Letitia Thomas
Foster Care Education and
Policy State Coordinator
Objectives

▪ Implement strategies to decrease the adverse impact of foster care on student achievement.

▪ Improve and strengthen cross-system collaboration on behalf of students in foster care to improve educational outcomes.

▪ Develop practices that ensure laws, resources, and supports for students in DFPS Managing Conservatorship are fully understood and implemented.
Introductions
Child Welfare 101
The Impact of Foster Care on Education
New Foster Care Education Data
Overview of Key Laws and New 86th Legislative Updates
Strategies to Promote Success
Commissioner Priority Projects – Foster Care
Resources Available
Next Steps and Key Actions
Total number of children (birth-18 years) in the custody of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services = 52,397 children
Reasons for DFPS Managing Conservatorship
Child Abuse and Maltreatment

- Sexual Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Physical Abuse
- Labor and Sex Trafficking
- Abandonment

- Physical Neglect
- Medical Neglect
- Neglectful Supervision
- RAPR- Refusal to Assume Parental Responsibility

Abuse and Neglect Definitions (CPS)
Children in out of home placement for reasons of safety and protection:

- Victims of abuse, neglect and exploitation
- Court ordered removal intervention
- In the conservatorship of the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
- Safety, Permanency and Wellbeing
Students in Foster Care identified by Texas public schools:

16,867

(2018-19 PEIMS Data)

Actual students in DFPS Managing Conservatorship:

30,340

(5-18 years of age)

More than 13,000 not ever identified
The Impact of Foster Care on Education

**Multiple School Changes**

- **31%-75%** of youth change schools when first entering foster care.

- **34.2%** of 17-18yr old youth in foster care experienced 5 or more school changes.

Educational
School Changes and readjustments

Situational
Abuse/Neglect

Psychological
Instability and Uncertainty

Emotional
Removal for home & subsequent moves

Copyright ©Texas Education Agency, 2019. All rights reserved.

National Factsheet on Educational Outcomes of Children in Foster Care | Revised April 2018
Missing School Foster Care Related Absenteeism

- Twice the rate of their peers
- Sibling Visits
- Visits with family
- Court appearances
- Therapeutic and other case related appointments
- Excused absences for case plan related and court-ordered appointments - TEC § 25.087
Education Instability

- Lower graduation rates and higher dropout rates
- Lower academic achievement rates
- Loss of:
  - Credits
  - Records
  - Supports and Services
  - Educational Continuity
- At Risk – Accelerated instruction (at-risk indicators and compensatory education) TEC § 29.081(d)(11)
New TEA Foster Care Data
Students in foster care are now a mandatory sub-group for which LEAs and states must collect and report data

20 USC §6311(h)(1)(C)(ii)

State report cards must include disaggregated information, including the graduation rates and academic achievement of students in foster care

20 USC §6311(h)(1)(C)(iii)

The existing PEIMS code for students in foster care will help Texas to fulfill the new data collection requirements

TEC §7.029(b-1)
Students in Foster Care -vs- Peers Statewide
STAAR Testing and Graduation Rates

2017-18 Federal Report Card for Texas Public Schools

- STAAR APPROACHES GRADE LEVEL IN ALL GRADES & SUBJECTS
  - All TX Students: 77%
  - Foster Care: 57%

- STAAR MEETS GRADE LEVEL IN ALL GRADES & SUBJECTS
  - All TX Students: 47%
  - Foster Care: 27%

- STAAR MASTERS GRADE LEVEL IN ALL GRADES & SUBJECTS
  - All TX Students: 21%
  - Foster Care: 9%

- 4YR COHORT (GR 9-12) GRADUATION RATE: CLASS OF 2017
  - All TX Students: 89.70%
  - Foster Care: 58.20%
## Special Populations 2017 Graduation and Dropout Rates

### Graduation Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Graduation Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Military-Connected</td>
<td>94.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide Graduation</td>
<td>89.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant Graduation</td>
<td>84.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At-Risk Graduation</td>
<td>83.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless Graduation</td>
<td>72.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foster Care Graduation</td>
<td>58.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Dropout Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Dropout Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Foster Care Dropout</td>
<td>25.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homeless Dropout</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Migrant Dropout</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At-Risk Dropout</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide Dropout</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Military-Connected Dropout</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What does foster care education data reveal?
Fostering Connections to Success and Increasing Adoptions Act of 2008 promotes school stability by:

- Promotes maintaining child in the school enrolled at the time of placement.
- Encourages coordination between education and child welfare.
- Considers appropriateness and proximity to child’s school of origin.
- Requires immediate and appropriate enrollment.

Public Law 110-351
ESSA aligns federal education law with child welfare law

Every Student Succeeds Act (2015):

- Clear, written transportation plans
- State level foster care liaison, local points of contact
- Student achievement data = school report cards

Public Law 114-95
Encourages educators and child welfare to work together to determine what school is in the child’s best interest.

There are many factors that relate to determining “Best Interest” for students in foster care.

Educators can provide information to DFPS that supports their decision-making and planning processes.

DFPS makes the final decision regarding “Best Interest”.

Copyright ©Texas Education Agency, 2019. All rights reserved.
School Stability

- Right to remain in school where student is enrolled at the time of placement or subsequent placements
- Until completion of the highest grade offered at that campus
- Regardless of whether student in foster care for duration of enrollment

- Enrollment within three days
- Records transferred within 10 working days

- TEC § 25.001(g)–(g-1)
- TFC § 264.115(a)
- TEC § 25.007(b)(1)
If remaining in the same school, is not in the child’s best interest; both federal and state law require prompt enrollment at the new school


Truancy: LEA shall provide additional counseling and may not refer to truancy court if truancy is a result of …pregnancy, foster care, homeless, principal income earner for family…..

TEC § 25.0915
Texas Law

**Transition Assistance** - TEC § 25.007

- Establish procedures to lesson adverse impact of movement
- Encourage school districts and open enrollment charter schools to provide services for a student when applying for admission to postsecondary and seeking financial assistance.
- Allow a student who is in a course required for graduation to complete course at no cost, before the beginning of the next school year.
- Review course credit accrual and personal graduation plan
Transition Assistance - TEC § 25.007

- Develop systems to ease transition in first 2 weeks of school.
- Must accept special education referral from previous school
  - Use previous IEP until new one developed
- Promote practices that facilitate access by a student to extra-curricular activities, summer programs, after-school tutoring programs, electronic courses, etc. at nominal or low-cost
Transition Assistance - TEC § 25.007

Procedures for awarding credit, including partial credit

SBOE Rules:
Credit by exam at any point in the school year

19 TAC § 74.24

Proportional credit for one completed semester of a two-semester course

19 TAC § 74.26
86th Legislative Session Updates

H.B. 1709 - (TEC § 25.007, § 29.0151)
School districts must notify DFPS if the school district appoints a surrogate parent to make special education decisions on behalf of the child.

If the court appoints a surrogate parent and the school district determines the surrogate is not performing his or her duties, the school district must notify DFPS.

If DFPS agrees the surrogate is not performing his or her duties, DFPS must notify the court, who must review the appointment and make appropriate orders.

H.B. 811 - (TEC § 35.001)
A student’s status in DFPS conservatorship or homelessness must be considered as a factor in the decision for suspension, removal, expulsion, or placement of a student in an alternative education program.
H.B. 2184 - (TEC § 37.023)
There must be notice to the parent or caregiver and the receiving school, as soon as practicable, after determining release from alternative education program.
Coordinated transition to the receiving school includes consultation with counselors, behavior coordinators, school social workers, and others.
A personalized transition plan is required

H.B. 1702 - (TEC § 51.936) (higher education collaboration opportunity)
Requires a public institution of higher education to obtain the names of current and incoming students currently or formerly in DFPS conservatorship and provide that information to the institution’s liaison officer responsible for assisting students currently or formerly in foster care.
Allows the liaison to attend trainings at the institution for higher education and requires the institution to publicize the liaison’s name and contact information and the available support services.
**Foster Care Consortia:**
Education and Child Welfare working together

**Robust discussion on cross-system practices, responsibilities, and collaboration to promote student success.**

DFPS
Region 3 East
Education Specialist Beverly Rowden

ESC 10
Foster Care Champion
Deon Quinn

Klein ISD Foster Care Liaison/Coordinator, Rekina Romes presented at the Foster Care Consortium for Harris County in collaboration with the Dept. of Family & Protective Services (March 2019)

September 17, 2019

Pictured from left to right: Carl Schroeder (Ed. Specialist 6 B), Lorena Knight (TX Workforce Commission Education Specialist), Felicia Bennett-Chambers (Ed. Specialist 6 A), Brandi Purswell (ETV Specialist/BCFS HHS) and Rekina Romes (Klein ISD Foster Care Liaison/Coordinator).
Commissioner Priority Projects

- TEA/DFPS TSDS Student Identification Build and Roll Out

- Updated Foster Care and Student Success Resource Guide and Resource Suite
In collaboration with DFPS, TEA is building an automated data sharing process and secure portal through TSDS, so that LEAs will be able to accurately identify students in foster care, in nearly real-time.

- **Display a roster of presently enrolled students in foster care**

- **Populate a list of schools and currently enrolled foster care students attended (within the same school year within or outside of enrolled district)**

- **Remove student identification barriers**

- **Accelerate the enrollment process**

- **Improve the accuracy of PEIMS coding for students in foster care**

- **Expedite services to students in foster care in accordance with state and federal statues**
Texas Foster Care & Student Success Resource Updates

- Revise Foster Care and Student Success Guide to include updated laws and practice guidance.
  - TEA is working in collaboration with DFPS, the Children’s Commission, LEAs, ESC’s and other Stakeholders.
  - Will serve as the foundation for additional tools and training resources that are developed.

- Website edits will include:
  - Updated laws, guidance, resources, and tools
Opportunities to Support the Guide Update Version 2.0

- Assemble Photos
- Collect Student Quotes
- Write Vignettes/Scenarios
- Gather Brief Success Stories
- Update Laws
- Best Practice Examples
- Other

Copyright ©Texas Education Agency, 2019. All rights reserved.
Foster Care and Student Success
Resource Guide Revision Timeframe

July 2019 - March 2020
Foster Care Resource Guide
Revisions and Approvals

March 2020 - May 2020
Publish and Distribute Updated Foster Care
Resource Guide
To move the needle from where I am to where I want to go, within the next 30 days I will ...
- TEA Foster Care and Student Success Information and Resources: https://tea.texas.gov/Academics/Special_Student_Populations/Foster_Care_and_Student_Success/Foster_Care___Student_Success_-_Information_and_Resources

- Supreme Court of Texas Children’s Commission – Education Resources:
  - http://texaschildrenscommission.gov/reports-and-resources/

- ESC Region 10 Foster Care Resources:
  - https://www.region10.org/search-results/?Keywords=foster+care&display=search&newSearch=true&noCache=1
▪ The Legal Center for Foster Care and Education: http://fostercareandeducation.org/NewsUpdates.aspx

▪ NAEHCY, Foster Care: http://www.naehcy.org/essa-and-children-foster-care

The Latest TEA News

The latest news from the Texas Education Agency is available through news releases, online correspondence, mailing lists, and other posted information.

- **Texas Educators**
  - Grow Your Own Grants Awarded

- **Student Testing & Accountability**
  - 2018-19 District Accreditations Announced

- **Texas Schools**
  - New Cohort of Math Innovation Zones
Email Updates

To sign up for TEA updates or to access your subscriber preferences, please enter your contact information below. About 60 different topic-specific subscriptions are available.

Subscription Type: Email

Email Address

SUBMIT  CANCEL

Your contact information is used to deliver requested updates or to service your subscriber preferences.
Sign-Up for Updates!

- Special Student Populations
  - Foster Care and Student Success
  - Bilingual/ESL Education
  - Early Childhood Education
  - Special Education Updates
  - Gifted/Talented Education
  - Pregnancy Programs
  - Languages Other Than English
  - McKinney-Vento Homeless Education
  - Spanish Curriculum Standards
  - At-Risk and Highly Mobile Student Program Division
  - Migrant Education Program
  - Military Connected Students
  - Mental and Behavioral Health
Statewide Parental Involvement Conference
San Marcos Embassy Suites and Conference Center
December 12-14, 2019

TETN for LEA’s (**Contact your ESC TETN site manager to sign-up)
Thursday, October 10, 2019, 1pm-3pm

TETN for LEA’s (**Contact your ESC TETN site manager to sign-up)
Thursday, February 13, 2020, 1pm-3pm
How To Find ESC TETN Managers in TEA’s AskTED

Search Criteria

Regional Education Service Centers:

All Regional Education Service Centers
REG 1 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER
REG 2 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER
REG 3 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER
REG 4 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER

Information Type:

- Organization
- Personnel

Select Roles:

- TEACHER OF THE YEAR COORD
- TECHNOLOGY COORDINATOR
- TED ADMINISTRATOR
- TEKS
- TEST COORDINATOR
- TETN
- TREN COORDINATOR
- TURNAROUND TEAM CONTACT

Note: To make multiple selections, hold down the 'Ctrl' or 'Shift' key while clicking.

Search
# How To Find ESC TETN Managers in TEA’s AskTED Search Results

## Search Results

### Search Regional Education Service Centers - Personnel

26 records found - Select one or more Personnel to Display

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Check to Include</th>
<th>Role ▲</th>
<th>Last Name</th>
<th>First Name</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>RESC Name ▲</th>
<th>City</th>
<th>Zip</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>RESC Person</td>
<td>KOLAHDOUZ</td>
<td>ALI</td>
<td>108950</td>
<td>REG 1 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER</td>
<td>EDINBURG</td>
<td>78541</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>RESC Person</td>
<td>SWARTZ</td>
<td>APRIL</td>
<td>178950</td>
<td>REG 2 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER</td>
<td>CORPUS CHRISTI</td>
<td>78401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>RESC Person</td>
<td>ROSE</td>
<td>MARTHA</td>
<td>178950</td>
<td>REG 2 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER</td>
<td>CORPUS CHRISTI</td>
<td>79401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>RESC Person</td>
<td>VILLERE</td>
<td>KYLE</td>
<td>178950</td>
<td>REG 2 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER</td>
<td>CORPUS CHRISTI</td>
<td>78401</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>RESC Person</td>
<td>CAMACHO</td>
<td>ALEX</td>
<td>235950</td>
<td>REG 3 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER</td>
<td>VICTORIA</td>
<td>77901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>RESC Person</td>
<td>CLARK</td>
<td>MARCUS</td>
<td>235950</td>
<td>REG 3 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER</td>
<td>VICTORIA</td>
<td>77901</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓</td>
<td>RESC Person</td>
<td>LEE</td>
<td>JOE</td>
<td>101950</td>
<td>REG 4 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER</td>
<td>HOUSTON</td>
<td>77092</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# How To Find ESC TETN Managers in TEA’s AskTED

## Search Regional Education Service Centers - Personnel - View Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regional Education Service Center</th>
<th>REG 1 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER (108-950)</th>
<th>REG 2 EDUCATION SERVICE CENTER (178-950)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>TETN</strong></td>
<td>Ali Kolahdouz</td>
<td>April Swartz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ALI KOlahdouZ</strong></td>
<td>Mailing Address</td>
<td>Mailing Address</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1900 W SCHUNIER</td>
<td>209 N WATER ST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Edinburg, TX 78541-2234</td>
<td>Corpus Christi, TX 78401-2599</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Phone</strong></td>
<td>(956) 984-6063</td>
<td><strong>Fax</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(946) 984-7650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Email</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="mailto:akolahdouz@escl.net">akolahdouz@escl.net</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Foster Care & Student Success Program
Contact

Letitia Thomas
Foster Care Education and Policy State Coordinator
Letitia.Thomas@tea.texas.gov

TEA Foster Care and Student Success:
https://tea.texas.gov/FosterCareStudentSuccess/

Phone: 512-463-9414
Email: fostercareliaison@tea.texas.gov
THANK YOU!

Remember: “Every wall is a door” Ralph Waldo Emerson