webb	Laredo
Education Service Center Region XV	San Angelo
Education Service Center, Region 20	San Antonio
Family Service Association of San Antonio, Inc.	San Antonio
Galena Park Independent School District	Galena Park
Greater Opportunities of Permian Basin, Inc.	Odessa
Greenville Independent School District	Greenville
Gulf Coast Community Services Association	Houston
Harris County Department of Education	Houston
Head Start of Greater Dallas, Inc.	Dallas
Hill Country Community Action Association, Inc.	San Saba
Jumpstart Enrichment for Tomorrow's Students	Snyder
Kerrville Independent School District	Kerrville
Kids Are First, Inc	Carrizo Springs
Lumin Education	Dallas
Mi Escuelita Preschools, Inc.	Dallas
Motivation Education & Training, Inc.	New Caney
Mount Pleasant Independent School District	Mount Pleasant
Neighbors In Need of Services, Inc	Rio Hondo
North Texas Parent & Child Development, Inc	Wichita Falls
Paris Independent School District	Paris

Grantee/Delegate Agency Name	Location
Pecos County Community Action Agency	Fort Stockton
Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District	Pharr
Region IX Education Service Center	Wichita Falls
Region 14 Education Service Center	Abilene
Region VII Education Service Center	Kilgore
San Felipe Del Rio Consolidated Independent School District	Del Rio
SER-Jobs for Progress National, Inc.	Irving
South Plains Community Action Association, Inc.	Levelland
South San Antonio Independent School District	San Antonio
Sulphur Springs Independent School District	Sulphur Springs
Swisher County Head Start	Tulia
Terrell Independent School District	Terrell
Texarkana Special Education Ctr Inc	Texarkana
Texas City Independent School District	Texas City
Texas Tech University Center for Early Head Start	Lubbock
The University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley	Edinburg
Tri-County Community Action, Inc	Center
Tyler Independent School District	Tyler
West Texas Opportunities	Lamesa

Respondents completing the needs assessment survey were asked to confirm their role at their agency:

Q7: What is your role?

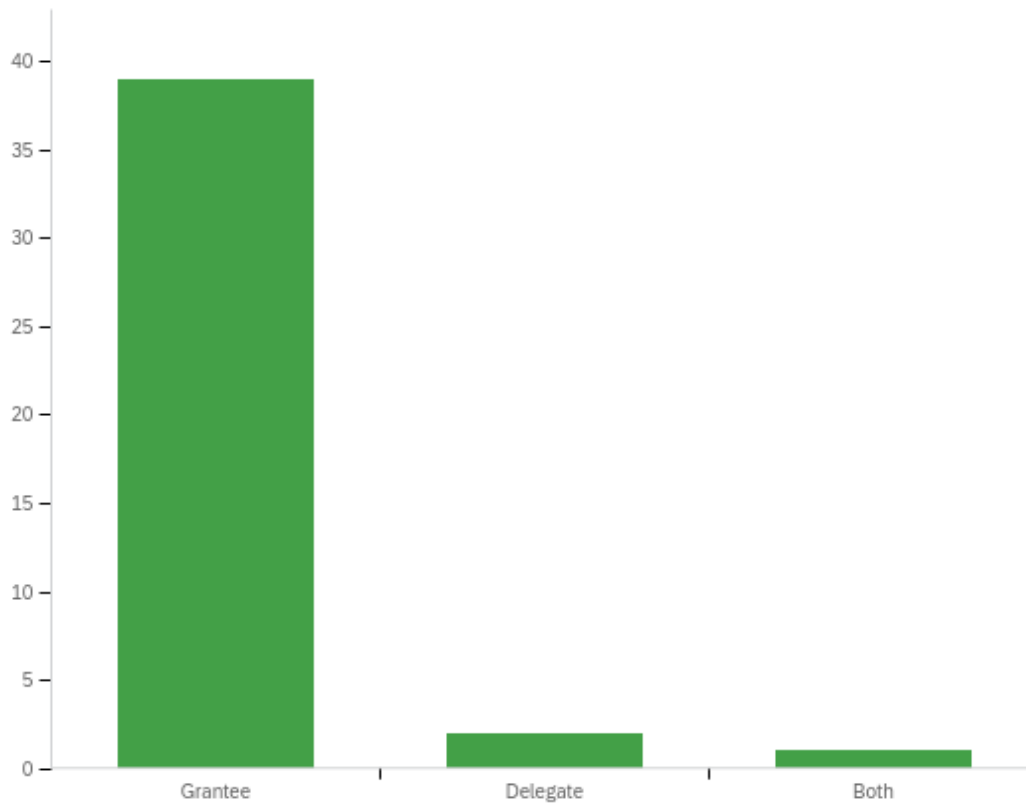


Q3: If Other Staff was selected: Please indicate your title and why you are completing this survey in lieu of the agency director or executive director.

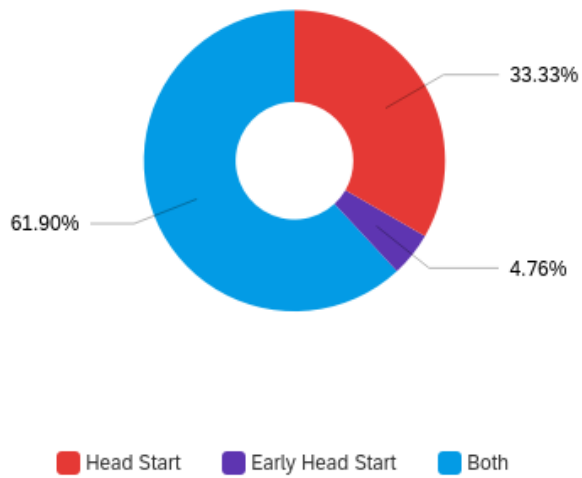
Answer: Head Start Managing Director

AGENCY TYPE AND SERVICES PROVIDED:

Q4: Agency Type



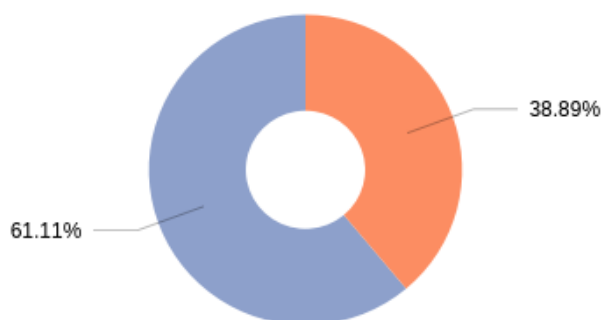
Q5: Services provided.



NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY KEY ACTIVITY RESULTS:

HEALTH CARE SERVICES

Q6: Please indicate whether you feel that **the activities, relationships, and/or resources** of your program during the program year 2022 provided adequate support to complete the following **Health Care Services** tasks/objectives.



- There was no need for this in our program
- More support was needed to complete objective
- Had adequate support to complete objective

Objectives	Adequate Support	More Support	No Need
Accessing mental health services, prevention and treatment services for children and families		X	
Supporting families to access other health related services	X		
Assisting families with programs/services related to physical fitness and obesity prevention for children		X	
Helping families to access nutritional services		X	
Key partnerships were in place to support children and families in your program to access other health services that were needed	X		
Supporting families to access services, (e.g., housing, education, family support, employment, or other needed services)		X	
Implementing a framework for working with and relating to staff, children and families to address trauma- and violence-informed care		X	
Provide communication and education to parents and caregivers promoting the importance of children's oral health	X		

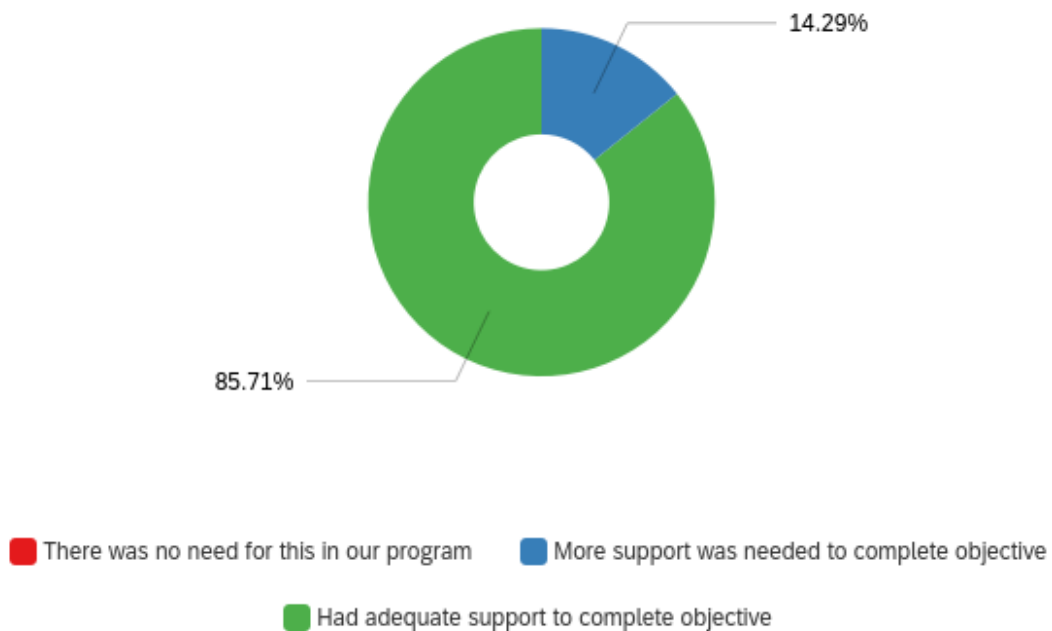
Q7: For the Health objectives above that were rated “more support was needed,” please describe the three (3) most important types of support that would have been most useful or helpful. (Be specific in your response)

Overall responses from the survey included in the order of most important:

1. Accessing early childhood mental health services for staff, children and families in all programs
2. Implementing a framework for working with and relating to staff, children and families to address trauma- and violence-informed care
3. Supporting families to access services and resources (*specifically: housing, parenting education, support with doctor’s accepting Medicaid*)

SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Q8: Please indicate whether you feel that **the activities, relationships, and/or resources** of your program during program year 2022, provided adequate support to complete the following tasks/objectives to provide services for children with **disabilities**.



SERVICES FOR CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES

Objectives	Adequate Support	More Support	No Need
Coordinating with LEAs to support Head Start families and children with disabilities transitioning to kindergarten		X	
Coordination between early intervention, and transitions between Part C and Part B, section 619 of the IDEA.		X	
Evaluating children to determine eligibility for services		X	
Identifying local services to support families and children with disabilities		X	
Connecting families with services to support children with disabilities, including Early Childhood Intervention		X	

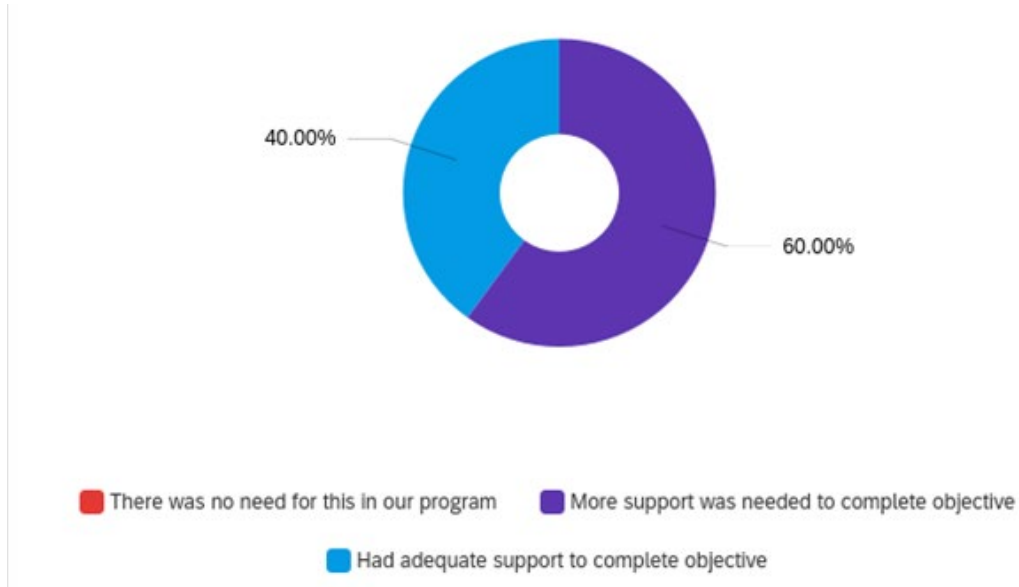
Q9: For the Disabilities objectives above that were rated “**more support was needed,**” please describe the three (3) most important types of support that would have been most useful or helpful. (Be specific in your response)

Overall responses from the survey included in the order of most important:

1. Coordinating with LEAs to support Head Start families and children with disabilities transitioning to kindergarten
2. Connecting families with services to support children with disabilities, including Early Childhood Intervention
3. Identifying local services to support families and children with disabilities

EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

Q10: Please indicate whether you feel that the activities, relationships, and/or resources of your program during program year 2022, provided adequate support to complete the following tasks/objectives to provide Early Childhood Systems Development services.



EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

Objectives	Adequate Support	More Support	No Need
Retaining high-quality early childhood educators		X	
Hiring high-quality early childhood educators		X	
Ability to operate program at full enrollment capacity in Head Start & Early Head Start		X	
Ability to provide adequate services with child care partners		X	
Supporting children and families experiencing homelessness to connect with available early childhood services		X	
Providing training and information on diversity, racial equity, equality and inclusion to staff, parents, children and families		X	
Interventions to eliminate, mitigate or prevent biases at the institutional level, by instituting practices, policies, and protocols to address it		X	
Building strategies for developing an equity lens to support staff to work, and children to learn in an equitable classroom environment		X	
Creating free Workforce Registry Accounts for early childhood staff through the Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS) or encouraging staff to set up individual accounts		X	
Participating in the state Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS), Texas Rising Star and partnering with child care and early childhood systems at the local level		X	

Q11: For the Education objectives above that were rated “more support was needed,” please describe the three (3) most important types of support that would have been most useful or helpful. (Be specific in your response)

Overall responses from the survey included in the order of most important:

- Ability to operate program at full enrollment capacity in Head Start & Early Head Start
- Retaining high-quality early childhood educators
- Hiring high-quality early childhood educators



GRANTEE SUMMARY

(ACTUAL RESPONSES IN BRIEF)

The updated Needs Assessment Survey provided results from which to measure and guide the work of the THSSCO, to engage in priorities of the Office of Head Start. Head Start/Early Head Start programs across the state are supported with resources through successful collaborations, connections and strong working relationships with state agency partners.

Strengths/Health

- 61.11% of programs had adequate support to complete health objectives
- Programs have key partnerships in place to provide adequate services for children and families

Overall Health Needs

- 38.89% of programs needed additional support to meet the health objectives
- There is little to no mental health support that is specific to early childhood
- Children, families, and staff are all dealing with traumas. There is additional support needed to address the issues that cause the trauma
- Supporting Families needing housing assistance, medical services and resources that are not easy to access since COVID

Strengths/Services for Children with Disabilities

- 85.71% of programs had adequate support to complete the 32 disabilities objectives
- Head Start in a school district have access to support for our students and families
- Support for students with disabilities our program is the LEA

Overall Services for Children with Disabilities

- 14.29% of programs needed additional support to meet the disabilities objective
- There is a barrier when it comes to connecting children to services. Some of the requirements to get tested (example: vision and hearing screening) can be overwhelming for a family
- Evaluating children to determine eligibility services. There is a 45 day wait period to evaluate some children and some go much longer without an evaluation
- Additional classroom support (intervention strategies) are needed for teachers working with students with disabilities and those identified

Strengths/Early Childhood Systems Development

- 40% of programs had adequate support to complete the Early Childhood Systems Development Objective
- Building an equitable environment for children and staff

Overall/Early Childhood Systems Development

- 40% of programs needed additional support to complete the Early Childhood Systems Development Objective
- Hiring and retaining high quality early childhood staff with competitive wages
- More information and training on the use of the workforce registry accounts for Early Head Start and Head/Start programs
- Increase recruitment efforts to enroll children in Head Start/Early Head Start

THSSCO STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2024

The updated THSSCO 2023-2024 Strategic Plan reflects two (3) of eleven (11) Federal Priority Areas as noted in the updated Needs Assessment Report which includes: **Health Care, Children with Disabilities and Their Families and Early Childhood Systems Development.**

The Strategic Plan outlines the work that was prioritized from the results of the THSSCO Updated Needs Assessment survey conducted in Head Start/Early Head Start Programs for 2022-2023, and related activities. **Additional activities and engagement for the all of the Federal Key Activity Areas can be located in the THSSCO 5 Year Strategic Plan for 2020-2025.** Those activities will not be repeated in this version of the strategic plan.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2023-2024

Information in **ORANGE** font is reflective of additional activities entered during the 2023-2024 fiscal year. The **GREEN** font is reflective of the 2022-2023 fiscal year. The **RED** font is reflective of the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

Health			
Area	Improvement Needed/ Action Steps	Person Responsible	Timeline
Mental Health: Access to mental health services to address needs of children and families and to provide information to access counseling, treatment, training and other resources.	Establish a better partnership with state mental health agency to support access available services in local communities. Through engagement.	THSSCO Director Welfare/Child Welfare	(Year 3) (Year 4)
	Continue to Partner with the Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health (TIEMH) at UT-Austin to provide resources for staff (best practices & trauma informed care, mentoring & coaching)	THSSCO Director in collaboration with Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health	(Year 2) (Year 3) (Year 4)
Health Services: Access to health services available to uninsured and undocumented children and families. Office of Head Start (OHS) Initiatives: Child health & safety Quality Environments Equity	Continue to provide information on medical and dental providers that provide free and low-cost services to uninsured and undocumented children and families.	THSSCO Director & Texas Oral Health Partners United Head Care Texas Dental	(Year 3) (Year 4) (Year 5)
	Continue quarterly meetings with Texas Oral Health Partners (OHP) to support the needs of Head Start/Early Head Start programs by providing dental health resources, toothbrushing kits and continuing toothbrushing and oral care on site with staff modeling and children brushing.	THSSCO Director United Head Care Texas Dental	(Year 3) (Year 4) (Year 5)
	Work with newly established partners, United Health Care Texas Dental to partner with Head Start organizations statewide to provide educational materials regarding oral health. Attend Head Start health fair or educational events and assist with educating parents and/or caregivers on the importance of oral exams and follow up dental care.	THSSCO Director & Texas Oral Health Partners United Head Care Texas Dental	(Year 3) (Year 4)
	United Head Care Texas continues to participate in quarterly meetings as a		

	<p>part of the THSSCO & Texas Oral Health Partners, to provide information, trainings, resources, guidance, tools and materials to aid in addressing the overarching oral health needs.</p> <p>Texas OHP will support oral health data sharing and collection.</p> <p>Update resourceful information to provide better support and outreach efforts at health fairs and community events.</p> <p>Include the OHS Health and safety initiatives in Health activities of the THSSCO to include Child health & Safety, Quality Environments & Equity.</p>	<p>THSSCO</p> <p>Region VI OHS</p> <p>TTA</p>	<p>(Year 4)</p> <p>(Year 5)</p>
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Services for Children with Disabilities

Area	Improvement Needed/Action Steps	Person Responsible	Timeline
<p>Head Start’s Involvement in Initiatives at the State Level: Ensure that Head Start is represented in state level early education discussions and engagement.</p>	<p>THSSCO representation on the Texas Early Learning Council, to coordinate activities and communicate Head Start issues that will be implemented in the Texas Early Learning updated Strategic Plan, to support intentional engagement at the community level, informed by local needs and stakeholder input.</p> <p>Work in collaboration with the Texas Head Start Association (TXSHA) to conduct trainings and webinars on current THSSCO & OHS initiatives</p>	<p>THSSCO</p> <p>Director, Texas Early Learning Council & State Agency Partners</p>	<p>(Year 3)</p> <p>(Year 4)</p> <p>(Year 5)</p>
<p>Coordinate with school systems to ensure continuity and alignment across programs, as appropriate.</p>	<p>Promote continuity of services, program alignment, and support for successful transitions, particularly with state preschool, kindergarten, and with Title I, McKinney-Vento, and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act programs.</p>	<p>THSSCO</p> <p>619 Coordinator</p> <p>State Agency Partners</p>	<p>(Year 4)</p> <p>(Year 5)</p>
<p>Data Sharing & Planning Coordination across early childhood data</p>	<p>Work with the Texas Early Learning Council to continue to engage to address effective data sharing across</p>		<p>(Year 3)</p> <p>(Year 4)</p> <p>(Year 5)</p>

systems.	systems. Support the development of the updated Texas Early Learning Council updated Strategic Plan		
EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT			
Area	Improvement Needed/ Action Steps	Person Responsible	Timeline
<p>Coordinated Data Systems Work toward the coordination and implementation of a streamlined data system.</p> <p>Work with state efforts to collect and use data on early childhood programs to guide decision-making and improve child and family outcomes.</p>	<p>Include Head Start in the state data collection efforts, longitudinal studies and data tracking system.</p> <p>Support appropriate access to and use of data to guide decision-making and to improve outcomes in areas such as coordinated eligibility and disparities in access to services.</p>	<p>THSSCO Director, Texas Early Learning Council (TELC) & State Team & State Agency Partners</p>	<p>(Year 3) (Year 4) (Year 5)</p> <p>(Year 4) (Year 5)</p>
<p>Head Starts Participation in Texas Rising Star (QRIS) Encourage Head Start programs to volunteer to participate in Texas Rising Star (QRIS) to support quality child care options.</p> <p>Supporting goal 2 in the TELSP, strategy 2:3 - Increase the number of high-quality programs.</p>	<p>Identify and share ways to increase the level of Head Start participation in Texas Rising Star (QRIS) to promote quality early learning programs.</p> <p>Licensed Child Care Programs in Texas are required to participate in Texas Rising Star.</p> <p>Head Start/Early Head Start programs that have agreements to serve subsidy and are licensed by Child Care Resources (CCR), may participate in Texas Rising Star (ORIS) under the National Accreditation programs procedures.</p>	<p>THSSCO Director, Texas Early Learning Council (TELC) Texas Rising Star at CLI</p>	<p>(Year 3) (Year 4) (Year 5)</p> <p>(Year 3) (Year 4) (Year 5)</p>
<p>Partnerships with School Districts Work with the TEA to strengthen existing partnerships and to develop additional ones in communities.</p> <p>Collaborate with state systems to align early care and education</p>	<p>Strengthen existing partnerships and the development of collaborative partnerships between Head Start programs and LEA's where the needs exist, including MOU's.</p> <p>Supporting apprenticeship programs</p> <p>Collaborate across systems to support health, mental health, and social emotional well-being.</p> <p>Partner with state systems to support</p>	<p>THSSCO Director, Texas Education Agency, Region VI OHS, Texas Early Learning Council, State agency partners THSSCO Director Infant Toddler</p>	<p>(Year 3) (Year 4) (Year 5)</p> <p>(Year 4) (Year 5)</p>

services and supports for children and families prenatally to age 5.	early childhood efforts across systems and reaching children and families	Specialist Network (ITSN) Team TECPDS Staff & Advisory Board Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health	
Support the expansion of and access to high-quality workforce and career development opportunities for staff.	Supporting & securing the workforce. Investing in the workforce by supporting the work of and working with state professional development systems, including workforce registries and career pathways, and with institutions of higher education to promote expansion and high-quality career development opportunities. Support the implementation of the Region VI Office of Head Start Apprenticeship Program Plans. Work to include HS/EHS in the Apprenticeship Program at CLI	THSSCO Director Infant Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN) Team TECPDS Staff & Advisory Board THSSCO Texas Head Start Association (TXHSA)	(Year 4) (Year 5) (Year 4) (Year 5)
ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES			
Area	Improvement Needed/ Action Steps	Person Responsible	Timeline
Children Experiencing Homelessness	Continue to participate in quarterly meetings with the Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youth (TEHCY) Office, to support enrollment of HS/EHS children. Texas Oral Health Partners (TXOHP) will support recruitment efforts.	THSSCO Director, TEHCY Coordinator TXOHP	(Year 4) (Year 5) (Year 4) (Year 5)
Father's and Family Engagement	Continue the partnerships with Dr. Jerry Roberson & Anthem Strong Families to support engaging Fathers in Head Start/Early Head Start.	THSSCO Director Dr. Jerry Roberson Anthem Strong Families TXHSA	(Year 4) (Year 5)
Opioid Abuse & Substance Misuse	Continue the partnership with the Opioid Response Network (ORN) to address the current issues in the state of Texas.	THSSCO ORN TXHSA	(Year 4) (Year 5)

THSSCO ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ACTIVITIES FOR 2022-2023

This include the development of, initiation, support and active engagement in the activities as noted.

HEALTH

- The THSSCO Director continues to work with the Texas Oral Health Partners to support programs with information to aid families to enroll children in dental homes, and to provide resources, activities and oral health reports on children in early childhood programs in Texas. The engagement includes:
 - The Texas Oral Health Coalition, Inc., continues to provides dental health reports to the THSSCO with data reports and participation with the Texas Oral Health Partners
 - Partnering with United Health Care (UHC) Texas Dental 2023-2024 Performance Improvement Project (PIP) Plan for submission to the State. As part of the indicated collaboration for this PIP, UHC provides: Project intervention for United Health Care Texas (UHCT), educational materials relating to oral health, attend Head Start health fairs and educational events, as well as assist with educating parents and/or caregivers on the importance of oral exams and follow up dental care. The UHCT Team participate in quarterly meetings with the THSSCO/Texas Oral Health Partners
 - Collaborative intervention to partner with Head Start organizations
- Collaboration office involvement in activities to support Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnostic and Treatment (EPSDT) screenings in the past year:
 - Developmental screening
 - Coordination for increased access
 - Partnerships at the state and local level
- Participates in workgroups with stakeholders to identify issues and to support work/engagement:
 - Support materials for public awareness campaigns
 - HS/EHS SNAP eligibility support
 - Quarterly meetings with state 619 State Coordinator to support the review, discussions and provide necessary updates to the current MOUs related to Part B, Section 619 of IDEA
 - Collaboration office involved in supporting MOU and public awareness campaign activities related to early childhood disabilities
 - Activities related to mental health and social emotional issues:
 - Infant and toddler mental health initiatives
 - Materials development
 - Interagency coordination

- Promotion of specific mental health priorities (e.g., adverse childhood experiences, substance misuse, suspension/expulsion, and domestic violence/child maltreatment)
 - The THSSCO Director is a member of the Infant Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation. A convening of Texas stakeholders. The workgroup activities include work around the Texas Mental Health Endorsement, targeted for different professional areas within the infant toddler field
- The THSSCO continues to serve on the board and as a Deputy Ambassador with Learn the Signs/Act Early Texas, participating in meetings to support participating EHS programs with early screenings and milestone tracking materials for families and the recruitment of additional EHS programs to participate in the program.
- Engaged in a new grant opportunity with the Texas Department of Agriculture. They were awarded a USDA grant called the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) Reach and Resiliency. Food and Nutrition is working with food banks and partners all over Texas to increase awareness of the program in rural, high need areas. The entire grant lasts from 2022-2024. To meet the USDA requirements listed in the grant, the THSSCO supported marketing and outreach, including physical material distribution and/or promoting on the office website.
 - The THSSCO Director works with the Texas Department of Agriculture/Food and Nutrition Division to support Head Start programs, by allowing the interested staff to provide information on meal site locations and to order Summer Meals Program materials.
- Participates in the Obesity Prevention Workgroup. The workgroup is exploring developing and piloting resources for local screening and/or referral systems for food insecurity to connect childcare centers to community food access resources such as SNAP, WIC, food pantries, and the Summer Meal Program. The first meeting with the THSSCO to complete a Q & A took place on 12/7/22. Project exploration began in January/2023.
 - Nutrition related activities (Provided information to the Obesity Prevention Workgroup with the I Am Moving/I Am Learning Curriculum to consider for use in classrooms to support physical wellness development)
- Participates in quarterly meetings with the Early Care Obesity Prevention Workgroup (ECOPW) to address the Work Plan/Work Group Objectives and goals, including the development of a Parent Resource Site:
 - Develop objectives for the parent resource page
 - Develop inclusion and exclusion criteria
 - Create a plan for collecting parent resources authored by member organizations
 - Create a plan for collecting and filtering parent resources authored by

outside organizations.

- Head Start Collaboration Directors in Region VI hosted an Opioid and Substance Use Summit at the Region VI Head Start Association Conference on September 27, 2022, at the Red Wolf Embassy Suites Convention Center in Jonesboro, AR.
 - The purpose of the Opioid and Substance Use Summit was to bring knowledge and awareness of opioids and substance use to Early Head Start/Head Start and other early childhood programs in Arkansas, Louisiana, Texas, New Mexico, and Oklahoma. Leaders from each state shared information, facilitated training sessions, plenaries and focus group discussion regarding what is happening in Region VI and how state partners have come together to address opioid and substance use. Each program left the summit with a plan of approach to better support the needs of the children and families in their programs.
 - The Opioid and Substance Use Summit was informative and inspiring. Some of the sessions offered included: Opioid & Substance Misuse-Five State General Session; Keynote Speaker, Dr. Michael Weaver, McGovern Medical School, UT-Health Science Center at Houston; Peer Recovery-Prevention and Treatment Panel Discussion with Monte Payne, facilitating; Breakout Sessions: AR – Identification, Treatment & Prevention of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders; LA – State of the State Address on the Opioid Epidemic: The Importance of Access to Medication Assisted Treatment; OK – Empowered by Innovation: New Normal for Treatment and Supports; TX – Methamphetamine and Stimulants. The Closing Opioid Session; You Can with Narcan – Jamal Williams.

HOMELESSNESS

- Continues to participate in quarterly meetings with the Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youth (TEHCY) Office. THSSCO works in collaboration and partnership with the TEHCY Office Director, to support the enrollment of homeless children in HS/EHS. The state director moved to another position during this fiscal year; however, the THSSCO meets with the program specialist.
 - Participated in the TEHCY Summit in San Marcos, August 29-31, 2022 in San Marcos, TX and facilitated a session on the Functions & Activities of the THSSCO, and provided updates from the Office of Head Start and the National Head Start Association. The THSSCO works in collaboration with the TEHCY Office to support the Office of Head Start, Home at Head Start Initiative, to enroll homeless children in Texas. The conference consisted of so many impactful and heartwarming sessions that left me speechless. The keynotes were Gabe Salazar from San Antonio and Renee Wilson-Simmons

from TN. The THSSCO Director meets quarterly with the Texas Education for Homeless Children & Youth State Coordinator to discuss and plan to support homeless children in Texas. This partnership/collaboration includes participation in meetings, webinars, trainings, and conferences to share information and to work together in our efforts to support Head Start and Texas early childhood programs. The THSSCO Director meets with the Education Service Center Staff twice per year to discuss their needs and to provide updated contact information for HS/EHS Administrators and programs to support enrolling homeless children.

- Continues to participate in monthly meetings with the Head Start State Collaboration Office (HSSCO) Learning Community on Homelessness, with the collaboration director's lead person; Director, PA Head Start State Collaboration Office.
- Continues to participate in meetings with the Region 6 Federal Regional Interagency Council on Homelessness (FRICH).

EDUCATION (SCHOOL READINESS, HEAD START-K PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT)

- Continue to participate as a governor appointed member of the Texas Early Learning Council, to engage in the work of the current Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan and the work of the PDG-B5 Renewal Grant
- Continue in my efforts to encourage HS to consider partnering with child care partners to support full enrollment opportunities and wrap around services
- Connected EHS Grantees with interested child care partners in their zip code area
- Support Head Start collaboration and partnerships in Migrant/Seasonal Head Start/Early Head Start Programs in the 20 Education Service Centers
- Provided HS information and Program Performance Standards to interested child care partners to ensure they understood the requirement for partnerships, and encouraged them to plan accordingly
- Continue to provided information and resources to child care providers interested in partnering in various capacities
- Texas Child Care Services (CCS) regulated providers are now required to participate in Texas Rising Star. New CCS providers and current CCS providers who are not Texas Rising Star certified must meet the minimum quality standards to receive Entry Level Designation as part of the certification process.
- Recruiting partners currently participation in Texas Workforce Registry

- Continue to participate as a governor appointed member of the Texas Early Learning Council, to engage in the work of the Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan and the PDG-B5 Grant that is currently being updated
- Participates in meetings and serve on advisory boards and work groups for several state agencies that support early childhood programs, making connections to share and encourage partnership opportunities
- Continue in my efforts to work with state agency partners to support the goal in the PDG B-5 Renewal Grant: Expanding access to high-quality programs by assisting child care providers in child care deserts to become licensed, supporting assessments and interventions for infants and toddlers with disabilities, and providing research-based classroom assessment tools
- Continue to support HS/EHS partnering with local child care programs, especially in child care deserts and to support to access services in rural areas

EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

- Provide Head Start/Early PIR Data for state agency partners.
- Continue to participate as a governor appointed member of the Texas Early Learning Council, to engage in the work of the current Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan and the work of the PDG-B5 Renewal Grant
- 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.
- Continues to participate in the Home Visiting Coalition meetings
- Participates in meetings with Children at Risk to support early childhood in Texas
- The Texas Education Agency (TEA) and the THSSCO will work to simplify the application practices by creating a common eligibility screener across multiple early childhood programs with similar eligibility criteria, allowing families to more easily determine which services they could be eligible for, and therefore, they may apply for. The screener, which will be developed in Year 3 of the grant cycle, will include at a minimum, criteria for childcare scholarships, public school pre-k, and Early Head Start/Head Start. The screener will be housed on the Early Childhood Texas website. Additionally, Texas is exploring possibilities for a coordinated cross-agency application for child care scholarships, pre-k, and Head Start/Early Head Start

- The THSSCO continues to work in partnership with the Texas Workforce Commission to support access to quality child care services. Continue the engagement and work with the TELC and the Inter-Agency Workgroup to implement carry out the goals of the Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan
- The THSSCO Director participates in monthly meetings with the Inter-Agency Deputy Director of Early Childhood Support to better engage to continues the work with state agency partners to implement the current goals of the Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan and the PDG-B5 Renewal Grant
- The THSSCO Director meets monthly with the Inter-Agency Deputy Director of Early Childhood Support Office of School Programs at the Texas Education Agency. The latest activities include the THSSCO engagement with the Texas Early Learning Council on the PDG-B5 Grant:
 - **Strengthen and Build the ECCE Workforce**
Develop a pipeline of effective early childhood educators and professionals through multiple pathways that improve the training of early childhood educators, including Career and Technical Education (CTE) programs in high school, articulation and transfer agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, support for early childhood apprenticeships including incentives.
- **Develop Statewide Integrated Data System**
Develop an Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS), taking into consideration how to align early childhood data efforts with the work of the Tri-Agency Work Group.
- **Reports and Studies**
Conduct a new comprehensive statewide needs assessment for children birth to 5 years old. Develop a new statewide strategic plan with efforts led by the Texas Early Learning Council in partnership with families, providers and other ECCE stakeholders.
- **Under Activity 6** – Sub granting Options: A, B and or C:
Supplement Funding for the state’s Part C program with PDG B5 funds and increase number of infants and toddlers served.

DATA AND STATE FUNDING RELATED WORK

- Continues to provide Head Start Program Information (PIR)
- Continue participating in meetings with First3Years/Houston Infant Toddler Coalition (HITC): Data gathering for the Developmental Promotion Workgroup
- Developmental Promotion – Integrating family voice into the HITC, developmental promotion, and early intervention:
 - Policy – The Early Childhood Intervention program yearly application for funding under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part C

- Awareness – Working on our public awareness campaign promoting early development and celebrating parents
 - Workforce – HITC's developing the runway for the launch
- Participates on the Developmental Screening Workgroup to create a Developmental Screening Landscape Analysis Roadmap and Early Childhood Integrated Data System Toolkit Guide
- Participates in work and engagement related to the strategies and activities included in the Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan, which will now be updated to support the PDG-B5 Renewal Grant activities
- Participated in the Early Childhood Integrated Data Roadmap Stakeholder (ECIDS) Listening Session Meeting on 9/2/22. Purpose: Through collaboration across and within agencies and programs, a Texas ECIDS provide an integrated and aligned approach to enable Texas to make informed decisions through programs and policies that promote positive outcomes for young children and their families
- Provided HS/EHS data to various state, local agencies and partners, to support data research, reporting requirements, analysis, projects, grant development, partnerships, and data mapping. As of the date of this report, the THSSCO provided HS/EHS data to the following: (children at Risk, Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health, Texas Education Agency, Children's Learning Institute, Watershed Advisors, Learn The Signs/Act Early Texas, Developmental Screening Workgroup, Texas Workforce Commission, Early Childhood Intervention Consortia, PE Images, Prenatal-to-3 Policy Impact Center, Child Trends, Center for Transforming Lives, Urban Institute, The Powell Foundation, & Arroyo Research Services)
- Participates in meetings with the Children's Commission ESSA Workgroup
- Provided data and information for the Early Childhood Data Roadmap Work Group (ECIDS). [Early Childhood Data Roadmap Work Group](#):
 - **Purpose:** Through collaboration across and within agencies and programs, a Texas ECIDS would provide an integrated and aligned approach to enable Texas to make informed decisions about programs and policies that promote positive outcomes for young children and their families.
 - **Goals:** We believe integrated early childhood data will lead to:
 - Better insight into how early childhood services are utilized across Texas Improved decisions regarding the use and refinement of early childhood programs
 - Clearer information for stakeholders and policymakers
 - Better outcomes for the children and families of Texas

The THSSCO Director has engaged in work with Texans Care for Children and other state agencies for the past two years, collaborating with experts and stakeholders across the state, to develop and launch the [Texas School Readiness Dashboard!](#) Texans have

increasingly recognized that positive early childhood experiences – during the critical period of brain development from birth to age five – help determine whether children start school ready to succeed in kindergarten and throughout their academic careers.

PARENT/FAMILY AND DIVERSITY RELATED

- Continues to participate in meetings with MIECHV and local and state partners to support HS/EHS work
- Participated in the International Fathers & Families Conference & the 2023 Texas Fatherhood Summit
- Participated in several trainings on racial diversity and equality at CLI, and shared the training information with HS/EHS to encourage their participation
- Engaged in a new partnership with Arroyo Research Services to support Migrant/Seasonal HS/EHS programs and the 20 Education Service Centers (ESC) staff. This includes participating in meetings, providing information, resources, reports, contact information for HS/EHS programs and administrators to support with enrollment and outreach

HEAD START TRANSITION AND ALIGNMENT WITH K-12 (EDUCATION)

Transition to Kindergarten - The THSSCO Director used the remaining grant funds in the 2022 travel budget to partner with Power Your Potential, a professional development company, to create an Early Childhood Partnership Guide for Texas that will explain the alignment between Head Start, childcare, and school districts. The Partnership Guide contains kindergarten transition information and activities to support effective partnerships, relationship building, and collaboration that will assist early childhood programs, families, and children in Texas to implement practices that will assist them in their partnership efforts. The transition guide supports the Office of Head Start (OHS) Transition to Kindergarten Initiative, as it includes kindergarten transition information that will address families, children, HS programs, ISDs, educators, leaders and the community in partnership efforts.

The [Texas Early Childhood Guide to Kindergarten Transitions guide](#) provides information that will strengthen the four points of connection and implementation methods, along with links to tools, materials, and resources to support successful transitions:

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS)

The Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS) continues to serve as a direct line to the THSSCO, and the Assistant Director of TECPDS is a member of the Advisory Committee. The Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS) serves as a direct line to the THSSCO, and the THSSCO Director serves on the

advisory committee. The Assistant Director of TECPDS is a member of the THSSCO Advisory Committee as well to support work and engagement:

Statewide System - Shared professional development (PD) opportunities for HS/EHS, along with training and resources available on the Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS), Early Childhood Learning Knowledge Center (ECLKC), and other agency platforms.

Continue to work with Head Start/Early Head Start Program Administrators to register their programs and encourage staff to establish free accounts on the Texas Workforce Registry, and to take advantage of the resources available through CLI Engage, Texas School Ready, Texas School Ready Comprehensive & Infant Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN).

Continue to share resources from the Texas Education Agency and other state agency partners to engage in activities that support Goal 4, Strategy 4.1 of the current Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan: Early childhood professionals are well qualified and have access to the support and training needed to improve kindergarten readiness and the resources to ensure they have a successful career serving children.

Trainer requirements and tracking - Promotes, share and encourage free PD opportunities provided by: The Children's Learning Institute (CLI), the Infant Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN), the National Head Start Association, Office of Head Start, training and those offered PD opportunities from state agency partners.

Trainer requirements and tracking - Share free resources and recorded training opportunities posted on the THSSCO website. The Assistant Director for the TECPDS participates in TXAEYC, NAEYC, and the National Workforce Registry, providing training, overview, and exposure to the TECPDS.

Statewide System & Early Childhood Professional Tracking - Continue to serve on the T.E.A.C.H. Advisory Board in our efforts to continue to improve and support the Texas early childhood workforce to obtain scholarships to continue their higher education and to obtain a career path, leading to obtaining a CDA or a degree. [T.E.A.C.H Texas](#) TEACH participation includes the following:

- Promote the expansion of the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Texas program and compensation initiatives for the early childhood workforce.
- Serve as an ambassador and market the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Texas program throughout your community and organization.
- Be familiar with T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Texas eligibility criteria and scholarship models.
- Provide input on policies and protocols that support high standards and performance outcomes for the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Texas program.
- Support efforts in identifying potential funding sources that can expand the T.E.A.C.H. Early Childhood® Texas program.

The THSSCO is working with the Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS) to support, educate, train and encourage HS/EHS staff to set-up Texas Workforce Registry accounts. The TECPDS staff will participate in state association trainings, institutes, conferences, etc., to register program staff and to support the association to access and use all the tools available, including the certificate generating tool to offer state validated training certificates for staff to verify their participation in PD trainings. TECPDS staff will share information about the Texas Trainer Registry.

The Texas Workforce Registry (TWR) is a web-based application for early childhood professionals to keep track of all of their education and employment history, as well as the clock hours of training they have accrued. Through your TECPDS account, create a professional development profile, view reports, link to your program or school, connect to the [Work In Texas](#) job search resource and matching system, and evaluate trainings presented by Registered Trainers.

The Texas Workforce Registry offers features for the early childhood workforce through TECPDS accounts, available at no cost:

- Specialist: Early childhood specialists are those professionals (regardless of early childhood setting) who support practitioners and administrators in quality improvement and professional development efforts
- Center Director/Administrator: Early childhood program administrators are those professionals who are responsible for planning, managing, implementing, and evaluating early childhood programs
- Practitioner: Early childhood practitioners are those professionals (regardless of early childhood setting) who provide direct instruction and/or care to young children

The Texas Trainer Registry offers resources for all early childhood professionals who deliver training, and all TECPDS accounts have access to trainer features.

There are two permission levels in the Texas Trainer Registry:

- Registered Trainer
- Non-Registered Trainer

Trainers listed on the Texas Trainer Registry (“Registered Trainers”) have gone through an approval process that is defined by a set of qualifications which include early childhood expertise and experience, and knowledge of adult learning theories and principles. The training approval process is linked to core competencies, principles of adult learning, and other standards, such as early learning guidelines.

TECPDS also offers opportunities for organizations that provide training to formally connect their trainings and trainers to TECPDS through an organizational dashboard. Currently, this opportunity is available for non-profit training organizations or organizations in formal agreements with the Texas Workforce Commission to provide professional development.

The THSSCO continues to support with the CLI management team and co-workers to connect Head Start with professional development opportunities to carry out the Texas School Ready Initiatives that support HS/EHS staff to participate in the professional development webinars, Lunch & Learn training, and learning opportunities offered by CLI, and recruits HS/EHS staff to participate in several Texas State Initiatives and grant activities offered through CLI.

The work of the TECPDS has evolved over the years.

- [\(CLI\) Engage takes an amazing voyage to the cloud to support the increase in the number of users](#)
- [Early Childhood Specialist Micro-Credential Program](#)
- Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System
- Texas Workforce Registry
- Texas School Ready

The THSSCO worked in partnership with Marcus Parker, Regional Director for Texas and New Mexico at Lakeshore Learning Materials, to present a virtual training on 11/9/22 for HS/EHS on the topic: Being an Intentional Partner in Play Indoors & Outdoors. The training focused on intentional choices that teachers and parents can make with children to support their learning while being a partner in play. It included specific strategies that enrich being a partner in play through opportunities for discovery, and actively participating in their play both indoors and outdoors. As responsive partners in play, the training addressed the growth of the whole child while respecting them and their play.

The THSSCO is working with the Children's Learning Institute (CLI), to support the recruitment of additional HS/EHS program staff to participate in the Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE) Program" during year two of the grant. The project is funded by the Administration for Children and Families and implements an evidence-based program called CARE, which aims at reducing teachers' job stress and burn out. CARE is a research-based professional development program designed to promote teachers' social and emotional skills and well-being. The goal of CARE is to mitigate the adverse impacts of stress and burnout on teacher well-being and thereby enhance their capacity to create a positive classroom climate for children's learning and development.

The THSSCO is working with the Children's Learning Institute/Infant Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN) to align the Head Start Program Performance Standards with the Early Learning Outcomes Framework. The ITSN Team provided a training to EHS administrators and infant/toddler staff who registered to participate. The Texas ITSN offers professional development opportunities and collaborative experiences for Specialists (mentors) and teachers covering a wide range of topics specific to supporting infant and toddler development. One of the goals of the THSSCO is to increase EHS infant/toddler staff participation in the ITSN.

ACTIVITIES FOR WELFARE/CHILD WELFARE

- Established a collaborative partnership with Texas Health and Human Services Commission to support SNAP recipients to enroll their children in the Head Start/Early Head Start program.
- Continues to participate in meetings and serve on advisory boards and work groups for several state agencies
- Participates in the Texas Home Visiting Coalition quarterly meetings
- Continues to participate in meetings with First3Years/Houston Infant Toddler Coalition to engage in the following:
Developmental Promotion Workgroup:
 - Integrating family voice into the HITC, developmental promotion, and early intervention:
 - Policy – The Early Childhood Intervention program yearly application for funding under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Part C
 - Awareness – working on our public awareness campaign promoting early development and celebrating parents



RESOURCES AND REFERENCES

- [Texas Head Start State Collaboration Office](#)
- [Act Early Texas](#)
- [Anthem Strong Families](#)
- [Children at Risk](#)
- [Children's Learning Institute](#)
- [CLI Engage](#)
- [Dr. Jerry Roberson](#)
- [Early Childhood Learning Knowledge Center](#)
- [Early Childhood Texas](#)
- [First3Years](#)
- [Infant Toddler Specialist Network](#)
- [Lakeshore Learning Materials](#)
- [Office of Head Start](#)
- [Office of Regional Operations](#)
- [Opioid Response Network](#)
- [Reach Out & Read Texas](#)
- [Region VI Head Start Association](#)
- [Texans Care for Children](#)
- [Texas Child Care Regulations](#)
- [Texas Department of State Health Services](#)
- [Texas Early Childhood Intervention](#)
- [Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System](#)
- [Texas Early Learning Council](#)
- [Texas Education Agency](#)
- [Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program](#)
- [Texas Head Start Association](#)
- [Texas Health & Human Services](#)
- [Texas Home Visiting](#)
- [Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health](#)
- [Texas opioid Response Network](#)
- [Texas Oral Health Coalition](#)
- [Texas School Ready](#)
- [Texas School Ready Comprehensive](#)
- [Texas Workforce Commission](#)
- [TexProtects](#)



TEXAS HEAD START STATE COLLABORATION OFFICE

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