



Texas Head Start Collaboration Office (TXHSCO)

Role in Texas's Early Childhood System

**Presented to: Governor's Task Force on Early
Childhood Education & Care**

Presented by: Dr. Alferma Giles, Director

What Is the TXHSCO?

Purpose & Role

- Facilitate collaboration and partnering among Head Start agencies and entities in the early childhood system that provide services to low-income children and families at or below the federal poverty level:

Public Assistance: TANF, SSI, SNAP

Categorical Eligibility: foster care, homeless

Over Income Allowance & Children with disabilities: 10%

- State-level liaison between federal Head Start agencies and Texas/local entities
- Builds partnerships across early childhood systems to improve services for low-income children from birth to 5
- Aligns policies, supports professional development, and assists in coordinating with schools, health services, and community organizations

Collaborating & Partnering in ECE Systems

- Governor-appointed member of the Texas Early Learning Council
- Texas Head Start Association (TXHSA) to ensure a partnership-focused approach to improving the coordination and delivery of comprehensive early childhood services
- Ensures Head Start is part of statewide planning and decision making
- Supports collaboration and partnerships with and between Head Start/Early Head Start, pre-K & childcare
- Aligns early learning standards and school readiness expectations
- Connects programs to health, mental health, and family supports

Statutory & Federal Authority

Federal: Head Start Act, Section 642B

Directs the U.S. Department of HHS to fund state Head Start Collaboration Offices

State: Texas Human Resources Code Chapter 72

Defines required coordination across agencies and local education agencies

Location/Size & Scope

The **TXHSCO** is strategically located within the **Children's Learning Institute (CLI)**, the designated Texas State Center for Early Childhood Development. Head Start is included in the direct access to research-practice expertise and statewide training and technical assistance infrastructure.

- Annual budget: **\$225,000**
- One full-time staff member (Director)
- Relies on cross-agency partnerships
- Texas Education Agency (TEA), other state agencies, and local programs



Current Federal Impact & Support

Direct funding from federal to local public or private non-profit **agencies:** *Education Service Centers, ISDs, Community Action Agencies, Migrant/Seasonal, American Indian Alaskan Native, limited purpose, community based & faith based*

2024 Texas Profile

- **\$826M** in federal funding
- **1,069 centers**
- **67,942 funded enrollment of agencies statewide**
 - 53,664 Head Start
 - 14,144 Early Head Start

Measuring Success

Quality & Program Performance

- Federal Program Information Report (PIR)
- Federal monitoring & Head Start Program Performance Standards
- CLASS scores when applicable
- Alignment with Texas early guidelines, Pre-K Guidelines, and Head Start Early Learning Outcomes Framework to the Texas Infant/Toddler Specialist (ITSN) Professional Learning Communities for Teachers
- Strengthened Partnerships & access with Child Care Programs in Texas Rising Star
- Participation in Texas School Ready, CLI Engage, and the Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS) Texas Workforce Registry
- Kindergarten readiness through collaboration and activities of the Texas Early Learning Council that address kindergarten expectations and transitions

Collaboration Efforts

Texas Head Start Association (TXHSA): Communication, training, and feedback loops for continuous improvement

Texas Education Agency (TEA): Pre-K partnerships, standards, and transitions

Collaborations within TEA:

- **Texas Education for Homeless Children & Youth (TEHCY):** Support for children from families experiencing homelessness
- **Texas 619 Coordinator:** Disability services coordination

Child Care/Workforce Agencies: Subsidy coordination and workforce initiatives

Health & Human Services: Medicaid/CHIP, mental health, and family supports

Child Care Regulation: Align state regulations, improve quality, and expand access to early childhood services

Challenges, Access & Gaps

- Constrained capacity for statewide coordination
- Limited access for eligible children and affordability barriers for non-Head Start families
- Workforce shortages and wage competition
- Fragmented systems and data silos



Considerations

1. Strengthen cross-agency governance and increase statewide coordination capacity
2. Invest in integrated early childhood data systems
3. Expand access and funding in high-need communities
4. Support a unified early childhood workforce strategy



Necessity of Collaboration

The TXHSCO continues to support statewide impact to:

- Strengthen partnerships
- Improve alignment
- Achieve positive outcomes for children and families

The Texas Head Start Collaboration Office Director plays a strategic, system-level role in aligning federal Head Start programs with the Texas's early childhood education and care system. Housing the office at the Children's Learning Institute further strengthens this work by providing research expertise, statewide infrastructure, and deep cross-agency partnerships that improve outcomes for children and families.





Thank You

Dr. Alferma Giles, Director