HSCO

Head Start Collaboration Office

UPDATED NEEDS ASSESSMENT REPORT AND STRATEGIC PLAN 2024–2025 YEAR 5 OF 5

Texas Head Start Collaboration Office

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txhsco.org

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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 goal is to assess how Head Start and Early Head Start programs collectively respond to the activity areas identified during the program year 2023-2024. The Texas Head Start Collaboration Office (TXHSCO) Updated Needs Assessment is comprehensive of the data sources below:

1. The TXHSCO Needs Assessment Qualtrics Survey results
2. Head Start Program Information Report (PIR)
3. Other data sources (Children's Learning Institute)

The 2023-2024 Needs Assessment is an annually 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 Texas Head Start Collaboration Office (TXHSCO) extends a special thanks to the Senior Communications Specialist at the Children's Learning Institute for supporting the development and publishing of the Qualtrics Survey and to Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees, Delegate Agencies, and Content Staff who provided input to support in the completion of the Needs Assessment Survey and those who responded.

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 direct 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 and National Collaboration Offices 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 TXHSCO 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 TXHSCO, 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 in Houston.

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

- **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 agency's 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 includes 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

MAP KEY
- Head Start (HS)
- Early Head Start (EHS)
- HS & EHS
- Partners
- Not Affiliated
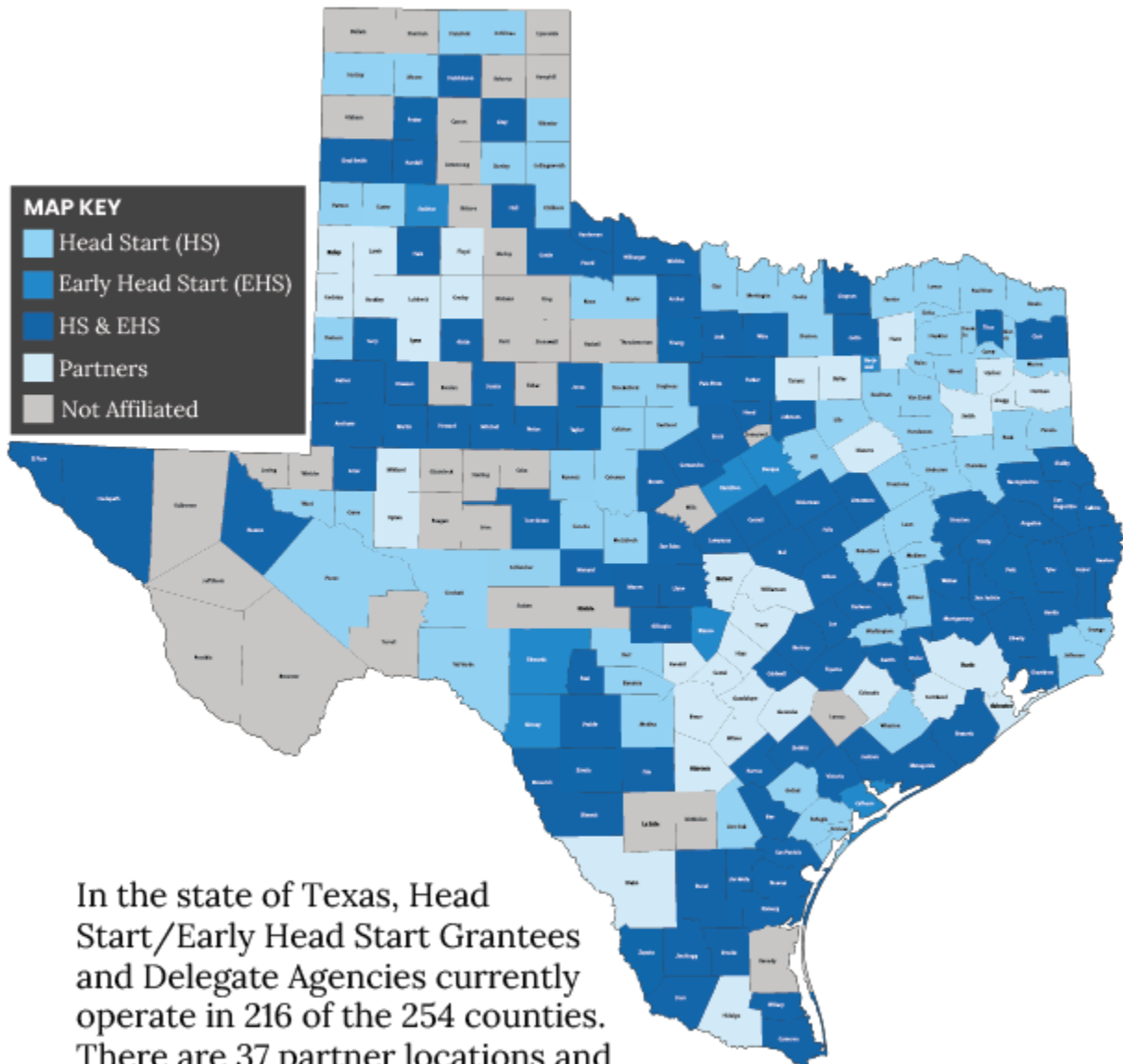
In the state of Texas, Head Start/Early Head Start Grantees and Delegate Agencies currently operate in 216 of the 254 counties. There are 37 partner locations and 38 counties in the state that are not affiliated with Head Start/Early Head Start.

NEEDS ASSESSMENT – RESPONDING AGENCIES

The **TXHSCO 2023-2024** Qualtrics Needs Assessment Survey was sent to **Head Start Grantee and Delegate Agency Administrators**. There was a total of **39 responses** received. There were **50 non-responding** programs.

Count	Grantee/Delegate Agency Name	Location
1.	Alabama Coushatta Reservation Tribal Council	Livingston
2.	Aldine Independent School District	Houston
3.	Ascension DePaul Services	San Antonio
4.	Austin Independent School District	Austin
5.	AVANCE-San Antonio, Inc.	San Antonio
6.	BakerRipley	Houston
7.	Beaumont Independent School District	Beaumont
8.	Cen-Tex Family Services Inc	Bastrop
9.	Central Texas 4C, Inc.	Temple
10.	Child Care Associates	Fort Worth
11.	ChildCareGroup	Dallas
12.	Child Inc.	Austin
13.	College Station Independent School District	College Station
14.	Community Council of South Central Texas, Inc.	Seguin
15.	Community Services of Northeast Texas, Inc.	Linden
16.	Cooper Independent School District	Cooper
17.	Denton Independent School District	Denton
18.	Education Service Center, Region 20	San Antonio
19.	Economic Opportunities Advancement Corporation of Planning Region XI	Waco
20.	Greenville Independent School District	Greenville
21.	Hidalgo County Head Start Program	McAllen
22.	Hitchcock Independent School District	Hitchcock
23.	Jumpstart Enrichment for Tomorrow's Students	Snyder
24.	Kerrville Independent School District	Kerrville
25.	Lubbock ISD	Lubbock
26.	Lumin Education	Dallas
27.	Nueces County Community Action Agency	Corpus Christi
28.	Parent-Child Incorporated	San Antonio
29.	Pecos County Community Action Agency	Fort Stockton
30.	Plano Independent School District	Plano
31.	Port Arthur Independent School District	Port Arthur
32.	Region VII Education Service Center	Kilgore
33.	Region 10 Education Service Center	Richardson
34.	Region 14 Education Service Center	Abilene
35.	Rolling Plains Management Corporation	Crowell
36.	Tri-County Community Action, Inc	Center
37.	Tyler Independent School District	Tyler
38.	Webb County Commissioners	Laredo
39.	West Texas Opportunities	Lamesa

NON-RESPONDING AGENCIES

Count	Grantee/Delegate Agency Name	Location
1.	Abilene Independent School District	Abilene
2.	AVANCE - Houston, Inc.	Houston
3.	AVANCE, Inc.	San Antonio
4.	Bonham Independent School District	Bonham
5.	Brazoria County Head Start Early Learning Schools, Inc.	Angleton
6.	Brazos Valley Community Action Program	Bryan
7.	Center for Transforming Lives	Fort Worth
8.	Central Texas Opportunities, Inc.	Coleman
9.	City of San Antonio	San Antonio
10.	Community Action Corporation of South Texas	Alice
11.	Community Action, Inc. of Central Texas	San Marcos
12.	Concho Valley Council of Governments	San Angelo
13.	County of Webb	Laredo
14.	Detroit ISD Head Start	Detroit
15.	Education Service Center Region XIV	Abilene
16.	Education Service Center Region XV	San Angelo
17.	Education Service Center Region 19	El Paso
18.	Family Service Association of San Antonio, Inc.	San Antonio
19.	Galena Park Independent School District	Galena Park
20.	Greater East Texas Community Action Program	Nacogdoches
21.	Greater Opportunities of Permian Basin, Inc.	Odessa
22.	Gulf Coast Community Services Association	Houston
23.	Harris County Department of Education	Houston
24.	Head Start of Greater Dallas, Inc.	Dallas
25.	Hill Country Community Action Association, Inc.	San Saba
26.	Innovative Network of Knowledge	Fredericksburg
27.	Kickapoo Traditional Tribe of Texas	Eagle Pass
28.	Kids Are First, Inc	Carrizo Springs
29.	Lutheran Social Service of the South, Inc. dba Upbring	Austin
30.	Mi Escuelita Preschools, Inc.	Dallas
31.	Motivation Education & Training, Inc.	New Caney
32.	Mount Pleasant Independent School District	Mount Pleasant
33.	Neighbors In Need of Services, Inc	Rio Hondo
34.	North Texas Parent & Child Development, Inc	Wichita Falls
35.	Opportunities for Williamson and Burnet Counties	Georgetown
36.	Paris Independent School District	Paris
37.	Pharr-San Juan-Alamo Independent School District	Pharr
38.	Region IX Education Service Center	Wichita Falls
39.	San Felipe Del Rio Consolidated Independent School District	Del Rio
40.	SER-Jobs for Progress National, Inc.	Irving
41.	South Plains Community Action Association, Inc.	Levelland
42.	South San Antonio Independent School District	San Antonio
43.	Sulphur Springs Independent School District	Sulphur Springs
44.	Swisher County Head Start	Tulia
45.	Terrell Independent School District	Terrell
46.	Texarkana Special Education Ctr Inc	Texarkana

47.	Texas City Independent School District	Texas City
48.	Texas Tech University Center for Early Head Start	Lubbock
49.	The University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley	Edinburg
50.	West Orange-Cove Consolidated I.S.D.	Orange

Question 2 - Respondents completing the needs assessment survey were asked to confirm their role at their agency:

What is your role?
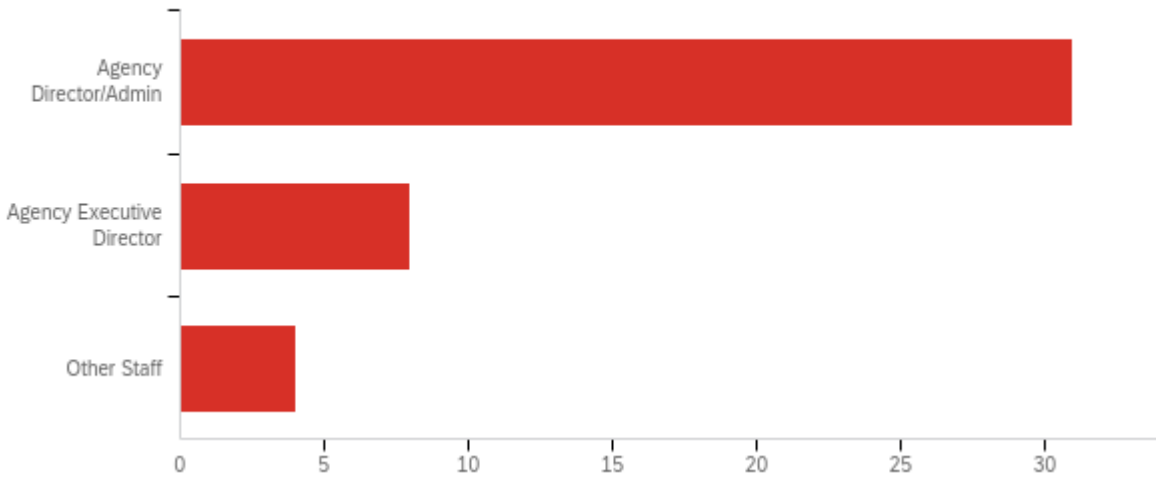
Questions 3 & 4 - If Other Staff was selected: Please indicate your title and why you are completing this survey in lieu of the agency director or executive director.

Vice President of Early Childhood Programs

- To assist the Texas Head Start Collaboration office gather information and data.
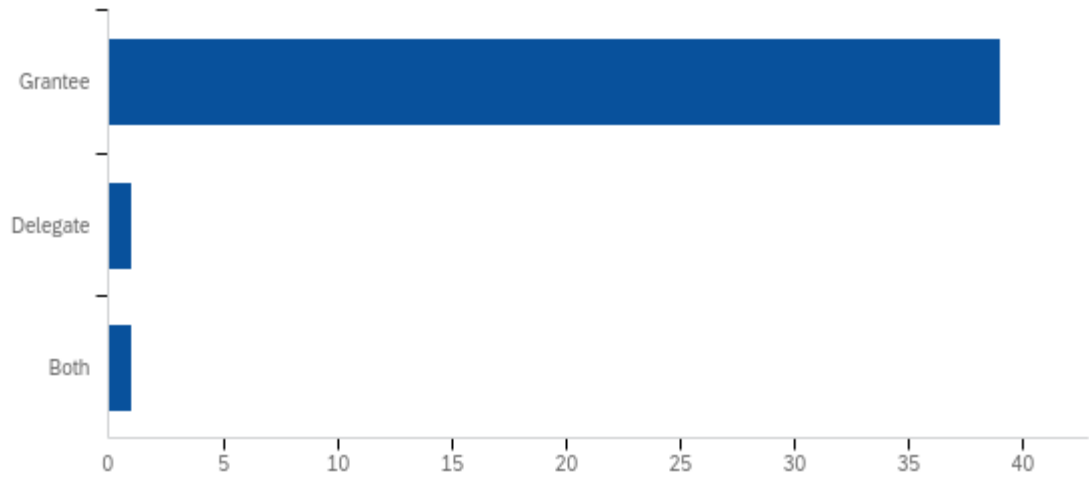
Education Coordinator

- I volunteered -- teamwork!

Quality Assurance Director

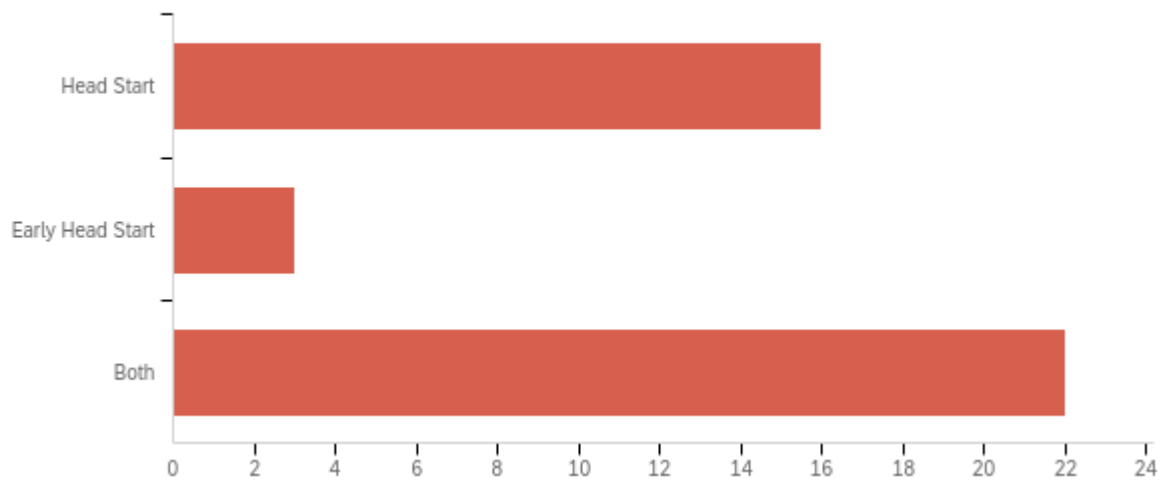- Response for the Agency

AGENCY TYPE AND SERVICES PROVIDED:
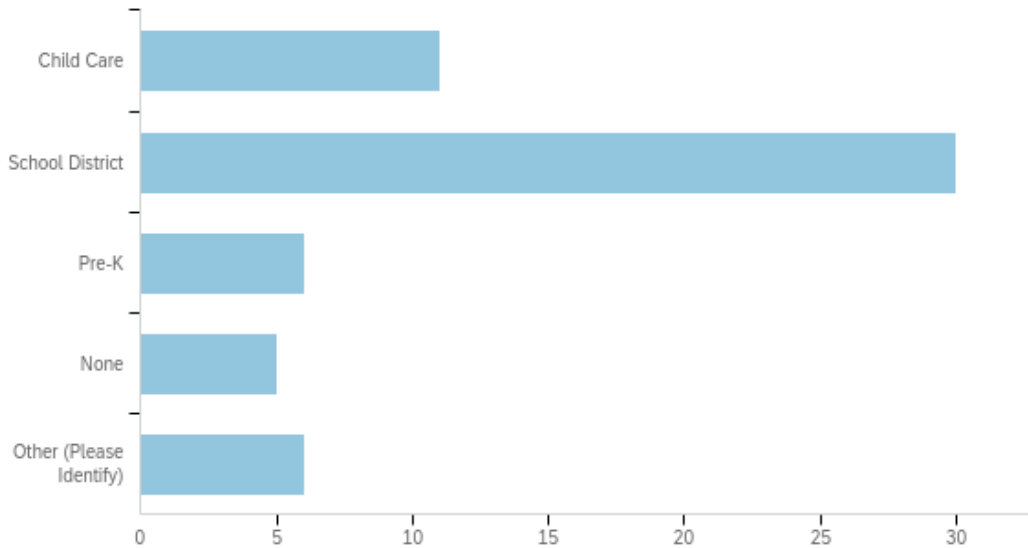
Question 5

Agency Type

Question 6

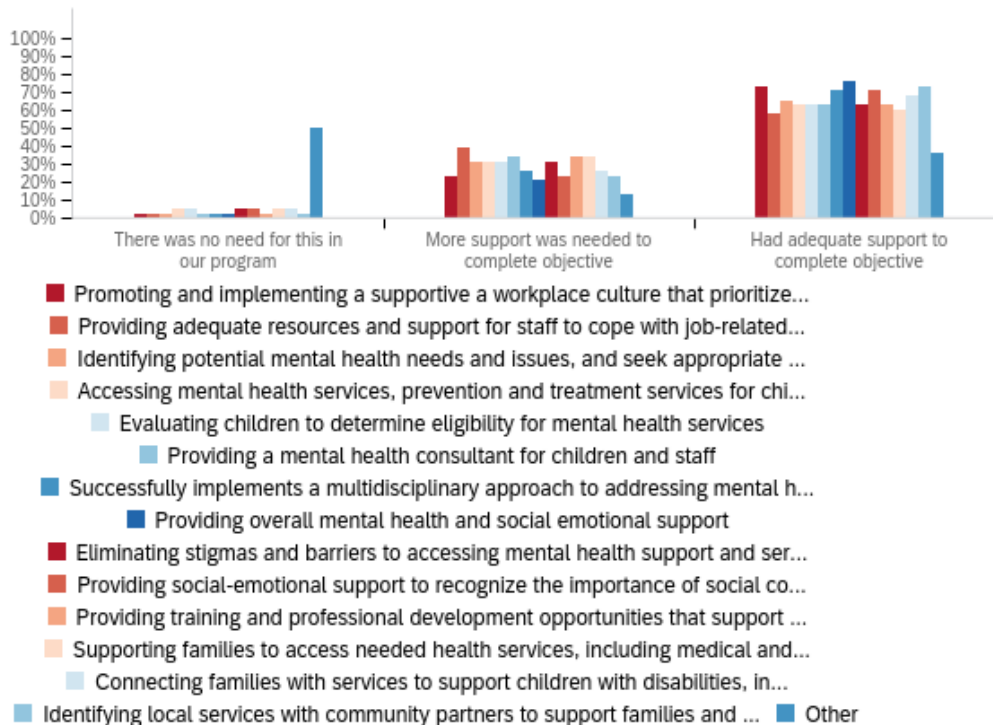Services Provided

Question 7

Partnerships

NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY KEY ACTIVITY RESULTS:

HEALTH CARE SERVICES: Question 8

Please indicate whether the activities, relationships, and/or resources of your program during program year 2023-2024, provided adequate support to complete the following tasks/objectives to provide Health (Mental Health) services.

HEALTH CARE SERVICES

Question 9

Please indicate whether you feel that the activities, relationships, and/or resources of your program during program year 2023-2024, provided adequate support to complete the following tasks/objectives to provide Health Care Services:

Objectives	Had adequate support to complete objective	More support was needed to complete objective	There was no need for this in our program
Promoting and implementing a supportive workplace culture that prioritizes the mental health and well-being of children and staff	X		
Providing adequate resources and support for staff to cope with job-related stress to ensure that employees can maintain a healthy work-life balance		X	
Identifying potential mental health needs and issues, and seek appropriate support and resources	X		
Accessing mental health services, prevention and treatment services for children and families		X	
Evaluating children to determine eligibility for mental health services		X	
Providing a mental health consultant for children and staff		X	
Successfully implements a multidisciplinary approach to addressing mental health concerns			X
Providing overall mental health and social-emotional support		X	
Eliminating stigmas and barriers to accessing mental health support and services	X		
Providing social-emotional support to recognize the importance of social connections in students' mental health and academic success		X	
Providing training and professional development opportunities that support mental wellness	X		
Supporting families to access needed health services, including medical and dental homes	X		
Connecting families with services to support children with disabilities, including Early Childhood Intervention	X		
Identifying local services with community partners to support families and children with disabilities	X		

Question 10 - 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)
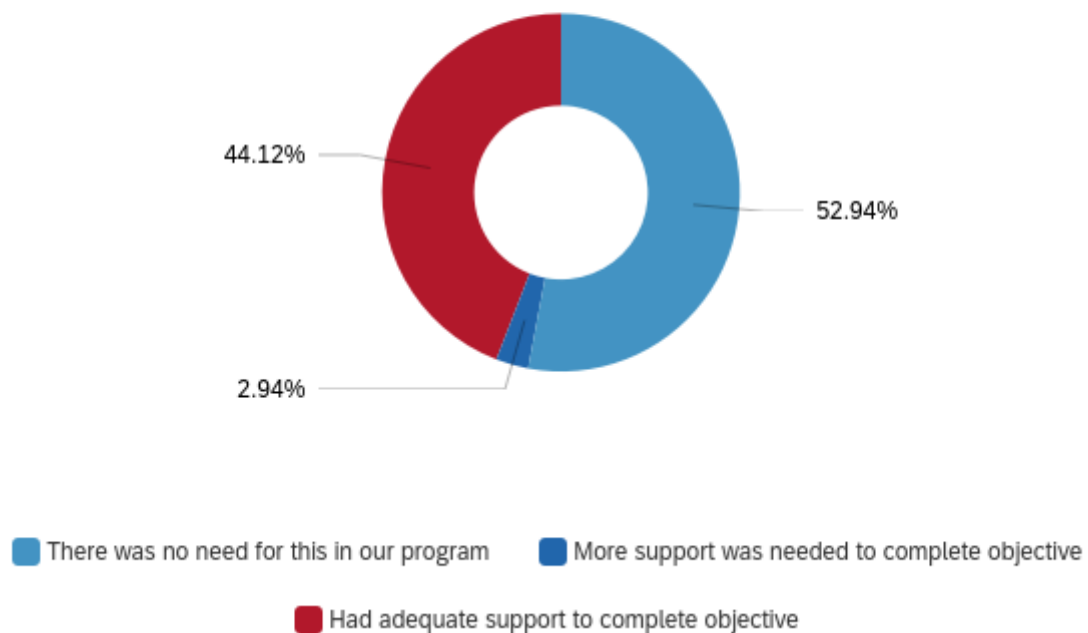
Overall responses from the survey included in the order of most important:

1. Accessing early childhood mental health services for staff, children, and families in all programs, including affordable mental health services, resources, and providers
2. Mental health funding to hire Mental health consultants or contract services and mental health training
3. Training on working with children with challenging behaviors and stress management

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Question 11

Please indicate whether the activities, relationships, and/or resources of your program during program year 2023-2024 provided adequate support to complete the following tasks/objectives to provide Professional Development services.

44.12%

52.94%

2.94%

■ There was no need for this in our program   ■ More support was needed to complete objective

■ Had adequate support to complete objective

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Question 12

Please indicate whether you feel that the activities, relationships, and/or resources of your program during program year 2023-2024, provided adequate support to complete the following tasks/objectives to provide Early Childhood Systems Development services:

Objectives	Had adequate support to complete objective	More support was needed to complete objective	There was no need for this in our program
Ability to operate program at full enrollment capacity in Head Start & Early Head Start		X	
Hiring and retaining high-quality early childhood educators		X	
Work in partnership with colleges, universities, State and local workforce boards to recruit and hire high-quality early childhood educators		X	
Engage in registered apprenticeship programs to recruit and hire high-quality early childhood educators		X	
Creating free Workforce Registry Accounts for early childhood staff through the Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS), and to participate in the professional development training available on the TECPDS		X	
Accessing professional development opportunities, including approved trainers from the TECPDS to support staff/program training		X	
Encourage early childhood staff to participate in Children's Learning Institute/CLIEngage		X	
Support early childhood staff to apply for financial aid and scholarship assistance, including TEACH		X	

For the **Professional Development** objectives 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.

1. Hiring and retaining high-quality early childhood educators
2. Ability to operate program at full enrollment capacity in Head Start & Early Head Start
3. Participation in TECPDS & CLI Engage

EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

Question 13

Point of notification: In my review of the data, charts, and individual responses, many of the responses were vaguely different than the actual chart percentages, which indicates that the information is inconsistent. As a result, the report includes inconsistent information.

Please indicate whether the activities, relationships, and/or resources of your program during program year 2023-2024 provided adequate support to complete the following tasks/objectives to provide Early Childhood System Development services.
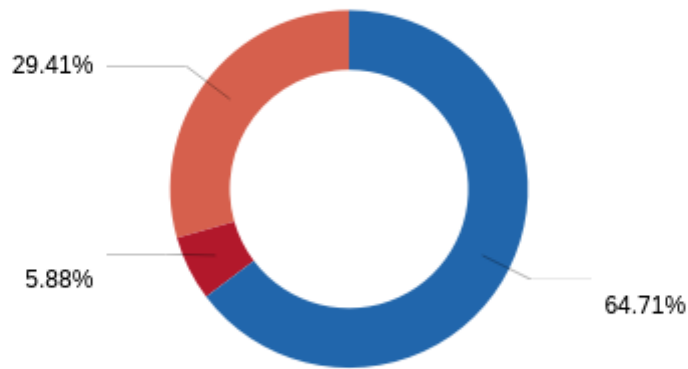
29.41%

5.88%

64.71%

■ There was no need for this in our program   ■ More support was needed to complete objective

■ Had adequate support to complete objective

EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT

Question 14

Please indicate whether you feel that the activities, relationships, and/or resources of your program during program year 2023-2024, provided adequate support to complete the following tasks/objectives to provide Early Childhood Systems Development services:

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

For the **Early Childhood Systems Development** objectives 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.

1. Recruiting, identifying, and retaining homeless families
2. Retaining high-quality early childhood educators including programs with childcare partners
3. Operating Head Start/Early Head Start at full capacity

GRANTEE SUMMARY

The updated Needs Assessment Survey provided results from which to measure and guide the work of the TXHSCO to engage in the 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
- Promoting and implementing a supportive workplace culture that prioritizes mental health and well-being of children and staff
- Identifying potential mental health needs and issues, and seeking appropriate support and resources
- Connecting families with services to support children with disabilities, including Early Childhood Intervention

Overall Health Needs
- Providing adequate resources and support for staff to cope with job-related stress to ensure that employees can maintain a healthy work-life balance
- Accessing mental health services, prevention and treatment services for children and families
- Evaluating children to determine eligibility for mental health services
- Providing a mental health consultant for children and staff
- Providing overall mental health and social-emotional support
- Providing social-emotional support to recognize the importance of social connections in students' mental health and academic success

Overall Services for Professional Development
- Hiring and retaining high-quality early childhood educators
- Ability to operate program at full enrollment capacity in Head Start & Early Head Start
- Participation in TECPDS & CLI Engage

Strengths/Early Childhood Systems Development
- Supporting children and families experiencing homelessness to connect with available early childhood services
- Building strategies for developing an equity lens to support staff to work, and children to learn in an equitable classroom environment

Overall/Early Childhood Systems Development
- Retaining high-quality early childhood educators
- Ability to operate program at full enrollment capacity in Head Start & Early Head Start
- Ability to provide adequate services with childcare partners

TXHSCO STRATEGIC PLAN
2024-2025

The updated TXHSCO 2024-2025 Strategic Plan reflects three (3) of eleven (11) Federal Priority Areas as noted in the updated Needs Assessment Report, which includes **Health Care, Professional Development, and Early Childhood Systems Development.**

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

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 2024-2025

Information in the **PURPLE** font is reflective of additional activities entered during the 2024-2025 fiscal year. The **ORANGE** font reflects 2023-2024. 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 the 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 agencies to support access to available services in local communities. Through engagement. 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)	TXHSCO Director Welfare/Child Welfare TXHSCO Director in collaboration with the Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health	(Year 3) (Year 4) (Year 5) (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:** 1. Child health & safety 2. Quality Environments 3. Equity	Continue to provide information on medical and dental providers that provide free and low-cost services to uninsured and undocumented children and families.	TXHSCO 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.	TXHSCO 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 fairs or educational events and assist with educating parents and/or caregivers on the importance of oral exams and follow-up dental care. Texas OHP will support oral health data sharing and collection. Update resourceful information to provide better support and outreach efforts at health fairs and community events. Include the OHS Health and safety initiatives in Health activities of the THSSCO to include Child Health & Safety, Quality Environments, & Equity. Increase the number of low-income infants, toddlers, & families who are universally screened and successfully connected to necessary services.	TXHSCO Director & Texas Oral Health Partners United Head Care Texas Dental TXHSCO Region VI OHS TTA	(Year 3) (Year 4) (Year 4) (Year 5)

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT			
Area	**Improvement Needed/ Action Steps**	**Person Responsible**	**Timeline**
Financial Aid and Scholarships Accessing financial aid and scholarship assistance for Head Start staff.	The THSSCO will work with the TECPDS Advisory Board to provide information regarding scholarships, and support for staff to obtain degrees.	TXHSCO	(Year 1-5)
Professional Development Accessing available free and low-cost professional development opportunities offering face-to-face and online learning for early childhood professionals, including infant and toddler teachers.	Work with the TECPDS staff, Advisory Board, Texas Early Learning Council, and the appointed workgroups to support goal 4 in the TELSP strategy: 4.1 – Provide high-quality professional development opportunities across the early childhood workforce. Infant-Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN) & Head Start Program Performance Standards Alignment Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS) Texas Infant-Toddler Network (ITSN) Children's Learning Institute Engage (CLIEngage) Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Texas Teacher Academy Texas School Ready (TSR) participation	TXHSCO Identified workgroup participants ITSN Team	(Year 1-5)
TECPDS Workforce Registry Increase awareness of and use of the TECPDS. Encourage non-registered Head Start Staff to register for Texas Workforce Registry accounts in the TECPDS.	TECPDS Staff participation in the Texas Head Start Association events: Board information/overview, participation in the TXHSA Conference, Providing bar codes, supporting participants to register. Continue to inform programs of TECPDS and support Workforce account registration Texas Workforce Registry Texas Trainer Registry TECPDS & Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework (ELOF) Alignment	TXHSCO TECPDS	(Year 5) (Year 4-5)

EARLY CHILDHOOD SYSTEMS DEVELOPMENT			
Area	**Improvement Needed/ Action Steps**	**Person Responsible**	**Timeline**
Coordinated Data Systems Work toward the coordination and implementation of a streamlined data system. Work with state efforts to collect and use data on early childhood programs to guide decision-making and improve child and family outcomes.	Include Head Start in the state data collection efforts, longitudinal studies, and data tracking system. 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.	THSSCO Director, Texas Early Learning Council (TELC) & State Team & State Agency Partners	(Year 3) (Year 4) (Year 5) (Year 4) (Year 5)
Partnerships with School Districts Work with the TEA to strengthen existing partnerships and to develop additional ones in communities with high-quality programs and childcare Collaborate with state systems to align early care and education services and supports for children and families prenatally to age 5.	Continue to strengthen existing partnerships and the development of collaborative partnerships between Head Start programs and LEAs where the needs exist, including MOUs. Supporting apprenticeship programs with state agency partners as appropriate and as it is possible. Continue to collaborate across systems and participate in meetings to support health, mental health, and social-emotional well-being. Continue to partner with state systems to support early childhood efforts across systems to reach children and families.	THSSCO Director, Texas Education Agency, Region VI OHS, Texas Early Learning Council, State agency partners THSSCO Director Infant Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN) Team TECPDS Staff & Advisory Board Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health	(Year 3) (Year 4) (Year 5) (Year 4) (Year 5)
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 Workforce Plan. Work to include HS/EHS in the Apprenticeship Program at CLI.	TXHSCO Region VI OHS & T/TA CLI (RAP)	(Year 4) (Year 5) (Year 4) (Year 5)

Child Care Partnerships	Work with the Texas Early Learning Council to support goals 2 and 5 in the TELSP, strategies: 2.1, 5.2 & 5.6 (Year 1-5)	TXHSCO	(Year 5)
Support access to full-day, full-year services, including those in rural areas.			

ADDITIONAL STRATEGIES			
Area	**Improvement Needed/ Action Steps**	**Person Responsible**	**Timeline**
Children Experiencing Homelessness Support the OHS Initiative to recruit and enroll 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. Participate in Caring Conversations Meetings with Region VI Training and Technical Assistance Family Engagement Specialist to support enrollment of children experiencing homelessness Continue to participate in meetings with the Texas Early Learning Interagency Collaborative Symposium (TELICS) to support enrollment of children experiencing homelessness Texas Oral Health Partners (TXOHP) will support recruitment efforts.	THSSCO Director, TEHCY Coordinator TXOHP Region VI T/TA	(Year 4) (Year 5) (Year 4) (Year 5)

THSSCO ACCOMPLISHMENTS/ACTIVITIES FOR 2023-2024

This report includes the development of, initiation, support, and active engagement in the activities as noted in the 2024-2025 Grant Application for the fiscal year (October 1, 2023 – September 29, 2024):

New Priority Area: Collaborate with state systems to align early care and education services and supports for children and families prenatally to age five

Priorities from Initial Application: Partnering with State Child Care Systems, Emphasizing EHS-CC partnerships; Family Access, Navigation & Engagement:

- Continue to participate as a Governor-Appointed member of the Texas Early Learning Council (TELC), engaging in the work of the PDG-B5 Grant and the development of the [Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan 2024-2026.](#)

- Developed a collaboration with the USDA Rural Development, State Coordinator for Homeless Families, and the Texas Single Family Housing Program Director to support the enrollment of children experiencing homelessness in rural communities and in other Head Start/Early Head Start programs in Texas.

- Continue to serve as a Deputy Ambassador for Help Me Grow/Learn the Signs Act Early, supporting the continuous participation of five (5) Early Head Start programs; this includes but is not limited to participating in quarterly meetings and supporting data. collection efforts, communication, and submitting annual work plans.

- Participate in quarterly meetings with the Texas Education Agency/ Early Childhood Program, Enrollment, and Partnership Specialist to engage in partnership discussions ranging from fostering partnerships in Head Start/Pathways to Head Start Partnerships (Local Education Agency Head Start Grantee and Non-Grantee Head Start), teacher qualifications, partnership models to supporting families, school districts, and children in centers. [Early Learning Public-Private Partnerships.](#)

- Provided information to those interested in partnering with HS/EHS programs, including a link to the Head Start Program Performance Standards, to ensure they understood the federal requirement for engaging in partnerships with programs.

- Encouraged interested HS/EHS programs to explore partnerships with childcare programs participating in Texas Rising Star (TRS), with at least a four-star rating.

- Supports participation of HS/EHS and childcare providers with accounts in the [Texas Workforce Registry](#).

- Continue to provide information, resources, and tools to childcare providers interested in partnering in various capacities and those in existing partnerships to better support parents in making quality childcare decisions.

- Supporting Head Start & Early Head Start programs in their efforts to engage in partnerships with HS/EHS.

- Texas Child Care Services (CCS) regulated providers are now required to participate in Texas Rising Star, thereby elevating the quality of the workforce and the services provided.

- Continue to participate in Quarterly [Texas Home Visiting](#) (THV) Consortium Meetings. THV is a free, voluntary program through which early childhood and health professionals regularly visit the homes of pregnant women and families with children under 6 years of age. Through the use of evidence-based models, the program supports positive child health and development outcomes, increases family self-sufficiency, and creates communities where children and families can thrive.

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

Priorities from Initial Application: Work with State efforts to collect data regarding early childhood programs and child outcomes; Integrated Data & System:

- The TXHSCO participated in the "Unraveling the Mystery of Texas Early Childhood Data" meetings in 2023 with state agency partners. The series of meetings was created specifically to provide better access and understanding of early childhood data to community-based organizations and collaboratives across our state:

  April: The Department of Family & Protective Services and United Way of Texas, for the first session, discussed the magical value of using data.

  May: The second session focused on community vision and how data can support that vision.

  June: The third session reflected on the May & June sessions and discussions on what the data says about our community.

  July: The final session reflected hearing from communities as they shared how using early childhood data has strengthened their work.

- The TXHSCO Director continues to serve as a Learn The Signs Act Early Deputy Ambassador, participating in quarterly meetings, working with early childhood systems to integrate the LTSAE materials and resources, and recruiting EHS programs to participate. Data from the first round of submissions from October through December/2023 includes the following:

  - 9 entries
  - 81 events
  - 1,476 families impacted in the quarter
  - 517 providers impacted in the quarter
  - Approximately 3,140 materials were given out in the quarter, not including all app brochures
  - Over 9,300 reached from digital communications
  - Biggest successes: people enjoy materials, more training requested, parents understand more about their child's development, increased engagement, and partnership within the community; materials added in welcome bags for ECI

- Continue to participate in meetings with First3Years /Houston Infant Toddler Coalition (HITC):
  - **HITC Vision:** Houston is a city where all infants and toddlers are thriving.
  - **HITC Mission:** Increase positive early experiences for infants and toddlers and best meet the needs of the families with young children in Houston.
  - **HITC Strategy:** Collectively develop and implement strategies for strengthening Houston's system of programs and services.

- Continue to participate in the Developmental Screening Workgroup meetings with HITC to support the Developmental Screening Landscape Analysis Roadmap and Early Childhood Integrated Data System Toolkit Guide. The HITC works to support Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) in Harris County.

- Continue to participate as a governor-appointed member of the Texas Early Learning Council (TELC) to engage in the work of the Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan 2024-2026.

- Provided HS/EHS data to various state and 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 TXHSCO 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)

- Provided data and information for the Texas Early Learning Council Data Roadmap Work Group to develop the Texas Early Childhood Integrated Data System Roadmap. (ECIDS). A more detailed view of Texas early childhood data systems and potential linkages can be found in a companion report: Texas Early Childhood Data Landscape and Inventory.

- **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:

    o Better insight into how early childhood services are utilized across Texas.
    o Improved decisions regarding the use and refinement of early childhood programs.
    o Clearer information for stakeholders and policymakers.
    o Better outcomes for the children and families of Texas.

- The data will be used to Identify bright spots, identify gaps in services, identify underserved populations, identify opportunities to align programs and services, identify where early childhood services correlate with child progress in key metrics, inform coordination across our programs, and tell Texas' story of collective investment in early childhood.
- Continue to provide annual HS/EHS PIR Data for the [Early Childhood Texas](#) Website, and state agencies to support data-sharing efforts.

New Priority Area: Support the expansion of and access to high-quality workforce and career development opportunities for staff.

Priorities from Initial Application: Supporting the expansion of, and access to, high-quality workforce and career development opportunities for staff; Collaboration with Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS); Workforce Recruitment, Retention & Support:

Texas Early Learning Strategic Plan 2024-2026 - Goal 2, Strategy 2.1 - Increase financial support of the early learning workforce.

- Worked with the Children's Learning Institute/Infant Toddler Specialist Network (ITSN) staff to align the Early Learning Outcomes Framework with ITSN Professional Learning Communities for Teachers. Training was provided to EHS administrators and infant/toddler staff who registered to participate. One of the goals of the performance goals for the TXHSCO Director is to increase EHS infant/toddler staff participation in the ITSN. [ITSN-EHS Alignment Document.](#)
- Recruited HS/EHS coaches to participate in the Core Competencies for Coaching (C3PD) Professional Development Program Fall 2023 study cohort. C3PD is a study funded by the National Institute of Education Sciences to develop a program that systematically prepares and trains early childhood coaches in a variety of school settings. The program focuses on building

coaches' competency in specific behaviors and skills that can be used to help teachers improve the quality of their classrooms

- Enhancements were made to the TECPDS to include Texas ECE Career Pathways.

- **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.

- **Statewide system** - Continue to work with HS/EHS Program Administrators to register their programs and encourage staff to establish free accounts on the TECPDS 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).

- The CLI Engage ECE Professional Micro-Credentials are available to Texas Early Childhood Professionals. The Micro-Credentials provide learners with professional development acknowledgment for skills and competencies developed throughout their careers.

- The TECPDS Certificate Generation Tool provides opportunities for all trainers to create certificates that meet all state requirements for their training participants.

- **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 (NHSA), The Office of Head Start (OHS), and professional development opportunities offered from state agency partners.

- **Trainer requirements and tracking** – Share free resources and recorded training opportunities posted on the TXHSCO website. The TXHSCO Director serves on the TECPDS Advisory Committee, as a direct line for support and engagement. Participates in the Texas Head Start and Region VI Head Start Association, the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children (TXAEYC), the National Association for the Education of Young Children

(NAEYC), and the National Workforce Registry, providing information and sharing training and professional development opportunities, and exposure to the TECPDS.

- **Statewide System & Early Childhood Professional Tracking** - Serves on the [T.E.A.C.H.](#) Advisory Board to support the Texas early childhood workforce to obtain scholarships to continue their higher education and to obtain a degree. [Early Childhood Career Pathways](#). [Find my Career Pathway Tool](#).

- **Connecting to Head Start professional development requirements** - Engaged in opportunities to support the CLI management team and assist co-workers in carrying out the Texas School Ready Initiatives that support HS/EHS staff to participate in the professional development opportunities. Recruited HS/EHS staff to participate in several Texas State Initiatives and grant opportunities at CLI.

- [Texas A&M AgriLife Extension's online childcare training](#) website offers a wide range of courses with certificates for workers looking to complete state-mandated training requirements, professional development, and CDA Resource Brief Description renewal requirements. Texas A&M AgriLife Extension is now integrated with TECPDS accounts for automatic certificate transfer.

- [Camp Fire First Texas](#) has been providing quality, early education workforce development for more than 20 years and has guided generations of Early Education Professionals along their unique career pathway. All of our instructors are members of the Texas Trainer Registry (TECPDS), and courses are recognized by Texas Child Care Licensing for clock-hour training and Continuing Professional Education (CPE) Credit requirements.

- Articulation Agreements are in place at several community and four-year colleges/universities in Texas to support early childhood professionals to transfer class credits between institutions and academic programs to ensure a pathway to achieve higher education without disruption and repeating classes. Refer to:
  - [Texas Early Childhood Education Degree Articulation Toolkit.](#)

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- o [Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board](#)

- The TXHSCO provided information and input in the agenda planning, PowerPoint presentation, and development of the Region VI OHS "Workforce Innovations Plan": Exploring Apprenticeships.

- The TXHSCO provided information and input to the Region VI OHS on the state of Texas to support the development of the [Region VI Workforce Planning Resource Guide 2024](#).

New Priority Area: Coordinate with school systems to ensure continuity and alignment across programs, as appropriate.

Priorities from Initial Application: Work with State school systems to ensure continuity between Head Start and Kindergarten Entrance Assessment (KEA); Transition to Kindergarten:

- Continue to participate in quarterly meetings with the Inter-Agency Deputy Director of the Early Childhood Support Office of School Programs/Early Childhood Education Division at the Texas Education Agency and the new Family Engagement team members at TEA to engage in collaboration to support early childhood across the state:

- Continue to participate in events, meetings, trainings, and activities with the Texas Early Learning Collaborative Symposium (TELCS):

  - o The TXHSCO participated in the virtual Winter Symposium, December 13 & 14, 2023 on Best Practices and Legal Foundation for Inclusion.

  - o The Spring Texas Early Learning Collaborative Symposium (TELCS) was held on April 10, 2024, hosted by the Texas Workforce Commission Child Care & Early Learning Division and Health and Human Services Commission Child Care Regulation. The Spring Symposium was specifically for staff who contribute to supporting the quality of early childhood programs in Texas to continue our work of cross-collaboration to build high-quality child care in Texas.

- The TELCS members and other state agency partners that participated in the Texas Early Learning Collaborative Symposium supported the development of the [TELCS Digital Notebook](#), which includes agency/program updates, data sources, links to resources, and the recording link for the Spring TELCS. The notebook provides an overview of the early childhood system and the resources available in Texas and is meant to be used as an internal resource to assist staff who work with child care and early learning programs or families with resources and support.

- Participate in quarterly meetings with the 619 Coordinator for Texas, to support children with disabilities to receive Early Childhood Special Education Services (ECSE): Children who meet eligibility criteria may receive Early Childhood Special Education services in a variety of settings such as a pre-kindergarten classroom, in the home, or in community settings such as Head Start and pre-school.

- Additional activities/engagement to support children with disabilities include:
  - Participating in monthly National Head Start Association & Collaboration Directors' Meetings with state 619 Coordinators.
  - Participating in the International Inclusion Institute, held May 7-9, 2024, and May 16-18, 2023 in Charlotte, North Carolina.

- The [CLI Engage](#) platform is available at no cost to all Texas public schools.

- Continues to participate in quarterly meetings with the Inter-Agency Deputy Director of the Early Childhood Support Office of School Programs/Early Childhood Education Division at the Texas Education Agency and the new Family Engagement team members at TEA to support alignments of early childhood programs in the state.

- Head Start and early childhood programs have access to the [Texas Early Childhood Guide to Kindergarten Transitions](#), which was developed by the TXHSCO in collaboration with Power Your Potential Professional Development to aid in their efforts to prepare and support kindergarten transitions for children, families, staff, and partners.

Regional priorities:

1. **Supporting the Enrollment of Children Experiencing Homeless Families**

2. **Racial Equity & Equality**

3. **Family and Fatherhood Engagement**

4. **Health/Mental Health**

5. **State: Obesity Prevention**

Supporting the Enrollment of Children Experiencing Homelessness:

Developed additional partnerships and collaborations with additional agencies/individuals to engage in working to enroll children and families experiencing homelessness:

- Region VI Training and Technical Assistance Family Engagement Specialist.

- Participated in the Family Foundation Event on April 30, 2024, hosted by Region the VI Training and Technical Assistance Family Engagement Specialist: Caring Conversations with the Family Foundation Network, to provide a brief overview of the TXHSCO National Priorities, the activities of our office to address enroll children experiencing homelessness, and to provide updated HS/EHS program rosters to share with their contacts and to support enrolling children.

- Developed a partnership with the State Director for Rural Development and the Texas Single Family Housing Program Director/Texas Rural Development to share the TXHSCO Priorities and rosters of HS/EHS programs.

- Shared a link to the video on Head Start Early Childhood Learning & Knowledge Center Website from the Office of Head Start Director/Mr. Khari Garvin with HS/EHS Administrators and agency partners involved in working with homeless children and families: Children and Families Experiencing Homelessness.

- Participate in quarterly meetings 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, training, and conferences to share information and to work together in our efforts to support Head Start and Texas early childhood programs.

- Participate in meetings with the Education Service Center Staff to provide an overview of the TXHSCO National Priorities, discuss their needs, and provide updated contact information for HS/EHS Administrators and programs to support enrolling children.

- **Region VI Systems Specialists Enhancing Services To The Homeless Population Action/Implementation Plan (August 2020 through July 2025)**
    - **Strategy 5** - Connect with active organizations/persons from each state to stay informed of state initiatives & prospective collaborations
    - **Strategy 6** - Establish a current list of Stakeholders at the regional level for advisory input and ongoing implementation
    - **Strategy 13** - Plan a Regional meeting/conference for all Champions for Homelessness representatives to meet and showcase work being done in their programs as well as receive training updates and materials.
    - **Strategy 15** - Collaborate with HS State Associations to present information supporting the Region VI Homelessness Systems Project at conferences

- Participate in monthly meetings with the Head Start Collaboration Office Homeless Learning Community (HSCOLC). The HSCOLC consists of collaboration directors connecting to share information, resources, tools, training, webinars, guest facilitators/presenters, etc., to support better engagement with agencies and organizations that serve homeless families in our respective states.

- Participate in quarterly meetings with the Federal Region 6 Interagency Council on Homelessness on a variety of presentations centered around supporting homeless families.
- Participate in meetings/webinars with the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness to learn of the federal guidance to facilitate current conversations taking place in communities and people with lived experience.

Racial Equity & Equality:

- Participated in webinars with the National Center on Early Childhood Development, Teaching, and Learning on equitable practices.
- Participate in the "Parenting While Black" monthly Webinars and shared the links to the training with HS/EHS program administrators to share with their staff and families.
- Shared training information and links to resources are shared with HS/EHS programs to access and use as needed and participate in the many webinars and trainings offered.

Family and Fatherhood Engagement

- Participate in the Texas Fatherhood Summit on June 1, 2023, in Austin. The overarching goal of the Fatherhood Summit was to build and share a comprehensive approach to supporting Texas fathers and their families.
  - Developed new partnerships while attending the summit with (Dr. Jerry Roberson/High-Performance Coach & David Bryant/Texas Department of Family and Protective Services) to provide support to HS/EHS.
- **September 14, 2023 -** Texas Head Start Association Virtual Leadership Forum, **"Knowing Our Why – Head Start Children and Families."**
- The TXHSCO developed a Consultant Agreement with Dr. Jerry Roberson,/Cognitive High-Performance Coach, to serve as the Keynote Speaker. His presentation was on "More Than the

Contributory Effect." The goal of the training was to support growing stronger families, with an emphasis on engaging fathers.

- Dr. Jerry Roberson provided follow-up sessions to HS/EHS programs, taking a deeper dive into the September 14 presentation on Fathers. The follow-up [Fatherhood and Family Engagement](#) Training included Head Start Administrators, Site Directors, Fathers and Family Engagement Staff, Family Services Staff, Fathers & Families

- Developed a partnership with [Anthem Strong Families](#) to explore common points of interest to support HS/EHS families and fathers. The TXHSCO presented an overview of the priorities of the collaboration office and participated in a presentation from their program. Resources and links to tools were shared with programs to use as needed and to make connections with Anthem Strong Families to provide professional development, in-service, and training to staff and families.

- The TXHSCO collaborated with **Dan Griffin** and **Harrison Crawford** at the International Fatherhood Conference in April/2023. They completed the development of the Trauma-Informed Curriculum for Fathers – [Amazing Dads!](#) The link to the curriculum was shared with HS/EHS to connect with them to implement the curriculum in their programs or to engage with Mr. Griffin and Mr. Crawford to provide training at the discretion of the program.

- Shared Fatherhood and Family Engagement information with HS/EHS Programs and partners involved in Family and Fatherhood Engagement:
    - [Fathers and Families Coalition of America](#) trainings, professional development & conferences
    - [Parent Leader Network](#) training on a variety of subjects
    - [Anthem Strong Families](#) training, tools, materials, and information

- The TXHSCO Director is scheduled to attend the National Fatherhood Conference in Atlanta, GA, August 13-15, 2024, to continue to develop new partnerships and determine additional means to work to strengthen family and fatherhood engagement in Texas.

Health/Mental Health:

- The TXHSCO 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.

- Participate in meetings with the Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health to support HS/EHS engagement and participation.

- Continue to work in collaboration with the Texas Institute for Excellence in Mental Health by participating in meetings and sharing free training opportunities, information, and materials with HS/EHS programs on developmental screenings and other early childhood supportive help.

Additional State Activities:

Oral Health

- Continue to lead the Texas Oral Health Partners by participating in quarterly meetings to support HS/EHS programs with information to aid families in enrolling children in dental homes and to provide resources, information, and oral health reports on children in early childhood programs in Texas.

- Continue to partner with United Health Care(UHC) Texas Dental to implement the activities outlined in their 2023-2024 Performance Improvement Project (PIP) Plan for submission to the State. As part of our indicated collaboration for this PIP, UHC provides a collaborative intervention to partner with Head Start organizations statewide to provide educational materials regarding oral health, attend Head Start health fairs or educational events, and assist with educating parents and/or caregivers on the importance of oral exams and follow up dental care. The UHC Team participates in quarterly meetings with the Texas Oral Health Partners.

- Supported the recruitment of HS/EHS teachers from nine (9) programs to participate in the (CARE) Study at CLI research study for the 2024-2025 Program Year. The CARE Grant is funded by the Administration for Children and Families. This study focuses on implementing and evaluating the CARE program, which aims to significantly reduce stress, burnout, and turnover among Head Start and Early Head Start educators, while also promoting their psychological and professional well-being. For a brief overview of the study, please see the attached flyer. Participation in the program comes at no cost to your agency, and teachers will receive stipends for their participation.
  - The CARE program is in line with the recently proposed changes to the Head Start Program Performance Standards, especially in regard to the integration of mental health services.
- Continue to participate in quarterly meetings with the Texas Homeless Education Children & Youth Office to:
  - Participate in annual training to inform the team and the Education Service Center (ESC) Staff of the priorities and functions of the TXHSCO.
  - Provide updated HS/EHS Administrators and Program Rosters to ESC staff to support enrollment efforts.
  - Continue to provide program administrators with web links to access conferences, free training, resources, and materials.
- Provide HS/EHS Programs with information to support partnering with Education Service Center McKinney Vento Staff to support enrollment of children.

The TXHSCO participates in both the Texas Head Start Association (TXHSA) & Region VI Head Start Association in all aspects. Participation includes but is not limited to working with the board of the TXHSA in collaboration with the TXHSA Consulting Team, in-person and virtual board meetings, Regional and TXHSA conferences, committee assignments, strategic planning, activities, and training

at the local, state, and regional levels. The TXHSCO is involved in the TXHSA planning and

implementing activities that support HS/EHS Programs. The TXHSA and the Region VI Head Start

Association Board members receive quarterly reports of the activities of the TXHSCO.

HSCO

Head Start Collaboration Office

THE STATE OF TEXAS

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