

Expanded Learning Opportunities Council

May 2, 2014

Council Members Present:

- Lizzette Gonzalez Reynolds, Chief Deputy Commissioner, Texas Education Agency
- Terry Conner, Partner, Haynes & Boone, LLC
- Donna Wasielewski, Community Programs Coordinator, Williamson County Juvenile Services
- Aimee Clapp, Special Education Teacher, Ysleta ISD
- Dr. Kurt Hulett, Principal, Killeen ISD
- Mynder Kelly, S.A.C. Teacher, Sulphur Springs ISD
- Dr. Jodi Durón, Superintendent, Elgin ISD
- Terese Stevenson, Senior Program Officer, Rees-Jones Foundation
- Angel Toscano, Manager of Afterschool Programs, ACTIVE Life
- Susan Baskin, Executive Director, Camp Champions

Council Members Absent:

- Leila Membreno Hernandez, Associate Professor, UT-Pan American
- Mark Kiestler, Chief Professional Officer, Boys and Girls Club of the Austin Area
- Dr. Robert Sanborn, Executive Director, Children at Risk

Other Participants:

Organization	Name
Texas House of Representatives	Hon. Dwayne Bohac
College of Charleston and Afterschool Alliance	Dr. Terry Peterson
Edvance, Inc.	Kristin Nafziger Shawn Petty
Texas Partnerships for Out of School Time (TXPOST)	Molly Clayton Chris LeSuer
SEDL	John Spence Garry Davis
Texas Education Agency (TEA)	Jan Lindsey Julie Wayman Christine McCormick Sara Grunberger Adrienne Fischer

Lizzette Reynolds opened the meeting and thanked the council members and Representative Dwayne Bohac. She noted special greetings from Commissioner Williams and stated that he believes strongly in the work of this council and feels that this group can have a significant impact on students and learning. She introduced Texas State Representative Dwayne Bohac,

who was one of the sponsors for the Expanded Learning Opportunities (ELO) Council legislation.

Representative Dwayne Bohac emphasized the need to help all students have ELO experiences. He encouraged the council to view their work from a customer service perspective and to craft their work to meet the needs of students and he described five pillars to reach underserved communities:

1. parent commitment
2. culture of high expectations
3. strong campus leadership
4. statewide mission statement
5. extended learning time (ELT)

The representative noted that ELO is one component of expanded learning and that high quality ELO opportunities are mission critical.

INTRODUCTIONS & PROCEDURES:

Lizzette Reynolds asked for introductions from each member.

Dr. Jodi Durón, Superintendent of Elgin ISD – She had the opportunity to work with Representative Mark Strama and fully supported the initiative and the bill. Elgin ISD is 70% economically disadvantaged, property poor, and struggling to provide ELO for students. To close the achievement gap, we need to start early and provide ELO. Engaging students in extended learning opportunities, especially summer opportunities, is critical for them to develop literacy and math skills so they don't continue to fall further behind. She noted that the E3 Alliance has a powerful video clip about the summer learning loss issue.

Susan Baskin, Executive Director of Camp Champions – Camp Champions provides outdoor education for schools as well as summer camp. They feel strongly about the potential of camp to create independent and resilient kids. They are working with 6th and 9th graders from KIPP San Antonio and with David Yeager at UT to measure the impact of outdoor learning.

Aimee Clapp, Elementary School Educator with Ysleta ISD – This is her second year working with the 21st Century Community Learning Center (21st CCLCP) program in a Title I school. She sees the kids participating in afterschool opportunities, the benefits they have, and this is an exciting opportunity to expand those efforts.

Terry Connor, Managing Partner with Haynes & Boone, LLC – He chairs the education advisory council of the Dallas Regional Chamber and is the board chair of Dallas Afterschool, an umbrella service organization that provides high quality social and emotional learning programs in afterschool settings and summer opportunities for underprivileged kids. He stated his belief that only true high quality programs can change educational experiences and outcomes. In addition, education encompasses critically important social and emotional impacts on underserved children.

Dr. Kurt Hulett, Middle School Principal for Killeen Independent School District (KISD) – He has become very passionate about afterschool because of the level of service that the Boys and Girls Club afterschool program provides. Among KISD students, 55% are from military families. Their Boys and Girls Club supervises and engages 150 kids from 3:35 to 6:30. Their challenge is that schools can't pursue opportunities because of restrictions on the use of funds. Their wish is for greater flexibility in use of funds and a stronger liaison to the business community. He also noted that special education has to stay in the forefront to ensure that all kids have ELO.

Mynder Kelly, High School educator with Sulphur Springs Independent School District (SSISD) – She taught at Mendez Middle School in Austin Independent School District (AISD) which had effective programs that got the parents involved. While teaching at Greenville High School, she worked with the Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) program serving about 100-125 students. In this program, the first hour was academic and subsequent time was enrichment. She would like to identify ways to continue academic and club-type activities. She noted that transportation can be a problem. She mentioned that the SSISD Sparks program was very successful but it was cut because of funding. She noted the importance of kids being engaged during school, after school, and during the summer.

Terese Stevenson, Senior Program Officer with Rees-Jones Foundation – Her organization provides services for children and families who are underserved in the areas of mental health, foster care, and youth development. They look at whole child approaches, including meaningful experiences with adults, safety, character development, and social-emotional learning. They are especially interested in increasing the availability of peer learning across communities and in scaling programs to serve more kids. She noted that philanthropy fills a big gap, but it cannot do it all, which means we need to be creative about leveraging resources.

Angel Toscano, Manager of Afterschool Programs for ACTIVE Life – Their main goal is to make healthy the norm. He runs the afterschool program with 26 schools that have active curriculum and teach daily lessons about nutrition. He also serves on the board of the Central Texas Afterschool Network.

Donna Wasielewski, Community Programs Coordinator with Williamson County Juvenile Services – She spent four-and-a-half years working with youth on probation for truancy during which time she developed a kids' and canines' program to address a variety of issues for kids. She sees a need to make learning relevant. So many kids in the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP) system have trauma, which affects the brain and learning. Most of their kids are active learners, and they see a need to excite kids about learning while addressing trauma issues. Her work reflects a strong belief in these alternative type programs and hands-on learning.

Lizzette Reynolds thanked the Texas Education Grantmakers Consortium for contributing funding for council members' travel and for research, the Texas Comprehensive Center at SEDL for providing lunch and assisting with meeting facilitation, and TXPOST for its contributions to ELO work in Texas. She also introduced TEA staff who are supporting the

project: Jan Lindsey, Julie Wayman, Christine McCormick (official point of contact), Sara Grunberger, Virginia Rodriguez, and Adrienne Fischer.

Lizzette reviewed the council's responsibilities and deliverables.

The operating procedures were approved.

National Speaker – Dr. Terry Peterson

Dr. Peterson remarked that no one has figured out how to harness the power of these organizations to benefit thousands of kids. The difficult thing is how to do this at scale. He discussed a number of research studies made available to the council in the book *Expanding Minds and Opportunities*.

Lizzette Reynolds – What is 'quality'? One of the major initiatives that the Commissioner brought to the table is his commitment to find more flexibility in utilizing funding, starting with Title I funding. This would be a perfect opportunity to create an extended learning initiative in these communities.

Rep. Bohac – Extended learning time is key.

Dr. Peterson – The model referenced in his presentation (from Massachusetts) was not effective. If not done well, student-teacher fatigue can be a problem. Activities need to be designed to ensure that kids are engaged.

Rep. Bohac – Kids need more time on academics. Character education plus academic education equals the ability to grasp opportunity. Character education has to come within the school framework. There are 24 character traits that are most correlated with success in life. We can put K-12 in front of every student, but kids will never grasp the opportunity without character training.

Dr. Peterson – We shouldn't do the same thing after school that we did during the first 7 hours of regular school. Tutoring would be an option, for example.

Dr. Hulett – For the kids from solid homes, the system works. Afterschool programs try to make up for situations where parents cannot be supportive, but districts can run into problems with funding constraints. Locally, KISD looked at incorporating web-based activities into afterschool programs, but they ran into problems spending State Compensatory Education (SCE) funds because funding can only be expended on at risk students. Is there research that indicates how we should be structuring this time to support kids more effectively?

Dr. Peterson – We don't have this research quite yet. Some research on components has been conducted. When done well, programs like "writing across the afterschool program" connect back to the school day and to academic outcomes. Usually this mix of creative and academic makes a difference. Big Thought has a summer program that starts with two hours of math, science, and social studies followed by two-and-a-half hours of kids working with experts in music that is topped off with two hours of hands-on activities.

Susan Baskin – The council needs to think about the workforce we are creating. There are many examples of students being academically qualified but lacking in team skills and other 21st century skills (see www.p21.org, which was founded by businesses). We have a wonderful

opportunity to prepare students to have these softer skills. We are great at our creativity and innovation. We need to have all kids exercise their creativity. Through ELO, we can increase creativity and innovation for kids. Do you have any examples of extraordinary programs that do a good job at this?

Dr. Peterson – When some people talk about this they're referring to character education. Last year at a workforce conference, there was a panel talk about the need for students to develop these skills. There are examples out there.

Terese Stevenson – We need to keep the kids in mind when designing these systems. Kids are going to be successful when they have a level of competency and excitement. Have you seen any research on programs that promote kids' self-efficacy?

Dr. Peterson – The work by Joseph Durlak and Roger Weissberg addresses this.

Dr. Durón – As we are talking about quality, what drives a program is quality staff. Often it is challenging to find the best people. What is some of the research on this?

Dr. Peterson – This is really key. There's a potential to use community teachers and classroom teachers, and both need professional development (PD). There are a lot of efforts being done to explore PD around afterschool staffing. One of the challenges in summer programs is that we decide to do them late. The Wallace Foundation encourages people to start planning in November and December for summer programs, use the best people in the design, and conduct PD.

Rep. Bohac – Dr. Martin Seligman and Dr. Chris Peterson led a team of social scientists, who came up with 24 character traits that lead to life success. He hopes that the council can look at these in its work. All 24 are teachable and measurable, and we need to put these things into place. At the end of the day, it's about hard work.

Presentation: Molly Clayton, Executive Director, Texas Partnership for Out of School Time (TXPOST)

Several state agencies are involved in this work: Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS), Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), Texas Department of Agriculture (TDA), Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC), and the Texas Juvenile Justice Department (TJJD).

TXPOST is working on new quality standards, which will be available later this year or next and will reinforce professional development.

Federal funding exceeds state funding by 12 times. The demand for 21st CCLC programs far exceeds supply.

Upcoming Research:

- Harris County Department of Education's (HCDE) study of the Cooperative for Afterschool Enrichment (CASE) Ambassadors program is documenting the return on investment for this afterschool program.
- Texas A&M University's (TAMU) study on corporate support for out of school time (OST)

- Afterschool Alliance’s study on ‘Texas After 3:00 p.m.’

Terry Conner – Do we have any way of knowing if federal funds are being spent in the right way? What do we know about federal funding and its impact?

Molly Clayton – 21st CCLC (also called Afterschool Centers for Education (ACE)) funds are administered by TEA. Federal funds through TWC are a different stream, and it is more difficult to determine outcomes.

Jan Lindsey – ACE funding is set for 2014-2015, but we’re not sure about allocations after that.

Lizzette Reynolds – The amount of funds has shrunk over the years, but the Agency has increased the quality of its programming. States will need to show how this programming can impact college and career readiness standards; science, technology, engineering and math (STEM), etc.

Dr. Hulett – Do groups like Communities In Schools (CIS), Boys and Girls Clubs (BGC), etc., get state funding?

Lizzette Reynolds – Several programs such as Amachi, Communities in Schools, Big Brothers Big Sisters, and Texas Academic Intervention and Mentoring (AIM) are currently funded through specific appropriation riders. How can we encourage state appropriators to give the choice to local communities to use their funds as they see fit rather than TEA funneling funds to specific organizations?

Dr. Hulett – On his campus, the BGC staff are there before school and provide tutoring, monitoring, and other services for kids. These people are integral to his staff.

Molly Clayton – TXPOST is interested in helping local communities put systems in place to support this work.

Mynder Kelly – Can you break down the eligibility requirement for the 21st CCLC program?

Molly Clayton – The request for applications (RFA) contains all of the specific requirements and is developed by TEA annually.

Terese Stevenson – Are activities aligned across the funding stream?

Molly Clayton – TXPOST works with regional providers to coordinate services.

Dr. Durón – Participation and access are a huge challenge for rural schools. What else are they missing, or is it just that the funds are limited?

Molly Clayton – There just is not enough public funding. Not every community has a strong private funding base. We need to increase the resources. We leave \$40 million a year untapped for summer and afterschool right now, and we need to be smarter about increasing these investments. 375 ACE sites serve 100,000 students as part of 21st CCLC, Cycle 6. When these funds run out sustainability will be an issue.

Terry Conner – Intuitively we agree that the principles are all good things. How to get these done is the main challenge.

Molly Clayton – You can either have a carrot or a stick. The best example is the ACE program, which has a parent involvement specialist for each grant. We are trying to get buy-in amid diversity.

Donna Wasielewski – Districts are being told that more money is coming for prevention. How much do you see that funding is being directed to this end?

Molly Clayton – Houston Councilman Brad Bratford recently proposed reducing expenditures for juvenile justice and investing instead in afterschool programming.

Lizzette Reynolds – She heard a good presentation on this recently at the Meadows Mental Health Policy Institute’s Texas State of Mind Conference, where a Harris County prosecutor facilitated a discussion with conservative and liberal groups and came to consensus on key issues.

Texas 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Kristen Nafziger

Texas receives 9.2% of the total federal funding for this program (\$1.149 billion), 95% of which is for competitive grants and 5% of which is for capacity building, administration, and evaluation.

The branding for the 21st CCLCs, the Texas Afterschool Centers on Education (ACE) program, has really taken off.

Most of the programs are surveying teachers at the local level. Edvance is trying to aggregate this and systematize this information. The American Institutes for Research (AIR) is conducting the independent evaluation.

Four Required Components of the ACE Program:

- Academics
- Enrichment
- Family Engagement
- College and Career Readiness

There are currently 122 Grantees, with 179 sites serving 180,000 students.

Edvance will be creating a rural network of grantees and former grantees, and they want to learn what’s working and share this information statewide.

Donna Wasielewski – Do you specifically target rural populations, or is it competitive?

Kristen – Grants are competitive.

Four Key Program Initiatives:

- Intentional Activities
- Family Engagement
- Learning What Works
- Sustaining Programs

Homework and tutorials are the number one activity provided by the 21st CCLC grants.

Texas has the most robust data system in the nation, called “TX21ST”.

AIR got a comparison group from TEA's Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) and showed positive results (see p. 203 in the compendium).

A two-year project –the STAAR¹ Pilot Project (SPP) – was conducted with 15 district grantees in which each selected a research-based academic intervention and identified targeted students to participate. AIR will also conduct surveys of parents, students, and others. The evaluation report is pending.

Dr. Durón – Which 15 were involved in this pilot?

Kristen Nafziger – She will get this information to the committee.

Each grantee was required to conduct local, independent evaluation. This activity has changed the conversation on quality. TEA is providing guidance, training, and technical assistance (TA) to support grantees with this effort.

Terese Stevenson – Is there any focus on alignment across the core components?

Kristen Nafziger – The grant application asks what the needs are and what they will focus on.

Sustaining Programs:

- Working with The Finance Project's Sustainability Planning Workbook
- Providing Sustainability Planning Training in selected communities
- Financing Training upcoming on May 15, 2014
- Examples
 - Temple ISD Tax Ratification
 - Northside ISD Scholarships from fee-based program
 - Region VI Education Service Center transitioning to Sam Houston State University

Donna Wasielewski – What are some of the key strategies for getting families engaged?

Kristen Nafziger – Programs will have events, such as a short student performance followed by use of science kits. It's really about talking with the families about what they need. The federal requirement is that an activity is 45 minutes, which is not the only way that families are engaging with their kids.

CASE Student Ambassadors, Lisa Carruthers, Director

Edwin Cortez, 9th Grader at Waller High School – He has been a student in an afterschool program for three years. His program is open every day of the week, except there is no transportation on Fridays. They have two years left on their grant. He gets distracted easily and he likes to talk during class. In the afterschool program he can stay and listen to his teachers. His friend Maria was bullied as a child, which led to low self-esteem. She decided to stay in the afterschool program, and she started getting along with people. She got over the

¹ State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness

bullies and depression because she found people she has something in common with in the after school program. Another girl was having suicidal thoughts, and he encouraged her to stay more often for the program and get involved in theatre. Once again she had somewhere to go and friends to connect with.

Donna Wasielewski – What are the reasons kids give for not participating in the afterschool program?

Edwin Cortez – They think that staying that long would make their day even longer.

Angel Toscano – What would you be doing if there were no afterschool program?

Edwin Cortez – Probably spending time with friends or family.

Terese Stevenson – What helped with your social skills?

Edwin Cortez – His teacher, Mr. Smith, asked him what was wrong one day and invited him to go play computer games. Slowly, but surely, his teachers helped him be more social.

Susan Baskin – What does the program do to encourage you to work on academics first?

Edwin Cortez – After the bell rings, you have an hour for homework help or work with teachers. Afterschool teachers ask coaches to release students from practice for the duration of their homework help. He wasn't doing well in biology, so we would go to his biology teacher on Mondays.

Mynder Kelly – In class can you tell the difference between ACE and non-ACE students?

Edwin Cortez – Most of the time ACE students give more respect and have stronger relationships with their teachers than their non-ACE peers.

Aimee Clapp – What are you personally doing to change your peers' minds about the program?

Edwin Cortez – He and his friends will stay after school for the hour period to do homework and then go to soccer.

Angel Toscano – What about summer programs?

Edwin Cortez – There have been field trips to LoneStar College. (Mrs. Byrd drills into the heads of kids the importance of going to college.)

Public Comment

Michelle Amos, Texas Afterschool Association – Edwin's presentation is a poignant moment in this work. There are three affiliates in Texas (Houston, Austin, San Antonio), and this is a member organization. Her experience is that the impact of afterschool programs goes beyond students and impacts adults as well.

Todd Litton, Executive Director of Citizen Schools of Texas – They bring in a second shift of educators. They are part of the expanded learning time (ELT) study, and they use AmeriCorps members for two-year shifts. They believe in the power of more time, which allows for apprenticeships (10 weeks) that involve professionals coming in and working with students to engage and excite them about learning. They focus on low-performing, low-income middle

schools, since kids who fail classes in 6th grade have a 33% chance of graduating (6th grade is the pre-k of secondary school).

Mary Riggs, Andy Roddick Foundation – Public-private funding is especially important. The largest cycle of the ACE program is ending this year. Private investments cannot cover the gap, which is \$5 million in Central Texas. She encouraged the Council to consider dedicated state funds that could be matched with private funds, which would maximize the effectiveness of funds invested.

Jenny Morrison, Texas A&M University – She is conducting research for the council on business investments. They have been approached by the Texas Education Grantmakers Advocacy Consortium (TEGAC) to explore how different corporations are supporting and can support ELO. Their study is focused on the case for worker productivity. They have designed a qualitative study of 20 CEOs (corporations, small businesses) in rural and urban settings, both currently involved and uninvolved in out-of-school time issues, and will conduct a national survey.

Terry Conner – Is the research around corporations' interest in out-of-school time because it affects their employees' families or around improving the pipeline of employees? Will this be focused on corporations that are already providing this support or ones that aren't?

Jenny Morrison – Corporations are interested in both aspects. The study will include corporations that are currently involved as well as those who aren't.

Shirlene Justice, TXPOST – She recently retired as the 21st CCLC coordinator with Austin Independent School District (AISD) and is on the TXPOST board. This out-of-school time space is very important because it impacts the 21st century and social-emotional skills that students need. This is a very young field. For those getting your recommendations, this may be the first time they consider these issues.

WORKGROUP:

Garry Davis –

- Work Breakdown Structure Document - a visual representation of the components of the project.
- Scope of Work - the planning document that outlines the project tasks, the assignment dates, who is going to be responsible for completing the work as well as how to communicate around getting that work done.
- Topics and Assignments Sheet - study topics that have been identified in the mandate to be included in the report along with additional topics you may want to study to inform your recommendations and your report.
- Preference Sheet - decide the subcommittees, and then put the topics that have identified, and assign individuals to subcommittees.

Each member completed and turned in a choice sheet for sub-committee assignments. TEA will review and provide assignments. Subcommittees will meet before the next in-person meeting and bring recommendations to the group.

Lizzette Reynolds adjourned the meeting.