

Agency Coordination for

YOUTH PREVENTION & INTERVENTION

October 2022

TEXAS
JUVENILE★JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT



Texas Department of
Family and Protective Services



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Executive Summary

The following report was prepared by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJDD), the Texas Education Agency (TEA), and the Texas Military Department (TMD) in accordance with Article IX, Section 17.05 of the 2022-2023 General Appropriations Act. The Texas Legislature directed the named state agencies to coordinate the delivery of juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services. Additionally, the group is required to submit a report to the Legislative Budget Board providing detailed information on the monitoring, tracking, utilization, outcome, and effectiveness of all juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services for the preceding five fiscal year period.

To carry out this work, an interagency workgroup was formed with representation from the four named state agencies. The interagency workgroup collaborates to achieve the following goals:

1. Increasing interagency understanding of state programming regarding juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services;
2. Identifying key considerations in service coordination, planning, and delivery; and
3. Identifying opportunities to enhance the coordination, planning, and delivery of prevention and intervention services.

In the following report, each of the named agencies summarizes its juvenile delinquency and dropout prevention and intervention efforts including a snapshot of services, eligibility criteria, and outcomes from each program for which data is tracked. The complete matrix is found in Appendix A. Each agency submits brief overviews of its dropout and delinquency prevention efforts, including monitoring information, outcomes, and available data.

This report includes the legislatively-required information and a description of coordination activities accomplished by the workgroup to date. In addition, the report also includes an examination of the continuing impact of truancy reform enacted by the 84th Texas Legislature on the delivery of dropout prevention, delinquency prevention, and intervention services; the prevalence of serious mental health concerns in youth served by these prevention and intervention programs; and opportunities to further improve the coordination of services.

SECTION 1: Legislative Charge

Article IX, Section 17.05 of the 2022-2023 General Appropriations Act reads as follows:

From funds appropriated above for the purpose of juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services, the Department of Family and Protective Services, the Juvenile Justice Department, the Texas Education Agency, and the Texas Military Department shall coordinate the delivery of juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services. Juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services are programs or services that are aimed at preventing academic failure, failure on state assessments, dropout, juvenile delinquency, truancy, runaways, and children living in family conflict. Each of the agencies listed above shall coordinate services with the others to prevent redundancy and to ensure optimal service delivery to youth at risk of engaging in delinquency and/or dropping out of school. Programs shall demonstrate effectiveness through established outcomes.

Not later than October 1 of each year, the agencies shall provide to the Legislative Budget Board, detailed monitoring, tracking, utilization, outcome, and effectiveness information on all juvenile delinquency prevention and dropout prevention and intervention services for the preceding five fiscal year period. The reports shall include information on the impact of all juvenile delinquency and dropout prevention and intervention initiatives and programs delivered or monitored by the agencies.

SECTION 2: Interagency Workgroup: A Shared Understanding

Through coordination of services, the workgroup members of the agencies named in Rider 17.05 established a shared understanding of priorities that will lead to optimal success in supporting positive youth development and decreasing dropout and delinquency rates. These priorities include the following:

- (1) **Recognize that trauma impacts the way children and youth think, learn, and behave.** Science has proven that the stress hormones that result from trauma can impact a developing brain, and when present in high levels and/or over long periods, stress hormones can physically alter structures in a child's brain that control decision-making, regulation of emotions, and the processing of information. Accordingly, programs that prevent, treat, or mitigate the impact of trauma increase resilience and strengthen children and youth.¹
- (2) **Implement interventions that target both risk factors and protective factors linked to reducing dropout and delinquency.** To holistically reduce dropout and delinquency rates, it is essential to both target those youth with the highest risk factors and to teach them protective factors that build their resilience to inevitable life challenges so that they are more successful at home, in school, and as adults.
- (3) **Align and coordinate with other programs that target common risk and protective factors.** A strong interconnectedness exists among dropout, delinquency, and other social problems such as truancy, substance abuse, abuse and neglect, suicide, teen pregnancy, and domestic violence. Prevention efforts that focus exclusively on one domain and fail to acknowledge the strong interconnectedness among risk factors stunt state goals to reduce negative outcomes and increase positive outcomes.
- (4) **View prevention and intervention efforts as a continuum and on-going endeavors.** Resiliency develops over time by building upon protective factors, such as relationships established in early childhood, and evolving as a child grows into school age and adolescence. **This continuum of support must include**

¹ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. SAMHSA's concept of trauma and guidance for a trauma-informed approach. HHS publication no. (SMA) 14-4884. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

families, schools, and communities in order to best increase protective factors and decrease risk factors among children and youth.

- (5) **Recognize the roles of families, schools, and communities in increasing protective factors and decreasing risk factors among children and youth.** Families, schools and communities can present both risk factors (dropout, delinquency, social concerns and support gaps) and opportunities to introduce protective factors. Targeting these environments for intervention efforts is vital.
- (6) **Recognizing the research-based connection between mental health and dropout rates.** According to the National Institute of Mental Health, approximately one in five youth aged 13 – 18 will experience a severe mental disorder at some point during their life. Canadian researchers found that older teens living with depression were twice as likely to drop out of high school as their peers without depression. This was the first study of its kind to assess depression symptoms among high school students the year before dropout.²
- (7) **Identify efficiencies in service delivery models that resulted from implementation changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic.** During the pandemic, all service delivery models were affected and modified to account for the health and safety of child and family participants. Through this process, each partner agency experienced new efficiencies, such as virtual service provision, that may impact long-term program design and operation. It is important to document and share these learnings.

SECTION 3: An Overview of Juvenile Delinquency and Dropout Prevention and Intervention Services in Texas

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS)

Prevention and Early Intervention Programs

The Prevention and Early Intervention Division (PEI) within DFPS was created by statute in 1999 and is charged with assisting communities in identifying, developing, and delivering high quality prevention and early intervention programs. These programs promote opportunities for partnerships with families that capitalize on the strengths of parents and children together to build healthy families and resilient communities, upstream from crisis and the need for intensive interventions. Services are voluntary and are provided at no cost to participants; however, not all services are available statewide.

While DFPS considers all prevention efforts strategies to strengthen families and outcomes for children, certain programs also have a preventative effect on juvenile delinquency and potential for school drop-out. The Community Youth Development (CYD), Statewide Youth Services Network (SYSN), and Family and Youth Success (FAYS) programs are specifically designed to target services to older children and promote positive youth development.

An analysis of Texas rates of dropouts and delinquency show a disparate number of children and youth of minorities and/or from high-risk communities in the juvenile justice system and truancy courts. CYD, SYSN, and FAYS serve children and youth in high-risk areas across the state and have a demonstrated, historical impact to effect a positive change for youth. As such, these programs address disparities by improving outcomes for children and youth belonging to a minority or high-risk community.

COVID-19 Response

DFPS continues to support grantees in navigating the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. During 2022, the majority of PEI programs resumed in-person service provision.

² Dupéré, Véronique, et al. "High School Dropout in Proximal Context: The Triggering Role of Stressful Life Events." *Child Development*, vol. 89, no. 2, Mar. 2018, pp. e107–e122. EBSCOhost, doi:10.1111/cdev.12792.

Though in-person services resumed for PEI clients, outreach and recruitment efforts continued to be drastically impacted by the pandemic. Grantees used creative methods to address this, including virtual community meetings, drive-through basic needs events such as food distributions, and outdoor and virtual programming. PEI also partnered with the Bright by Text program, a nationwide text messaging service for parents and caregivers of children 0-8, as a means for added connection to families during a time of isolation. As an element of its universal prevention campaign, PEI is working with Texas Public Broadcasting and grantees to increase family enrollment and to connect families to valuable local resources. In addition, grantees reported an increase in issues related to workforce recruitment and retention. This greatly impacted service provision to clients and is further discussed in the Considerations section of this report.

Monitoring, Tracking, and Effectiveness

PEI monitors contracts through a statewide monitoring plan based on an annual risk assessment of contracted grantees that includes analysis of fiscal, administrative, and programmatic areas. Contracts are regularly monitored through a review of data and reports from the Prevention and Early Intervention Reporting System and quarterly program reports submitted by each contractor. If PEI identifies a deficiency or concern regarding contract performance, contract managers and/or program specialists work with contractors to implement a Corrective Action Plan. Performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies are listed below by fiscal year.

Community Youth Development

Through the Community Youth Development (CYD) program, PEI provides funding and technical assistance to community-based organizations to foster positive youth development and build healthy families and resilient communities. CYD grantees provide juvenile delinquency prevention services in 23 targeted zip codes with a high incidence of juvenile crime and other risk factors. Communities prioritize and develop prevention services according to local needs. Core programmatic components include mentoring, youth leadership development, and parental involvement, as well as ancillary programming providing life-skills classes, conflict resolution, tutoring, career preparation, and recreation. The 87th Legislature continued its investment in CYD by appropriating approximately \$1,000,000 in federal funding for expansion.

Client Eligibility: Youth ages 6-17, with a focus on youth ages 10-17, who live in or attend school in one of the designated zip codes.

Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for Fiscal Years 2017-2021 are listed below:

Table 1. Community Youth Development

Description	Fiscal Year 2017	Fiscal Year 2018	Fiscal Year 2019	Fiscal Year 2020	Fiscal Year 2021
Percentage of CYD youth not referred to juvenile probation	98.4%	98.14%	98.10%	98.49%	98.71%
Annual number of youth served	15,159	17,324	19,219	15,580	15,293
Average monthly number of youth served	5,083	8,323	9,317	6,792	6,514

Source: DFPS Databook

STATEWIDE YOUTH SERVICES NETWORK

The Statewide Youth Services Network (SYSN) program creates a statewide network of youth programs aimed at positive youth development for youth ages 6 to 17. PEI funds allow state-level grantees to identify areas that may benefit from additional resources and target specific support to local communities. Examples of services provided include mentoring and youth skills development. These programs seek to prevent juvenile delinquency and create positive outcomes for youth by increasing protective factors.

Client Eligibility: At-risk youth between the ages of 6-17 years of age, with an emphasis on youth ages 10-17.

Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for Fiscal Years 2017-2021 are listed below:

Table 2. Statewide Youth Services Network

Description	Fiscal Year 2017	Fiscal Year 2018	Fiscal Year 2019	Fiscal Year 2020	Fiscal Year 2021
Percentage of SYSN youth not referred to juvenile probation	98.8%	98.59%	98.9%	98.99%	99.10%
Annual number of youth served	3,866	3,718	3,964	3,550	3,457
Average monthly number of youth served	2,296	2,728	3,038	2,159	1,971

Source: DFPS Databook

FAMILY AND YOUTH SERVICES

The Family and Youth Success (FAYS) program addresses family conflict and everyday struggles while promoting strong families and youth resilience. Every FAYS provider offers one-on-one coaching or counseling with a trained professional and group-based learning for youth and parents. FAYS programs also operate a 24-hour hotline for families having urgent needs.

Client Eligibility: Families with youth under 18 years old who are dealing with family conflict or everyday struggles. In some areas of the state, FAYS only provides services to families with children 6-17 years of age.

Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for Fiscal Years 2017-2021 are listed below:

Table 3. Family and Youth Success Program

Description	Fiscal Year 2017	Fiscal Year 2018	Fiscal Year 2019	Fiscal Year 2020	Fiscal Year 2021
Percentage of FAYS youth not referred to juvenile probation	95.00%	93.75%	93.58%	94.20%	95.75%
Annual number of youth served	25,278	25,971	25,208	20,343	18377
Average monthly number of youth served	6,142	7,056	8,155	5,963	5,556

Source: DFPS Databook

Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD)

PREVENTION AND EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAMS

The Prevention and Early Intervention Programs of the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD) are authorized in section 203.0065 of the Texas Human Resources Code. The programs were first initiated in early 2012 when the Texas Juvenile Justice Board established a community-based prevention and early intervention funding strategy from existing resources. Beginning in Fiscal Year (FY) 2014, TJJD received a legislative appropriation to support this strategy.

Section 203.0065 of the Texas Human Resources Code defines prevention and intervention services as “programs and services intended to prevent or intervene in at-risk behaviors that lead to delinquency, truancy, dropping out of school, or referral to the juvenile justice system.” The statute defines populations to be served through these services are at-risk youth, ages six through 17 years old and their families.

Probation departments collaborate with a variety of providers to offer a range of services to youth ages 6 to 17 years who are at increased risk of later involvement with the juvenile justice system. Some departments collaborate with local community youth service organizations to provide educational assistance, mentoring, character development, and skills building (e.g. problem solving, anger management, conflict resolution skills, etc.) after school or during summers. Other departments focus on providing parents of at-risk youth with the skills, services, and supports they need to better manage their children’s challenging behaviors.

Through a competitive request for proposals process in early 2012, TJJD initially awarded \$1.4 million in grant funds to 24 probation departments to implement prevention and early intervention programs for youth who were not under departmental supervision but who were identified to be at increased risk of delinquency, truancy, dropping out of school, or referral to the juvenile justice system. Since then, TJJD has increased funding and added several grants. In FY 2020, prevention and early intervention grant funds

were provided to support 31 counties, totaling \$2,571,050.

However, in March of FY 2020, many of the prevention and intervention programs funded by TJJJ were put on hold while the state shut down in response to COVID-19. At the time, nearly all of these programs required face-to-face contact, and little was understood about exactly how virus transmission occurred. Eventually, some of these programs moved to a virtual model much the way school districts implemented virtual learning.

As a result of the pandemic and the subsequent economic downturn, in June of 2020, TJJJ was required to reduce its funding for the FY 2020-2021 biennium allocation by 5%. This resulted in cuts to many programs across the agency, including but not limited to the prevention and intervention programs funded by the agency for FY 2021. TJJJ funds for these programs were discontinued at the end of FY 2020. The 87th legislature reinstated TJJJs prevention and intervention funding for FY 2022-2023. As a result, TJJJ distributed a request for proposals to the probation field for FY 2022 to re-establish prevention and intervention programs run by local probation departments. In total, TJJJ awarded \$3,012,177 to 27 juvenile probation departments for FY 2022. Performance data for these programs will be provided in next year’s report.

Monitoring, Tracking, and Effectiveness

Contracts for the prevention and early intervention services are regularly reviewed through the submission of annual fiscal and programmatic reports, monthly data provision, and quarterly data reports. If a deficiency or issue is identified regarding performance, TJJJ staff works with grant recipients to immediately remedy the situation. Data is analyzed to assess rates of successful program completion and the prevention programs’ impact on participants’ likelihood to be formally referred to the juvenile justice system. Additionally, agreements with the Texas Education Agency facilitate data matches for participants with parental consent to assess the prevention programs’ impact on discipline referrals, school absences, and graduation rates for students aged 17 and up.

It is worthy to note, due to budget cuts requested by state leadership in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, no juvenile probation department received TJJJ funding for youth participation in prevention and intervention programs during FY 2021.

Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for FY 2016-2020 are listed below:

Table 3. TJJJ Prevention and Early Intervention Programs

Description	Fiscal Year 2017	Fiscal Year 2018	Fiscal Year 2019	Fiscal Year 2020	Fiscal Year 2021
Number of youth who started in program during the fiscal year	3,046	3,140	2,693	2,102	N/A
Number of youth who ended the program during the fiscal year	2,766	3,006	3,239	2,235	N/A
Percentage of youth completing prevention program successfully	92.1%	92.0%	93.5%	95.4%	N/A
Percentage of eligible youth not referred to juvenile probation during program participation	96.8%	96.2%	96.7%	98.3%	N/A
Number of youth for whom consents were received (not unduplicated)	1,467	1,334	1,312	556	N/A
Percentage of youth with the same or fewer school absences	55.5%	53.9%	55.0%	62.6%	N/A

Description	Fiscal Year 2017	Fiscal Year 2018	Fiscal Year 2019	Fiscal Year 2020	Fiscal Year 2021
Number of youth with discipline referrals (not unduplicated)	857	695	659	332	N/A
Percentage of youth with the same or decreased number of discipline referrals	80.3%	79.6%	75.1%	91.0%	N/A

The majority, or 98.3%, of youth starting a TJJD-funded prevention and intervention program in FY 2020 did not have a subsequent formal referral to juvenile probation department within one year of starting the program.

TJJD received data from the Texas Education Agency on students with a consent form signed by a parent or guardian. An analysis of this data compared student absence rates and disciplinary referrals during the twelve-weeks prior to entering a TJJD-funded prevention and intervention program and the twelve-weeks after program completion. For students completing a program in FY 2020 and included in this analysis (N=556), 56.1% experienced a decrease in absence rates after program exit, while 6.5% maintained their absence rate after program exit. In sum, 62.6% of students included in the analysis were able to maintain or have fewer absences after program participation.

Additionally, among students completing a program in FY 2020 and included in this analysis (N=332), 62.0% continued to have the same number of disciplinary referrals after program exit, while 28.9% experienced a decrease in the number of disciplinary referrals after program exit. In sum, 91.0% of students included in the analysis were able to maintain or have fewer disciplinary referrals after program participation.

Texas Education Agency (TEA)

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides state and federal grants to school districts, charter schools, non-profit organizations, and other eligible entities to implement dropout prevention related services for grade K-12 students who are identified as at-risk of dropping out of school. Specifically, TEA administers numerous services and programs aligned with best-practice research to mitigate barriers for students at-risk of dropping out of school. Throughout this report an overview of these programs and services are outlined.

Division of Highly Mobile and At-Risk Student Programs

The Highly Mobile and At-Risk Student Programs Division was established in 2017 to improve resources and support to address the needs of highly mobile and at-risk students. Specifically, this Division serves special populations including youth experiencing homelessness, in foster care, military connected, pregnant and parenting, or a victim of human trafficking. In addition to serving these specific populations, the Division participates in several state stakeholder advisory and legislatively required committees to strengthen collaboration and services for at-risk students.

[Highly Mobile & At-Risk Student Programs](#)

Details concerning each program area are provided below:

Table 4. Student Group by PEIMS Enrollment, Texas Public Schools (2021-2022)

Description	Total Number	Percent of Population
Foster Care	14,181	.2%
Homeless	61,687	1.1%
Military	176,554	3.3%

Description	Total Number	Percent of Population
Total Number of At-Risk Students	2,901,015	53.4%
Total Number of Students	5,427,370	100%

Foster Care and Student Success Initiative:

The TEA Public Education Information Management System’s (PEIMS) total enrollment count for school year 2020-2021 identified 14,181 students in foster care enrolled in Texas Public schools. However, similarly reported data from Texas Department of Family and Protective Services during fiscal year 2021, there were 28,753 children in DFPS Managing Conservatorship³. The discrepancy in data highlights that Texas schools are under-reporting students in foster care by over 14,000 students and that additional resources are needed to assist TEA and DFPS with a data-system to support information-sharing between DFPS and Local Education Agencies.

Table 5. Grade 9 Four-Year Longitudinal Graduation and Dropout Rates for Students in Foster Care⁴, Class of 2018, 2019, 2020

Year	Graduation Rate	Dropout Rate
2020	61.4%	23%
2019	62.6%	25%
2018	63.4%	22.5%

Key Activities:

- TEA updated the Texas Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide. This comprehensive guide update includes law changes from three Texas Legislative sessions, new resources and updated guidance throughout. The additions also include two new Chapters, a chapter on the Every Student Succeeds Act (2016) (Chapter 8) and Trauma-Informed School Supports, Mental Health and Discipline (Chapter 10).
- TEA is updating the adopted Commissioner Rules⁵ concerning school transitions for students who are in substitute care⁶ and students experiencing homelessness, to support implementation of TEC § 25.007. These rules define how districts must support students, in the event of a school move, and ease the burden of school transitions.
- TEA developed a local education agency self-assessment, that is used by LEAs to assess the effectiveness of their services and support for students in foster care. This is in alignment with the Results Driven Accountability system, that integrates highly mobile student groups (foster care, homeless, military-connected) as a required group in the 21-22 school year.
- TEA continues to serve on the Supreme Court of Texas Children’s Commission Foster Care Education Committee and related work groups in collaboration with interagency stakeholders to develop tools and resources to support improving student education outcomes.
- Information regarding [TEA Foster Care and Student Success](#) is available on the agency’s [webpage](#).

Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youth (TEHCY) Program

³ 2021 DFPS Data Card,

https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/Data_Book/documents/DFPS_Data_Card.pdf

⁴ Students identified as in foster care at any time while attending Grades 9-12 in Texas public schools.

⁵ Chapter 89. Adaptations for Special Populations. Subchapter FF. Commissioner’s Rules Concerning Transition Assistance for Highly Mobile Students Who Are Homeless or in Substitute Care

⁶ Students in substitute care or “foster care” are students in the managing conservatorship of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services.

The TEA Public Education information Management System (PEIMS) data snapshot for the 2021-2022 school year identified 61,687 students experiencing homelessness. This was a 6.3% (3,876) increase from 57,811 in 2020-21. This increase in identification may be attributed to the removal of previous COVID-19 social safety nets, such as the eviction moratorium, extended unemployment benefits, monthly child tax credit payments, etc. In addition, the transition back to in-person learning assisted LEA staff with identifying students and families experiencing homelessness. As a provision of Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA), states are required to report graduation and dropout rates for students experiencing homelessness. Graduation rates increased slightly (0.7%), as compared to 2019, and dropout rates decreased by 1.1%. These percentages remain improved from the graduation and dropout rates reported in 2019 and 2018. The chart below provides graduation and dropout rates from 2017 to 2020.

Table 6. TEHCY Graduation and Dropout Rates, 2017-2020

Year	Graduation Rate	Dropout Rate
2020	80.5%	11.5%
2019	79.8%	12.6%
2018	80%	11.8%
2017	72.1%	17.7%

TEHCY 2021-2022 Program Initiatives are listed below:

- **Sub-Grants to LEAs** - Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youth (TEHCY) continuation sub-grant. In 2021, over \$8.3 million was distributed to 92 subgrantees, which includes:
 - 85 local education agencies (LEAs).
 - 7 regional education service centers (ESCs), which serve as fiscal agents to support 128 LEAs through shared service arrangements.
 - Serving a total of 213 LEAs in 18 out of 20 regional ESCs across Texas.

This funding increases local supports for students experiencing homelessness in Texas public schools by providing additional capacity to promote school stability; facilitate enrollment; and improve identification, attendance, and academic outcomes for homeless children and youth. The 2022-2023 TEHCY Continuation Grant will distribute approximately \$8.7 million to 2021-2022 TEHCY grantees to continue providing this support for homeless children and youth.

- **ESC Capacity Building Grants** – 2021-2022 TEHCY ESC Capacity grants of \$50,000 were awarded to all twenty ESCs to strengthen statewide, regional, and local support and infrastructure to serve students experiencing homelessness in Texas schools. ESC grantees assist the agency with technical assistance, professional development, community collaboration, and dissemination of program materials to support implementation of best practices and strategies for identification, enrollment, academic progress monitoring, and services for all Texas students experiencing homelessness. This grant will continue into the 2022-2023 school year, and funding for each ESC was increased to \$75,000 to increase staff capacity and continue building upon the work of previous years.
- **2021-2024 ARP Homeless I Grant** – TEA allocated \$16.7 million to 2021-2022 TEHCY Grantees to increase their capacity to address the unique needs of homeless children and youth due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **2021-2024 ARP Homeless II Grant** – TEA allocated \$55 million for eligible LEAs to provide increased capacity to expand systems, staffing, and programmatic support to facilitate identification and enrollment, mitigate learning loss and provide wraparound services, and address the unique needs of homeless children and youth due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Statewide Summit** – 2021-2022 TEHCY Program Summit Grant was awarded to Texas Network for

Youth Services (TNOYS). TNOYS will assist TEA with development and implementation the TEHCY Program Summit. The two-and-a-half-day summit will provide a variety of professional development tracks for TEHCY Subgrantees, LEAs, ESCs, and stakeholders with best practices and innovative program models to increase the identification, enrollment, and to address the unique educational needs of students experiencing homelessness. Due to COVID-19, the summit occurred on a virtual platform on August 3rd and 5th, 2021, with over 1,500 registrants. The 2022 TEHCY Summit will be a hybrid conference, taking place both in-person and virtually on August 29-31 in San Marcos, Texas. This year's theme, *Creating Connections, Building Bridges*, will inspire attendees to strengthen school and community partnerships in order to provide the necessary reinforcements for systems that uphold student success.

For more information regarding [Texas Education for Homeless Children and Youth \(TEHCY\) Program](#), visit the agency's website.

Military-Connected Youth

Texas has the second highest identified military connected student population in the United States. A total of 176,554 military connected students were enrolled in 2021-2022; this is an increase from 144,683 students enrolled in Texas public schools for the 2020-2021 school year. See the table below for graduation and dropout rates for military-connected students from 2018-2020.

Table 7. Grade 9 Four-Year Longitudinal Graduation and Dropout Rates for Military-Connected Students, Class of 2018, 2019, 2020

Year	Graduation Rate	Dropout Rate
2020	95.3%	2.2%
2019	95.4%	2.2%
2018	95.8%	2.2%

Key Activities:

- A military-connected student is a dependent of a current or former member of the U.S. military service in the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard on active duty; a current or former member of the Texas National Guard; a current or former member of the reserve force in the U.S. military; or a member in the U.S. military or reserve force who has fallen in the line of duty.
- TEA awards the Purple Star Campus designation, a special honor created by the 86th Texas Legislature through SB 1557, for each school year beginning in 2020-21. The Purple Star Campus Designation recognizes Texas district and charter schools that show their support and commitment to meeting the unique needs of military-connected students and their families. Selected schools have their designation featured on the Txschools.gov webpage. As of August 2021, a total of 161 campuses have received the designation.
- For the 2021-2022 school year, TEA received 200 applications for the Purple Star Campus. This is the first year that campuses that earned the designation in 2019-2020 must re-apply. The Purple Star Campus Designation lasts for two-years. TEA will announce the Purple Star Campus Designation for 2022-2023 in August 2022.
- TEA continues to increase the awareness across the state regarding the military student identifier and the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children to ensure military-connected students are properly served in Texas public schools. Visit TEA's [Military Connected Child Education Program](#) webpage for more information.

Local Education Agency (LEA) Self-Assessment

TEA developed a local education agency self-assessment, that can be used by LEAs to assess the effectiveness of their services and supports for students in foster care, students experiencing homelessness

and students who are military connected. This is in alignment with changes to TEA's Results Driven Accountability system that reports annually on the performance of LEAs, and integrated highly mobile student groups (foster care, homeless, military-connected) as a required group for the first time in the 2021-2022 school year.

Pregnancy Related Services Program

TEA provides a Pregnancy Related Services (PRS) program with State Compensatory Education funds, for at-risk students who are pregnant or parenting according to the [Texas Education Code \(TEC\) 19 §29.081\(d\)](#). A total of 5,271 students received PRS related services in 2020-2021 school year. Pregnancy Related Services are support services, including Compensatory Education Home Instruction (CEHI), that a pregnant student receives during the pregnancy, prenatal, and postpartum periods. Districts may choose whether to offer a PRS program. If a district chooses to offer a PRS program, it must offer CEHI services as part of that program, as they are mandatory. The programs are designed to help students adjust academically, mentally, physically and stay in school.

In 2019, the 86th Texas Legislature passed HB 3, requiring the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) to include pregnancy as a reason a student withdraws from or otherwise no longer attends public school (TEC § 48.009). In the Class of 2020, 34 students dropped out of school for reasons related to pregnancy.

The TEA Financial Compliance Department has developed resources for LEAs to ensure detailed required documentation is completed properly and accessible for audit purposes. These resources can be found on the [TEA Pregnancy Related Services \(PRS\) webpage](#).

The rules for the operation of a PRS program can be found in the [Texas Administrative Code \(TAC\): 19 TAC § 129.1025](#)

Child Abuse and Neglect Reporting and Human Trafficking Prevention

TEA leads a Statewide Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness Workgroup. The cross-agency workgroup addresses the development of policy guidance, resources, tools, and training to support LEAs with implementation of child abuse and neglect, including human trafficking prevention, awareness, and related requirements. The group is comprised of both internal and external agency partners, including the Office of the Governor, Office of the Attorney General, Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Texas School Safety Center, Texas Association of School Boards, Education Service Center (ESC) Region 12, Crime Stoppers of Houston, Children's Advocacy Center's of Texas, TEA Title IV School Safety Initiative (ESC Region 14), TEA College, Advising and Student Supports Division, TEA Curriculum Division, TEA Safe and Support School Division, TEA Educator Investigations, and TEA Special Populations Division.

As a part of the work-group TEA conducted a webinar series featuring state and national leaders concerning Child Abuse and Human Trafficking Awareness and Prevention for Texas schools. Additionally, the workgroup supported TEA in the development of promotional materials, toolkits, website updates, and guidance concerning human trafficking reporting in Texas schools.

TEA, with guidance from the Child Abuse Prevention and Awareness workgroup and the Texas Human Trafficking Coordinating Council, developed 'No Trafficking zone' signage rules and signage for posting during the 2022-2023 school year to support implementation of SB 1831 passed by the 87th Texas legislature.

For more information about child abuse and neglect, human trafficking prevention, and educator mandatory reporting training requirements visit [TEA's Child Abuse Prevention](#) and [Human Trafficking Prevention](#) webpages.

Accelerated Learning Opportunities

The 87th Texas Legislature passed HB 4545, which sets the minimum requirements for all students who did not perform satisfactorily to receive supplemental accelerated instruction. At-risk students can benefit greatly from these academic supports, designed to foster student engagement, personalized learning and academic progress.

For students that do not perform satisfactorily on state assessments the following options exist:

Option 1: Assign a student to a teacher who is designated as a master, exemplary, or recognized teacher for the subsequent school year in the applicable subject area

Option 2: Students who do not perform satisfactorily on state assessments receive at least 30 hours of supplemental instruction (i.e., tutoring) during the school year and/or in summer.

Additionally, HB 4545 supports include: Students are not required to be retained in grades 5 & 8 for not meeting STAAR requirements. There is only one reading and math assessment opportunity, therefore students are not required to take multiple test re-takes. Accelerated Learning Committees must be in place for students who did not perform satisfactorily on the STAAR for grades 3,5, 8. The Accelerated Learning Committee will develop an Accelerated Learning Plan in collaboration with the principal/designee, parent/guardian, and the teacher of the subject of an assessment in which the student failed to pass.

Small group instruction must be provided in a ratio of one instructor/tutor per three students, unless the parents/guardians of the students in the group provide consent for a larger ratio.

See [TEA Accelerated Learning Resources page](#) for more information.

Mental and Behavioral Health Services and Supports

On average, an estimated one in five students struggles with a mental or behavioral health challenge. In addition, youth mental health concerns increased for students during the pandemic to crisis levels according to recent national data sources.⁷ TEA also identified mental health challenges as one of the two greatest challenges facing schools in recovery from the pandemic, along with learning loss, in the agency's ESSER (Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief fund) State Plan submitted to the U.S. Department of Education.⁸ TEA has focused in implementing laws adopted in the 86th Texas legislature that were proactive to support student mental health. The agency stood up a new Safe and Supportive Schools Division with staff developing resources, providing training, and collaborating across state and local mental health agencies to support schools in addressing students' mental and behavioral health needs.

While TEA does not receive state appropriations for mental health positions or services in schools, TEA leverages resources and partnerships to support school systems build partnerships and practices. For example, TEA serves on the Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council which aims to increase access to mental health services in communities, and to connect Education Service Center and school personnel to Texas mental health resources provided throughout Texas regions.

TEA also applied for competitive federal grants from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) for Project AWARE Texas, Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education. These grants helped TEA place mental health professionals in several schools. Federal funding also helps to support our work with building resources and tools to help all schools learn and implement school mental health best practices.

Below is an overview of some of the important work TEA contributed to regarding supporting students who are at-risk of dropping out of school, and all students in Texas who require mental health and wellness resources to support safety and learning.

TEA Mental Health Resource Highlights

Best Practice Based Programs and Resources: TEA and HHSC recommend mental health resources for LEAs that are evidence-based programs and research-based practices that are reviewed and updated annually,

⁷ <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/surgeon-general-youth-mental-health-advisory.pdf>

⁸ <https://tea.texas.gov/media/document/301221>

and available through links on this TEA Web page, pursuant to TEC 38.351: <https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/other-services/mental-health/mental-health-and-behavioral-health>

Suicide Prevention, Intervention, Postvention: TEA worked with the Texas Suicide Prevention Council, HHSC and other partners after 86R to revise and update the online and self-paced ASK+ suicide prevention gatekeeper training to meet statutory requirements for Texas educators located here:

<https://texassuicideprevention.org/training/ask-basic-gatekeeper/>

Grief and Trauma - Informed Practices: TEA developed a COVID-19 - responsive Trauma-Informed Training Series for educators and school personnel called Project Restore. This training includes an introduction plus six online self-paced training modules. There is also a facilitator guide provided for LEA leaders to use in staff meetings, or with small groups of educators to train and plan. There are also certificates to print after each module. There are several embedded resources to access for more training and planning support.

Project Restore: <https://www.texasprojectrestore.org/>

TEA and [AWARE Texas](#) (Advancing Wellness and Resiliency in Education) partners have trained Regional Education Service Centers (ESCs) to facilitate and coach LEAs to develop **Trauma Sensitive Schools** using vetted materials. The AWARE Texas state partners provide an ongoing learning collaborative for ESCs to support coaching LEAs. ESC support on this topic may be available upon request from the ESC.

Texas School Mental Health Website and Resources- Texas School Mental Health Website: TEA worked with state and regional partners to develop and launch a new website to house TEA's mental health resources in 2021. From this TEA website that will continue to evolve, district stakeholders can access a variety of statewide and community resources to support mental health and wellness for students and families: <https://schoolmentalhealthtx.org/>

Statewide Plan for Student Mental Health: TEA developed a statewide plan for student mental health, pursuant to 86R, SB 11: <https://schoolmentalhealthtx.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Statewide-Plan-for-Student-Mental-Health-.pdf>

School Mental Health Practice Guide and Toolkit: TEA developed a School Mental Health Practice Guide and Toolkit. The Toolkit highlights the TEA Framework for School Mental Health and promotes partnerships: <https://schoolmentalhealthtx.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/TEA-Narrative.pdf>

Resources and Tools Library: TEA worked with partners to develop a bank of resources, sample tools, a statewide mental health resource guide to locate services, and other resources to support schools with implementing best practices for school mental health. Resources will be developed and vetted with our partners on an ongoing basis in the mental health resources and tools Library on this accessible website. <https://schoolmentalhealthtx.org/school-mental-health-toolkit/>

Mental Health Resources Database: TEA launched a new statewide mental health resources database for schools in 2022, improving on a list of resources identified in 2020 that was developed pursuant to SB 11, 86R. TEA partnered with several state agencies to identify the resources, including with the ESCs who each have a login to update and maintain regional resources. This Web-based resource is available to every school in Texas to access and increase access to mental health supports: <https://schoolmentalhealthtxdatabase.org/>

Education Service Centers - Overview: Each ESC has appointed at least one contact who works with TEA in a Professional Learning Community to build capacity and provide mental health supports for districts. Each ESC also has a collaborative non-physician mental health professional embedded in the ESC to work collaboratively. This role is hired by the Local Mental Health Authority/Authorities (LMHA) to serve districts in the region. Together, these professionals at the ESCs support districts with gaining awareness of mental

health resources and they are providing training (HB 19) - unless the position is vacant due to turnover, local workforce shortage in the region, etc.

Monthly Behavioral Health Training: Each ESC in collaboration with the LMHA typically provides ongoing and monthly mental health training on topics. Training sessions are posted on ESC websites or are customized with districts in the region. For example, mental health topics required for training to be facilitated by the LMHA non-physician mental health professional pursuant to HB 19 are:

- Mental Health First Aid Training
- Training regarding grief and trauma and providing support to children with intellectual or developmental disabilities who suffer from grief or trauma
- Facilitating training on prevention and intervention programs that have been shown to be effective in helping students cope with pressures related to: use of alcohol, cigarettes, or illegal drugs; or misuse of prescription drugs

ESC School Safety State Initiative: TEA funds an ESC Title IVA State Initiative that provides additional safety and mental health training and support for ESCs to build capacity to train and support districts in each education region. Access more information here: <https://www.esc14.net/page/t4si>

National School Mental Health Education Resource: This new report was published by the Council of Chief State School Officers in December 2021 for state education agencies. It is a national resource titled: **Advancing Comprehensive School Mental Health Systems**. The publication highlights Texas as a national example, including Texas' COVID-19 response to support student mental health. It highlights TEA's mental health resources to support districts and schools.

<https://753a0706.flowpaper.com/CCSSOMentalHealthResource/#page=1>

TEA Mental Health Coordination - Overview: The Division of Safe and Supportive Schools facilitates coordination and provides resources for mental health and wellness initiatives. Our work is in alignment with TEA's strategic goals, the Safe and Supportive Schools Program, relevant mental health related state statutes, state plans and partnerships. The Division leads Project AWARE Texas which is a competitive federal school mental health grant to TEA from SAMHSA to advance wellness and resiliency in education. Other teams across TEA and within ESCs also provide related training and resources to support district stakeholders to promote student mental health and wellbeing.

TEA coordinates across state agencies and with other state organizations on mental health initiatives; including with the [Texas School Safety Center](#) on the Safe and Supportive Schools Program, and with many state agency partners through the [Statewide Behavioral Health Coordinating Council](#). District stakeholders may email TEA's Mental Health and Wellness Team for additional information on the resources highlighted in this brief, to be connected to additional TEA mental health related resources or program contacts across the agency, or to be connected with a specific ESC, other statewide partners, or school mental health resources: MentalandBehavioralHealth@tea.texas.gov.

Amachi Texas (Mentoring)

Amachi Texas is authorized by the 2022-2023 General Appropriations Act, Article III, Rider 49, 87th Texas Legislature. Amachi Texas provides one-to-one mentoring for youth ages 6–14 whose parents or family members are incarcerated, on probation, or recently released from the prison system. The youth that are served are referred through partnerships such as agreements with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, prison fellowship and re-entry programs across Texas. The youth are engaged in both school-based and community-based mentoring relationships with trained volunteers. Ongoing supervision, support, and

training for volunteers are provided to support retention of mentors. Services include match-support and group activities for the volunteers, families, and students served.

Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) Lone Star is directed by statute to implement the Amachi mentoring program statewide. BBBS Lone Star subcontracts with eight BBBS agencies throughout Texas to provide mentoring for children of incarcerated adults.

Monitoring, Tracking, and Effectiveness

Progress reports are provided to TEA quarterly. BBBS Lone Star reports outcomes to the Texas Education Program annually. TEA has assigned a program specialist to monitor quarterly data reports and the final annual report of program outcomes. TEA program staff convenes meetings with BBBS leadership during the school year in order to provide guidance and to ensure the program is on track to accomplish goals.

Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for Fiscal Years 2017-2020 are listed below:

Table 8. Amachi Texas Mentoring

Descriptions	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Total number of matches/students served during the grant year	1,405	1,332	1,141	1,313
Total number of matches still open at the end of the grant period	968	824	692	943
Percentage of matches eligible for six months sustainability that were sustained for six months	83%	90%	86%	92%
Percentage of matches eligible for twelve months sustainability that were sustained for twelve months	65%	59%	58%	62%
Percentage of students who were mentored for at least six months that were referred to the juvenile justice system	1.4%	1.2%	1.8%	1.2%
Number and percentage of students who were mentored for at least six months who were referred to a disciplinary alternative placement (AEP) at school	2.8%	3.0%	2.3%	2.7%
Percentage of mentored students who were promoted to the next grade level	98.8%	99.2%	97.4%	98%
Percentage of students who demonstrated increased self-confidence on the Youth Outcome Survey (YOS)	85%	84%	92%	90%
Percentage of mentored students who demonstrated an improvement in relationships on the Youth Outcome Survey (YOS)	90%	92%	92%	87.5%

Communities In Schools (CIS)

The CIS program is governed by Texas Education Code §33.151-159; 19 Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 89, Subchapter EE; and the General Appropriations Act, Article III, Rider 22, 87th Texas Legislature, 2021. CIS is a collection of affiliated non-profit corporations that place full-time staff within each school served to deliver a wide range of services to students most at-risk of dropping out. Campus-based programming can include crisis intervention, individual counseling, support groups, life skills, tutoring, mentoring, parent engagement, and enrichment activities – all targeted to meet the individual needs of students so they can fully engage in learning and be academically successful. CIS begins work on a campus by performing a needs assessment to identify available resources, gaps in service, and administrator priorities and to determine how best to help the school in supporting the student population. Tier I, or schoolwide services, are given to address the needs of the full campus population while a smaller cohort of “case managed” students receive Tier II (group) and Tier III (individual) services targeted to each student’s individual needs. CIS engages the community and other service providers to support the work on a campus.

Monitoring, Tracking, and Effectiveness

To administer the program, TEA manages a set of policies, requirements, and a CIS student-level database. The agency provides technical support to and coordination of the CIS programs. TEA continuously monitors student data and reports performance outcomes to the legislature and other stakeholders on a quarterly basis.

Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for Fiscal Years 2017-2021 are listed below:

Table 9. Communities In Schools (CIS) in Texas

Descriptions	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021
CIS of Texas local programs (grantees)	28	28	28	28	27
Campuses served	939	913	967	1,186	1,235
School districts	139	142	139	175	178
Case managed students served	87,932	86,435	88,644	105,892	98,285
Average state and local expenditure per case	\$842	\$829	\$884	\$898	\$1,219
Stayed in school (7-12 th Grade)	98%	98%	99%	99%	99%
Promoted to the next grade (K-11 th)	95%	96%	96%	98%	97%
Eligible seniors	94%	94%	95%	95%	92%
Targeted for academics, improved	89%	90%	90%	89%	89%
Targeted for attendance, improved	75%	74%	77%	82%	76%
Targeted for behavior, improved	91%	93%	86%	82%	82%
General Revenue	\$15,521,817	\$15,521,817	\$15,521,815	\$30,521,817	\$30,521,815
TANF	\$3,898,450	\$3,898,450	\$3,898,450	\$3,898,450	\$3,898,450

TANF Admin	\$943,892	\$943,892	\$943,892	\$943,892	\$943,892
Total	\$20,364,159	\$20,364,159	\$20,364,157	\$35,364,159	\$35,364,157

Texas Academic Innovation and Mentoring (AIM)

For the 2022-2023 biennium, the General Appropriations Act, Article III, Rider 51, 87th Texas Legislature, 2021 provided funding for the Texas Academic Innovation and Mentoring program. The purpose of the program is to expand a statewide, after-school, and summer programs designed to close the student achievement gap between minority and low-income students and English Learners who are at risk of dropping out of school and their peers. The program aids targeted students to enroll in after-school and summer recreational programs that effectively address student achievement gaps through a combination of skills gap remediation and at-risk prevention services in low performing schools at 69 sites across Texas. One half of the service sites are along the Texas-Mexico border. While traditional Boys & Girls Clubs (BGC) programming addresses comprehensive prevention needs, the Texas AIM partner, Sylvan Learning Center, provides evidence-based curriculum through certified teachers with assistance provided by BGC staff. Through joint delivery of the program, children receive seamless services from two strong partners. Additionally, the staff development that BGC receives from the Sylvan partnership enables growth and capacity building for the BGC.

Monitoring, Tracking, and Effectiveness

The BGC and Sylvan Learning Center collect and monitor student data. Student level data is used during the school year to identify the academic needs of each individual student and to inform the provision of services for each student. The TEA program manager develops a progress report in order to manage program performance. The summary performance data is reported to TEA at scheduled points during the year and is reported to TEA in a final performance report at the end of the school year.

Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for Fiscal Years 2016-2020 are listed below:

Table 10. Texas Academic Innovation and Mentoring

Descriptions	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020
Percentage of Texas AIM youth that advance an academic level*	85%	78%	85%	84%	76%
Number of youth served annually	3,011	3,186	3,226	3,175	2,674
Average monthly cost per youth served	\$55	\$55	\$55	\$55	\$55
Percentage of English Learners served	29%	29%	21%	30%	34%
Percentage of Texas AIM youth who received a "C" or better for a subject in which they received services	91%	87%	92%	85%	89%
Percentage of Texas AIM youth that passed the STAAR Test**	85%	75%	69%	64%	**

*An academic level is defined as an increase in Growth Scale Value from pre-assessment to post

**2019-2020 STAAR assessment waived

Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers: Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (Texas ACE)

This federally funded program is authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Title IV, Part B, as amended by Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. The Texas 21st Century Community Learning

Centers program (also known as Texas Afterschool Centers on Education, or Texas ACE) assists students, particularly students who attend low-performing schools, in meeting challenging academic standards by providing them with academic enrichment and a broad array of additional programs and activities during non-school hours and periods when school is not in session (e.g., after school and summer). The activities provided reinforce and complement the regular academic programs of the schools attended by the students and target the students’ academic and other needs. This federal formula grant is awarded to the Texas Education Agency, which competitively awards grants to eligible entities and supports those entities in implementing high-quality programs in communities across the state.

Monitoring, Tracking, and Effectiveness

All Texas ACE programs operate under a set of guidelines that consists of federal statutory requirements and program-specific requirements and a Texas ACE Blueprint that integrates requirements with state priorities, evidence-based research, and best practices to form a continuum of performance. When implemented with fidelity, Texas ACE programs are designed to improve student performance on state assessments, core course grades, on-time grade level advancement, school day attendance, discipline referrals, high school graduation rates, and high school career competencies. The state office provides resources and supports to all Texas ACE grantees including robust in-person and virtual training opportunities, individualized technical assistance, data collection and reporting tools, local program evaluation support, program implementation monitoring, and online resources.

The Fiscal Year data reported in the following table is for the fall, spring, and summer program terms.

Table 11. Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (Texas ACE)

	FY 2016 (76 Programs)	FY 2017 (66 Programs)	FY 2018 (66 Programs)	FY 2019 (83 Programs)	FY2020 (83 Programs)	FY2021 (83 Programs)
Total Students	120,617	111,380	108,902	129,884	124,395	111,355
Total Regular Students *	45,101	68,640	71,506	80,332	69,997	61,166
Total Non-Regular Students	42,193	42,740	37,396	49,552	54,398	50,189
Limited English Proficiency Youth	20%	21%	20%	24%	25%	25%
Economically Disadvantaged	66%	71%	71%	76%	80%	73%
Special Needs	7%	7%	7%	8%	9%	10%
At Risk	51%	55%	56%	58%	57%	53%
Migrant	9%	9%	1%	1%	1%	1%
ESL	1%	1%	9%	11%	9%	9%

* Regular students are those served for 30 days or more during the year. For programs that started in Fiscal Year 2017 and later, regular students are those served for 45 days or more.

Texas Military Department

TEXAS CHALLENGE ACADEMY (TCA)

The Texas ChalleNGe Academy (TCA) is an evidence-based program designed to provide opportunities to adolescents who have dropped out of school but demonstrate a desire to improve their potential for successful and productive lives. A voluntary, preventive program, the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program (NGYCP) helps young people improve their life skills, education levels, and employment potential. Sixteen-to-18-year-old male and female high school dropouts are eligible to apply for the 17-month program, which includes a five-month residential phase followed by a 12-month mentoring phase.

TCA was created in 1994 as an AmeriCorps Program and transitioned to a National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program (Seaborne ChalleNGe Corps) in 1999. Hurricane Ike’s landfall on Galveston Island in 2008 forced the program to relocate to Sheffield, Texas. Texas opened a second campus in Eagle Lake, which began serving students in July 2015. In December 2018, after recommendations from the Sunset Commission, Texas closed the campus in Sheffield and consolidated resources into the Eagle Lake campus. Authorized and funded through the Department of Defense, the National Guard Bureau is responsible for management and oversight of the 42 ChalleNGe academies that have graduated more than 179,000 participants to date. Led by professionals who emphasize structure, discipline, education and life skills, the Youth ChalleNGe Program provides those who drop out of school the chance to grow into productive and accomplished young adults.

Monitoring, Tracking, and Effectiveness

Independent evaluations found the Youth ChalleNGe program to be effective. MDRC, a social policy research organization, concluded a multi-year evaluation of the Youth ChalleNGe Program and found it significantly improves the educational attainment, employability, and income earning potential of those who participate in the program.⁹ A RAND Corporation cost-benefit analysis found the Youth ChalleNGe Program generates \$2.66 in benefits for every dollar expended on the program, a return on investment of 166 percent.¹⁰ This rate of return is substantially above that for other rigorously evaluated social programs that target disadvantaged youth. Recently, Promising Practices Network identified the ChalleNGe Program as a "proven" program.¹¹ The Texas ChalleNGe Academy has graduated 896 students in the past five years with an average high school completion rate of 65.9%. The average academic growth rate was two years, with an average of five academic credits recovered during the 22-week residential phase. Available performance outcomes, outputs, and efficiencies for Fiscal Years 2017-2021 are listed below:

Table 11. Texas Challenge Academy

Descriptions	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY2020 ***	FY2021 ***
Enrolled	358	214	218	172	218
Graduated	241	183	91**	116	107
Retention %	67.3%	85.5%	67%**	61%	49%
HS Completion	167	126	63**	73	81
HS Completion %	69.3%	68.9%	69.2%**	62.9%	75.7%
TABE Math Growth (years)	2.0*	1.7*	1.8**	1.7	.8
TABE Reading Growth (years)	2.0*	1.6*	1.7**	1.7	.9
AVG # of Credits per student	5	4.5	4.4**	4.6	6.3

* Grade equivalent reporting changed to reporting the total combined growth. TABE is not a fair representation of academic growth based on student interest at time of post-test.

** Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 92 students were sent home on 24 March 2020 and the class was cancelled. 12 students were able to finish all program requirements (through distance learning) with 8 receiving their high school diploma and recovering 80 credits.

***FY2020 and 2021 were still categorized as COVID impacted years with enrollment numbers reduced to allow for implementation of CDC protocols.

⁹ MDRC. (2011). *Staying on Course: Three-Year Results of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Evaluation*

¹⁰ RAND Corporation. (2012). *A Cost-Benefit Analysis of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program*.

¹¹ <http://www.promisingpractices.net/program.asp?programid=275>

SECTION 4: Dropout and Delinquency Prevention and Intervention Coordination Activities of Rider 17.05 Workgroup

In the previous year, workgroup member agencies have engaged in the following activities:

- Provided delinquency, dropout prevention, and intervention programs funded by participating agencies, including the populations, locations served, and evidence of the program effectiveness. (See Appendix A)
- DFPS hosted the annual Partners in Prevention Conference both virtually and in-person in Austin in November 2021, virtually in October 2020 and in-person in Austin, Texas in November 2019. This conference creates an opportunity for contractors, community partners, and other professionals in the field from across Texas to network and to acquire comprehensive information on the prevention of child abuse and neglect and related problem behaviors such as family violence, substance abuse, and juvenile delinquency.
- Shared information and updates on agency and legislative activities which stand to impact various prevention/intervention efforts, including:
 - TEA efforts to strengthen support for special student populations, including students who are disabled, English learners, homeless, in foster care, displaced, trafficked, migrant, pregnant and/or parenting, military connected, have mental health or behavioral health challenges, are highly-mobile, or are at-risk.
 - The TEA Special Populations Department and Highly Mobile and At-Risk Students Division focuses on implementing strategic priorities for these populations.
 - 87th Legislative activities that support dropout or delinquency prevention/early intervention, such as:
 - Dissemination of information to schools on new resources available for training in trauma-informed practices, safe and supportive schools.
 - Technical assistance support to schools and grantee programs by DFPS, TEA, Texas Military Department, and TJJJ regarding program implementation shifts necessary due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
 - TEA, DFPS, TJJJ and HHSC provided training for twenty ESCs on state resources available from each agency. This information was used by ESCs to help them identify regional resources to support school mental and behavioral health on the rubric template, pursuant to SB 11, 86R.
 - Through Rider 29 (previously the Rider 39 Improved Outcomes Pilot Program in the 86th Legislative session) DFPS-PEI was charged with improving outcomes for children at the highest risk of re-entry into the child protective services system. DFPS contracted with a grantee in Travis County and began work in November 2019, using evidenced-based programs to that target the reduction of a child's interaction with the juvenile justice system, the reduction of teen pregnancy, and the increase of graduation rates.
 - Dissemination of information to community youth service providers on the range of programs and services available across systems.

SECTION 5: Key Considerations and Next Steps in Coordinating Services

During the fiscal year, juvenile delinquency and dropout prevention and intervention programming across Texas was impacted by numerous factors including but not limited to:

- 1) COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery;
- 2) Staffing Shortages; and
- 3) Available Mental and Behavioral Health Supports.

These factors, both on their own and as interconnected issues, impacted many youth and families, including exacerbating mental health concerns, increasing economic insecurity, and increasing clients' inability to access supportive resources. In the face of these challenges, all partners continuously worked to share information, resources and strategies to continue effectively offering programs and services.

CONSIDERATION 1: Addressing dropout prevention, truancy, and juvenile delinquency prevention during the COVID-19 pandemic recovery.

In the 2021-2022 school year, districts and campuses identified 2.7 million students as "at-risk." As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, many students, including those not previously identified as at-risk, experienced academic disruptions ultimately leading to disengagement and becoming uncontactable. As student's returned to in-person school the impact of the pandemic, including being away from peers, school environment, and consistent routines, for nearly two-years, had devastating impacts. Mental health challenges, behavior, regression both socially and academically are apparent. The impact of the pandemic exacerbated existing challenges and created new ones significantly impacting the state's most at-risk and vulnerable students. Schools, students, and the community need resources and practical strategies to address student support, engagement, truancy, dropout prevention and intervention, and academic achievement for at-risk learners.

Moreover, the 87th Texas Legislature passed special initiatives to address the needs, gaps, and challenges of all students from pandemic. HB 1525 launched Texas COVID-19 Learning Acceleration Supports (TCLAS), which provided districts with \$1.4B in learning acceleration services and grants for strategic planning, instructional materials, teacher pipelines, more instructional time, and innovative school models. Additionally, HB 4545 provides accelerated learning support for students, including targeted tutoring for students who meet the eligibility criteria. TEA implemented these pieces of legislation during the 2021-2022 school year.

Similarly, DFPS, the Texas Military Department, and TJJD had to continuously adjust and readjust program implementation to accommodate necessary and required safety measures for participating youth and program staff. Departments navigated service delivery continuously shifting from virtual to in-person based on changing public health recommendations. Despite measures taken, due to the instability of programming caused by the pandemic, all department program enrollments were impacted significantly by the pandemic. Both DFPS and the Texas Military Department identified that their programs continued to experience fewer enrollments and a low client retention rate. TJJD saw fewer referrals into their programs in 2020 and some programs were forced to suspend services due to local COVID restrictions. In FY 2021, TJJD was forced to cut all of its Prevention and Intervention Programs to satisfy budget cuts required by state leadership. However, funding was reinstated in FY 2022 that resulted in 27 new programs being funded.

As part of efforts to provide schools/grantees and families with supports, information, and linkage to local support TEA and DFPS have utilized their webpages. The following are links to those webpages:

- 1) TEA's COVID-19 Support and Guidance webpage: <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/covid/coronavirus-covid-19-support-and-guidance>.
- 2) Texas COVID Learning Acceleration Supports (TCLAS): <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health->

- safety-discipline/covid/texas-covid-learning-acceleration-supports-tclas
- 3) TEA School Mental Health: <https://schoolmentalhealthtx.org>
 - 4) HB 4545 Information: <https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/news-and-multimedia/correspondence/taa-letters/house-bill-4545-implementation-overview>
 - 5) DFPS-PEI's Get Parenting Tips page contains articles regarding parent support in relation to COVID and linkage to local parenting supports: [Parents - GetParentingTips.com](https://www.dfps.texas.gov/parents-getparentingtips.com)

To address this consideration, the workgroup will:

- Utilize available data and continue to identify additional coordination activities to increase awareness of community-based resources available to schools.
- Identify strategies to maintain service provision in the aftermath COVID-19.
- Increase the number of times the workgroup convenes so that programs, needs, and gaps in services are communicated with cross-agency partners.
- Provide schools and program personnel technical assistance regarding program implementation.
- Collaborate to determine strategies that address truancy and dropout prevention.
- Continue to provide schools/grantees and the public with additional resources, including timely information and local resources through agency websites.
- Share any workgroup recommendations and available resources with the leadership of each agency.
- Map out the different populations who could benefit from the various programming offering by our partner agencies and coordinate referrals when appropriate.

CONSIDERATION 2: Addressing Staffing shortages in the time of COVID-19 Recovery.

This fiscal year, all Departments reported a growing number of staffing vacancies internally and amongst program staff, causing a major issue and concern impacting COVID-19 recovery across all agencies and system partners. These staffing shortages have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and an increase in formerly non-competitive employment opportunities offering higher wages. The complexity of a reduced workforce, an increase in funding, and significant needs of students and families presented a unique challenge to all agencies represented in the workgroup as they work to serve Texas youth.

A majority of workgroup agencies report that internal and contracted staff are either leaving the workforce due to COVID-19 health related concerns or a need to care for their mental health after years of caring for youth in the midst of a global pandemic. Additionally, from urban and suburban schools with large student populations to those districts serving rural communities, public school systems across Texas are faced with growing staffing challenges that have been exacerbated by both population growth and the wide-ranging disruptions of the pandemic. To address the education workforce presented during this time, TEA has created a Teacher Vacancy Task Force. The Teacher Vacancy Task Force is working to find teacher-shaped solutions to these challenges - blending a variety of perspectives and experiences from current classroom teachers and school administrators - into thoughtful policy recommendations and an innovative way forward that firmly supports the needs of our teachers.

PEI continues to offer year-round training opportunities and technical assistance calls for grantees. This year, PEI contracted with a vendor to provide an interactive training series that explores innovative strategies to effectively recruit new employees, develop a healthy and engaging workplace culture, and retain current teams.

To address this consideration, the workgroup will:

- Collaboratively discuss staff shortages. Share agency efforts and strategies with cross-system partners to support staff recruitment.

- Facilitate recruiting efforts at job fairs for positions that may contain similar duties (i.e. direct care positions).
- Share innovative approaches to staffing and trainings related workforce retention and development.
- Share the following resources across systems aimed to address staffing shortages:
 - TEA Teacher Vacancy Task Force:
 - TEA <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/covid/teacher-vacancy-task-force-overview>
 - Use of Retirees to Support Staffing: <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/covid/use-of-retirees-to-support-staffing>

CONSIDERATION 3: Mental and Behavioral Health Supports to Help Families Remain Stable.

This fiscal year, Departments saw an increase of youth requiring mental and behavioral health services. Workgroup members identified an increase in youth experiencing anxiety and depression as they attempt to return to normalcy while continuing to navigate a pandemic.

Simultaneously, DFPS, TJJJ and TMD reported an increase in the number of youth who require intensive mental and behavioral health services. Due to coinciding staffing shortages in DFPS, TJJJ, and TMD, as well as throughout mental health services, youth were not able to access critical services in a timely manner, leading to long waitlists. Additionally, staff providing services to youth through the Departments identified struggling to focus on prevention work while simultaneously addressing ongoing and frequent crisis situations and higher intensity cases. Each Department is working to address the lack of adequate and accessible mental and behavioral health supports both internally and collaboratively.

To address this consideration:

- Continue to meet regularly to share mental and behavioral health resources to take back to their perspective departments.
- TEA will continue to provide information and training to schools on mental and behavioral health through Webinars, professional learning communities with ESCs, conferences and ongoing technical assistance to schools.
- TEA will continue to develop additional resources to support positive behavior interventions, such as trauma-informed practices, multi-tiered systems of support, and restorative discipline practices for at-risk students through its Special Populations Department and Division of Safe and Supportive Schools. TEA will engage the workgroup and other partners in this process.
- TEA will coordinate it's mental and behavioral health practices work with the Safe and Supportive Schools program in accordance with the agency's [Statewide Plan for Student Mental Health](#).
- TEA will continue to build partnerships with other agencies. TEA encourages access to mental health services in schools whenever possible to better help families. Partners will also be engaged to provide training to educators, such as Youth Mental Health First Aid. One other partnership example that TEA encourages for schools was funded by the Texas legislature, [Texas Child Health Care Access Through Telehealth](#). Early identification as well as, intervention and treatment, that includes access to mental health professionals in schools, are important strategies to help prevent mental illness, pathways to violence, student dropouts, and reduce risks for psychological and physical safety in the public schools.
- TEA will continue to encourage consideration of school counselors and mental health professionals to be included in the workforce by school systems, when feasible. When these professionals are available on staff, they can help provide needed expertise and student services where the students are located during the day. School-based services can increase access, learning time, and help

avoid attendance problems for missed appointments. Multi-disciplinary teaming, effective service delivery, and coordination of mental health resources in schools by trained personnel is a best practice to ensure student and family access to meaningful school mental health services and supports.

- DFPS will continue to oversee the FAYS program and provide counseling services to youth their families across Texas.
- TMD will continue to focus readiness efforts for youth at intake, to account for an increase in youth with intense mental health needs.
- Invite the head of CRCG's with HHSC to workgroup meetings to assist workgroup members in identifying a process for the local entities to better collaborate to identify services.
- Share the following resources across systems to address mental health needs:
 - TEA School Mental Health: <https://schoolmentalhealthtx.org/>
 - TEA Mental and Behavioral Health: <https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/other-services/mental-health/mental-health-and-behavioral-health>
 - TEA Safe and Supportive School Program: <https://tea.texas.gov/texas-schools/health-safety-discipline/safe-and-supportive-schools>
 - TEA Safe and Supportive School Climate: <https://tea.texas.gov/about-tea/other-services/mental-health/safe-supportive-and-positive-school-climate>
 - TEA School Mental Health Toolkit: <https://schoolmentalhealthtx.org/school-mental-health-toolkit/>

APPENDIX A: Detailed Information of Workgroup Agency Delinquency and Dropout Prevention and Intervention Services

Department of Family and Protective Services

Statewide Youth Services Network (SYSN)

All data for the following grantees is pulled from DFPS Contracts for Prevention and Early Intervention.

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2021: **\$ 1,525,000**

Brief Description of Program: PEI funds allow state-level grantees to identify areas of high need and vulnerability, and target specific support to local communities; therefore, the level and extent of services by county varies. Services offered by providers include community and school-based mentoring, youth leadership development, and youth skills.

Texas Alliance of Boys and Girls Club: Providers deliver evidence-based programs such as Boys & Girls Club Experience, SMART Moves youth-based curriculum, and youth leadership development that proactively increase protective factors in youth including involvement with positive peer groups, involvement with school and community, and presence of caring adults other than parents in the youth's life.

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2021: 3,457

Counties Served: All Texas counties.

Eligibility Requirements: Youth ages 6 through 18 years, and target ages 10 through 17 years.

Data Elements Collected: Demographic Information, risk factors, services provided, average monthly served, and attendance.

Evidence of Effectiveness:

Big Brothers, Big Sisters Lonestar: Use of evidence-based programs. Use of Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) Strength of Relationship Survey measuring happiness, closeness, and coping. Also uses the BBBS Youth Outcome Pre-Post Survey measuring dimensions of the mentoring relationship (social competence, scholastic competency, social acceptance, educational expectations, grades, truancy, attitudes towards risk, parental trust, and presence of special adult). These measures have been found to be reliable and valid based on previous youth development research.

Texas Alliance of Boys and Girls Club: Use of evidence-based programs. Programs include Boys & Girls Club Experience, SMART Moves youth-based curriculum, and youth leadership development.

Community Youth Development (CYD)

All data for the following grantees is pulled from DFPS Contracts for Prevention and Early Intervention.

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2021: **\$9,370,550**

Brief Description of Program: Communities prioritize and fund specific prevention services according to local needs. Approaches used by communities to prevent delinquency have included mentoring, youth employment programs, career preparation, academic support, life skills classes, youth-based curriculum, family-based curriculum, youth leadership development, and recreational activities.

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2021: 15,293

Counties Served: Bell, Bexar, Cameron, Dallas, El Paso, Galveston, Harris, Lubbock, McLennan, Nueces, Potter, Tarrant, Travis, Webb, Willacy

Zip Code: 75216, 75217, 76106, 76164, 76508, 76707, 77081, 77506, 77550, 78046, 78207, 78415, 78501, 78520, 78577, 78569, 78580, 78744, 79107, 79403, 79404, 79415, 79924

Eligibility Requirements: Youth through age 17 years who reside in or attend school in the targeted zip code. Target ages are 10 through 17 years. Youth who have a CPS case or whose legal case is pre-adjudicated, informally adjudicated, or deferred adjudication are eligible. However, youth cannot have been on or currently be on probation.

Data Elements Collected: Demographic Information, risk factors, juvenile probation status, services provided, average monthly served, and attendance.

Evidence of Effectiveness: The Program Experience Survey (PES) gauges CYD program participant's experience and the degree to which they feel the programs benefited them. Responses indicate client satisfaction with services and programs are shown to have an impact on individual, family, and community functioning.

Family and Youth Success (FAYS)

All data for the following grantees is pulled from DFPS Contracts for Prevention and Early Intervention.

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2021: \$24,821,446

Brief Description of Program: The FAYS program (formerly STAR) addresses family conflict and everyday struggles while promoting strong families and youth resilience. Every FAYS provider offers one-on-one coaching or counseling with a trained professional as well as family coaching or counseling. FAYS providers also offer group-based learning for youth and parents and each provider operates a 24-hour hotline for families

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2021: 18,377

Counties Served: All Texas Counties

Eligibility Requirements: Families with youth under 18 years old who are dealing with family conflict or every day struggles. In some areas of the state FAYS only provides services to families with children 6-17 years of age.

Data Elements Collected: Demographic Information, risk factors, services provided, and average monthly served.

Evidence of Effectiveness: Through the data collected for this program, DFPS tracks whether children remain safe during services, within 1 year and within 3 years after discharge. This is a measure of the percent of adult caregivers who do not abuse or neglect their children while receiving PEI services. Other data tracked includes percentage of youth not referred to juvenile probation and the increase in protective factors, such as family functioning and resiliency, social supports, and nurturing/attachment.

Texas Military Department

Texas ChalleNGe Academy (TCA)

The mission of the Texas ChalleNGe Academy (TCA) is to reclaim the potential of at-risk teens through mentoring, education, training and volunteer service. The program is a seventeen-and-a-half-month voluntary program for 16-18-year-old high school dropouts or those at risk of dropping out. Youth who volunteer to attend the program learn about TCA from various sources including school counselors, juvenile case workers, juvenile justice sources, advertising campaigns, and word of mouth from previous attendees. The initial portion of the program is a 22-week residential phase with a quasi-military (learn to adhere to military courtesies, discipline and a regimented schedule) approach. During this phase, the cadets complete the eight core components (academic excellence, responsible citizenship, leadership/followership, service to community, jobs skills, life coping skills, health and hygiene, and physical fitness). All the youth are given the opportunity to earn a high school diploma and/or GED or earn credits to return to their home high school. During the residential phase, each youth is paired with an adult mentor of their choosing who assists them during the entire 12-month post residential phase to ensure they stay on track with their "Post Residential Action Plan" developed during the residential phase. All cadets complete a minimum of 40 hours of community service projects during the residential phase. While the academic opportunities are a vital part of the residential phase, the benefits of the non-cognitive skills developed through the other core components and the discipline and structure of the military training model greatly enhances the young person's chances for future success. The program is provided at no cost to the youth or their family and is funded by a combination of federal and state funds (75% federal, 25% state). The Eagle Lake campus is one of the 42 National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Programs which are located in 32 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. The National Guard Youth Program has been operating nationally since 1993 and for twenty-one years in Texas.

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2021: \$5.1 million (\$3.7 million federal and \$1.4 million state)

Brief Description of Program: The mission of the Texas ChalleNGe Academy (TCA) is to reclaim the potential of at-risk teens through mentoring, education, training and volunteer service. The program is a seventeen-and-a-half-month voluntary program for 16-18 year old high school dropouts or those at risk of dropping out.

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2021: 107 graduates Due to the COVID pandemic, TCA reduced the number of students enrolled in the program to allow for social distancing on campus.

Program Locations: Eagle Lake campus serving youth statewide (Program has four recruiters to select students from all over the state)

Eligibility Requirement: 16-18 years old, citizen of Texas/US, not currently on parole/probation for other than "juvenile offenses", no felony convictions or pending charges, drug free at admission, drop out or at-risk of dropping out

Data Elements Collected: Number of graduates, percent completing HSD/GED or credit recovery, percent completing post residential phase, hours of community service

Evidence of Effectiveness: Independent study by MRDC¹⁰. A recent RAND Corporation cost-benefit analysis found the Youth ChalleNGe Program generates \$2.66 in benefits for every dollar expended on the program, a return on investment of 166%.¹¹

¹⁰MDRC. (2011). *Staying on Course: Three-Year Results of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Evaluation*

¹¹RAND Corporation. (2012). *A Cost-Benefit Analysis of the National Guard Youth ChalleNGe Program*.

Texas Education Agency

Texas COVID Learning Acceleration Supports (TCLAS)

Texas COVID Learning Acceleration Supports (TCLAS) is a set of funding and targeted supports available to Local Education Agencies (LEAs) to accelerate student learning in the wake of COVID-19, utilizing state and federal funds. To streamline accessing supports, TCLAS is available in **one streamlined application** to LEAs. TCLAS funded the following activities to support LEAs with COVID-19 learning loss and recovery.

- **Strategic Planning** - Strategic planning and performance management to prioritize, launch, and continuously improve learning acceleration strategies
- **Instructional Materials** - Rigorous, high-quality instructional materials designed to make up ground and master grade level TEKS
- **Teacher Pipelines** - Talent pipelines that support teachers to deliver excellence in the classroom, getting more than 1 year of growth in 1 year
- **More Time** - More time for the students in most need, including expanding instructional time in the summer and with targeted tutoring
- **Innovative School Models** - Innovative school models to incorporate all of the learning acceleration framework.

Academic Innovation and Mentoring (AIM)

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$2,250,000

Brief Description of Program: Academic Innovation and Mentoring (AIM) is designed to close the gaps in the student achievement among minority and low-income students and English Learners who are at risk of dropping out. **Texas AIM** is an innovative partnership between Texas Alliance of Boys and Girls Clubs (BGC) and the Sylvan Learning Centers. Support services for students include: after-school academic instruction and tutoring, assigned adult advocates, parent engagement activities, character and leadership development in problem-solving and decision-making, fine arts activities, sports, fitness, recreation, and health and life skills. Texas AIM supports a data system to assess needs, plan services, and monitor student performance and engagement.

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 2,674

Program Locations: 69

Eligibility Requirements: Eligibility for funding is limited to the Texas Boys and Girls Club, as specified in the General Appropriations Act, Article III.

Data Elements Collected: Percentage of students served who advanced an academic level in a math or reading assessment and number of discipline referrals.

Evidence of Effectiveness: Data elements reported in the Fiscal Year 2020 final report from Texas AIM include: average monthly cost per student (\$55), percentage of students who advanced an academic level in a math or reading assessment (76%), and percentage of youth receiving a C or better in a subject for which they received services (89%). The STAAR state assessment requirement was waived for the 2019-2020 school year; therefore, a percentage of students that passed the STAAR state assessment was not reported for Fiscal Year 2020.

Amachi

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$2,000,000

Brief Description of Program: The purpose of Amachi is to provide one-to-one mentoring for youth ages 6-18 whose parents or family members are incarcerated in or recently released from the prison system. Youth are engaged in mentoring relationships established primarily through partnerships with school districts, faith-based organizations, non-profit partnerships, the Texas Department of Criminal Justice, Prison Fellowship, and re-entry programs across Texas.

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2020: 1,313

Program Locations: Dallas-Fort Worth metropolitan area, Houston metropolitan area, the central Texas region, El Paso, the Gulf Coast region, Hereford, Lubbock, the Texas panhandle region, and the south Texas region.

Eligibility Requirements: Big Brothers Big Sisters (BBBS) Lone Star implements the Amachi mentoring program and subcontracts with eight BBBS programs throughout Texas to provide mentoring for children of incarcerated adults.

Data Elements Collected: Data is maintained by BBBS Lone Star. Progress reports are provided to TEA quarterly. BBBS Lone Star reports outcomes to TEA annually.

Evidence of Effectiveness: During the 2019-2020 school year (Fiscal Year 2020) 1,313 students had a mentor and were served. Of these, 92% of matches that were active during the school year were sustained for at least six months. 98% of mentored students were promoted to the next grade level. 90% of all matches reported improvement in at least one of the four areas of personal and social well-being designed to measure self-confidence. 87.5% reported improvement in at least one category of improved relationships. 1.2% of the students were referred to the juvenile justice system and 2.7% of students were reported as referred to an alternative education program.

21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC)

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2020: \$115,850,845

Brief Description of Program: The purpose of the 21st CCLC program is to assist students to meet the challenging state academic standards by providing them with academic enrichment activities and a broad array of other programs and activities during non-school hours or periods when school is not in session (such as before and after school, or during summer recess). The activities provided reinforce and complement the regular academic programs of the schools attended by the students and are targeted to the students' academic needs. The Texas 21st CCLC program operates as the Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE), or Texas ACE.

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2021: 1,111,355 students were served during the program year that coincides with Fiscal Year 2021.

Program Locations: Eighty-three grantees operated 603 community learning centers in 141 school districts.

Eligibility Requirements: Eligible entities include a local educational agency (independent school district, open-enrollment charter school, and regional education service center), community-based organization, Indian tribe or tribal organization (as such terms are defined in section 4 of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Act (25 U.S.C. 450b)), another public or private entity, or a consortium of two or more such agencies, organizations, or entities. Competitively funded grant programs must target students that primarily attend schools eligible for school wide programs under the ESEA, Section 1114 and the families of such students.

Data Elements Collected: Program attendance, student activity participation, center activity schedule, family activity schedule, family activity attendance, staffing, and student identifiers to link to state-collected data for outcomes for required federal reporting and local program evaluation.

Evidence of Effectiveness: ¹²

- Regular participation in the 21st CCLC program (60-days+) was consistently associated with higher state assessment scores in mathematics.
- Regular participation in the 21st CCLC (60-days or more) by high school students was associated with higher GPAs; more credits earned and increased grade promotion. These high school participants had an average of a 72 percent greater likelihood of being promoted to the next grade level, a 17% reduction on average statewide in school-day absences, and a 14% reduction on average statewide in disciplinary incidents during the school day.
- Higher quality programs boasted a longer duration of student attendance, fewer school-day disciplinary referrals, increased likelihood of grade promotion, and an increase in reading assessment scores.

Communities In Schools (CIS)

Total Funds Fiscal Year 2021: \$35,364,157

Brief Description of Program: The mission of Communities In Schools (CIS) is to surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. CIS staff work full time on school campuses and partner with educators, students, and parents to identify students who are at-risk of dropping out of school. CIS staff provide intensive case management services and an array of campus-based programming including: crisis intervention, individual counseling, support groups, life skills training, tutoring, mentoring, parent engagement, and enrichment activities – all targeted to meet the individual needs of students and remove barriers to learning so they can fully engage in school and be academically successful. CIS monitors student level data and tracks educational outcomes. The CIS program delivers services in six areas: academic enhancement and support, college and career awareness, enrichment activities, health and human services, parental and family engagement, and supportive guidance and counseling.

Number of Youth Served Fiscal Year 2021: 98,285 students received intensive case management services.

Program Locations: 178 districts, 1,235 campuses

Eligibility Requirements: Eligible grantees include 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations.

Data Elements Collected: Demographic information, attendance, disciplinary actions, grades, state assessment scores, partner organizations, end of year student outcomes (promoted, retained, graduated, dropped out, etc.), targeted need(s), and services provided.

Evidence of Effectiveness: During Fiscal Year 2021, 27 CIS programs served up to 948,330 students on 1,235 campuses in 178 school districts. Of those, 98,285 were provided individual case management services. Reported outcomes included: 99% stayed in school (grades 7-12); 97% were promoted to the next grade (grades K-11); 92% of students that were eligible to graduate graduated; 89% of students that were targeted for academic intervention showed improvement; 76% of students that were targeted for

¹² American Institutes for Research. "Texas 21st Century Community Learning Centers: 2014-15 Evaluation Report." Prepared for the Texas Education Agency. May 2016.

attendance intervention showed improvement; and 82% of students that were targeted for behavior intervention showed improvement.

Texas Juvenile Justice Department

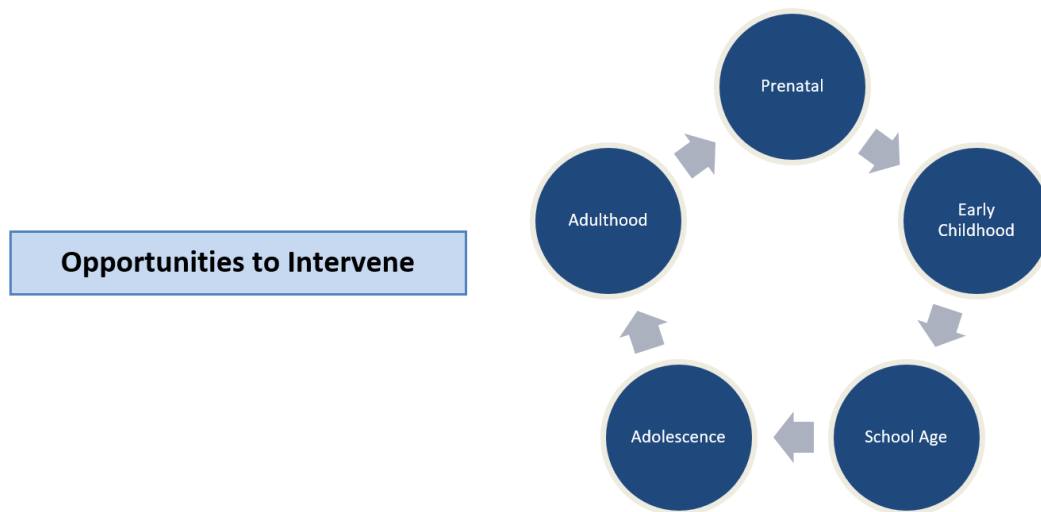
There are no TJJD-funded programs to describe in the FY21 that report this year's report due to budget cuts; however, the program descriptions are included in Section 3 of this report.

APPENDIX B: Delinquency and Dropout Prevention Practices: Pursuing a Developmental Continuum of Services

The earlier prevention efforts can begin, the better, as many risk factors and predictors of dropout and delinquency begin before kindergarten. Resiliency develops over time, building upon protective factors, such as relationships established in early childhood, and evolving as a child grows into school age and adolescence.

Just as preventative measures like vaccines often need to be repeated as a child grows older to extend protection from illnesses, so too do youth often require "booster shots" to extend the protective buffers established earlier in their development and to protect against new risk factors that emerge as they grow older. An intervention that provided protections during elementary school may lose its impact during middle school, for example, when another intervention may be needed to address evolving developmental needs and risk factors. A continuum of effective interventions has been identified that range from prevention programs targeting early childhood through individualized interventions that prevent justice involved youth from recidivism. Common strategies among them include:

- **Prenatal:** Interventions that provide prenatal care to expectant mothers as well as prevent expectant mothers' exposure to alcohol, drug use, smoking, and stress have the potential to prevent many subsequent problems for a child.
- **Early childhood:** Individual and family interventions in the preschool period, such as home visits, parent training, and quality education and childcare services, are used to improve life-course outcomes.
- **School age:** Once children become of school age, they are faced with peer pressure and school risk factors. Many prevention efforts at this next developmental stage are universal school or classroom interventions focused on encouraging positive behavior social and emotional skill building. Other efforts include targeted programs for at-risk or high-need students and their families, providing smaller classroom communities, family training courses, and afterschool enrichment activities.
- **Adolescence:** Adolescent prevention programs focus on bonding students with their school and community, and span across the middle and high school years. By enhancing school climate, belonging and academic achievement through activities like service learning, positive youth development, career development, mentoring, tutoring, and counseling. These programs are designed to reduce risky behavior and keep students in school.
- **Delinquent youth:** Therapeutic models for delinquent youth have been found effective for reducing recidivism rates and strengthening relationships within families.



Appendix C: Dropout and Delinquency Prevention Resources

Several resources exist to assist the state, communities, and service providers in identifying and selecting programs and practices with demonstrated effectiveness in preventing dropout and delinquency:

- **Get Parenting Tips.** GetParentingTips.com provides resources including a video library, parenting articles, tip sheets, and community resources for parents of children 0-17. This effort is provided by DFPS.
- **Prevention and Early Intervention, DFPS.** The Prevention and Early Intervention page provides information to PEI programs and links to prevention resources.
http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/prevention_and_early_intervention/
- **The National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI)**, previously known as **The Center for Evidence-Based Practice: Young Children with Challenging Behavior**, is funded by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs. Their goal is to raise the awareness and implementation of positive, evidence-based practices and to assist states and programs in their implementation of sustainable systems for the implementation of the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children (birth – five).
<https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/>
- **Center for Disease Control (CDC).** This organization provides information and resources on a wide variety of topics, supporting health, and educational outcomes. The website provides resources about school connectedness, health and academics, and other adolescent related topics for school personnel and families to increase protective factors helpful for school success and health outcomes, including a list of resources which can be found at:
<https://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/index.htm>, with school connectedness at the following webpage: https://www.cdc.gov/healthyouth/protective/school_connectedness.htm, and health and academics at: https://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/health_and_academics/index.htm. Information regarding Adverse Childhood Outcomes (ACEs) can be found at <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/index.html>.
- **Effective Social and Emotional Learning Programs.** The CASEL Guide shares best-practice guidelines for district and school teams on how to select and implement SEL programs.
<https://casel.org/guide/>
- **The Institute of Education Sciences: What Works Clearinghouse.** This resource provides

information about research, practice guides and intervention reports for dropout prevention and evidenced-based decision-making. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/>

- **Effective Strategies for Dropout Prevention.** The National Dropout Prevention Center/Network provides research and resources on effective strategies for dropout prevention. <http://dropoutprevention.org/effective-strategies/>
- **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention's Model Programs Guide (MPG)** is designed to assist practitioners and communities in implementing evidence-based prevention and intervention programs that cover the entire continuum of youth services from prevention through sanctions to reentry. <https://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/> **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP).** OJJDP provides resources for effective and promising model intervention programs.
- **CrimeSolutions.gov.** The National Institute of Justice provides a library on effective and promising delinquency prevention programs. <https://www.crimesolutions.gov/TopicDetails.aspx?ID=62#practice>
- **Juvenile Justice Evidence-Based Practices.** This resource hub provides recent research on key issues, model policies, and reform trends relating to evidence-based practices. <https://jje.org/hub/evidence-based-practices/>
- **What Works and What Does Not? Benefit-Cost Findings on Prevention Programs from Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP).** Lee, S., Aos, S., & Pennucci, A. (2015). *What works and what does not? Benefit-cost findings from WSIPP.* (Document Number 15-02-4101). Olympia: Washington State Institute for Public Policy. http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/ReportFile/1602/Wsipp_What-Works-and-What-Does-Not-Benefit-Cost-Findings-from-WSIPP_Report.pdf
- **Blueprints for Healthy Youth Development.** A project of the Center for the Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado, serves as a resource for governments, foundations, businesses, and other organizations trying to make informed judgments about investments in evidence-based prevention and intervention programs that are effective in reducing antisocial behavior and promoting a healthy course of youth development. <https://www.blueprintsprograms.org/>
- **SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP).** NREPP is an evidence-based repository and review system designed to provide the public with reliable information on mental health and substance abuse interventions. <https://www.samhsa.gov/ebp-resource-center>
- **The National Child Traumatic Stress Network.** This organization provides information and resources on a variety of policy and program topics related to the impact of trauma on children, including the impact of trauma on learning. <https://www.nctsn.org/resources>