

**Facilitator/Coordinator**

**Planning Guide**

***Funded by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board***

***Implemented by the University of North Texas & the North Texas Regional P-16 Council***

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**Academic Vertical Alignment Training And Renewal Initiative Grant Summary**



**Funding Period:** September 1, 2011 - August 31, 2013

**Funding Source:** Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB)

**Coordinators:** University North Texas and the North Texas Regional P-16 Council

Grant Need: Many students enter college coursework without a deep understanding of specific and necessary elements of the requisite discipline and cross disciplinary skills (CCRS), often resulting in the need for developmental coursework at postsecondary levels. Secondary educators desire to deepening specific content areas and introduce postsecondary practices to their students but indicate a need for reference materials articulating expectations of postsecondary coursework and student performance measures. This gap will need to close with end of course exams in high schools and two- and four-year institutions of higher education (IHE) being required to accept students who pass the EOC exams into entry level courses.

Goals:

* Design a vertical alignment process based on successful alignment projects undertaken by THECB and others
* Prepare and assist secondary and postsecondary faculty and administrators to facilitate horizontal and vertical curriculum alignment between high school and college English language arts, mathematics, and science courses and sequences
* Develop and deliver up a training workshop for up to 12 Education Service Center and P-16 Council partners coming from across the state and then provide technical assistance for these participants as they implement vertical alignment activities

Outcomes/Partnership Benefits:

* Enhance the success of students in high schools and prepare them to transition to institutions of higher education to support future careers and decrease the need for developmental education
* Enhance the success of students in two-year IHE and prepare them to transition to four-year IHE
* Ensure the content preparation and cross disciplinary skills are well aligned so that students can enroll and succeed in postsecondary education at all levels
* Support the THECB’s participation and success goals in “Closing the Gaps”

Partnerships:

1. Four-year Institutions of Higher Education:
   * Phase Two: University of North Texas, Texas Woman’s University, Stephen F. Austin University
   * Phase Three: University of Texas Pan American, Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi, Sam Houston State University, Stephen F. Austin University, Midwestern State University, University of North Texas, Texas Woman’s University, Baylor University, St. Edwards University, Abilene Christian University, Angelo State University, West Texas A&M University, and University of Texas at San Antonio
2. Two-year Institutions of Higher Education:
   * Phase Two: Dallas County Community College District, Brookhaven College, Tarrant County College, and Angelina College
   * Phase Three: South Texas College, Del Mar College, Lone Star College System, Kilgore College, Vernon College, Brookhaven College, Dallas Community College District, Tarrant County Colleges, Hill College, Texas State Technical College, McLennan Community College, Austin Community College, Cisco College, Howard College, Frank Phillips College, Amarillo College, Clarendon College, San Antonio College, and Palo Alto College
3. P-16 Councils:
   * Phase Two: North Texas Region P-16 Council and Deep East Texas P-16 Council
   * Phase Three: Upper Rio Grande Valley P-16 Council, Coastal Bend Partners for College and Career Readiness, Deep East Texas P-16 Council, North Texas Regional P-16 Council, San Angelo P-16+ Partnership, Inc., Panhandle P-16 Council, and P-16 Plus of Greater Bexar County
4. Districts:
   * Phase Two: Dallas ISD, Fort Worth ISD, Nacogdoches ISD, Hudson ISD, Woden ISD, and Lufkin ISD
   * Phase Three: Pharr San Juan Alamo ISD, Calallen ISD, Buffalo ISD, Magnolia ISD, Huntsville ISD, Kilgore ISD, Burkburnett ISD, Wichita Falls ISD, Vernon ISD, Iowa Park Consolidated ISD, Dallas ISD, Fort Worth ISD, Burleson ISD, Waco ISD, La Vega ISD, Midway ISD, Robinson ISD, Reicher Catholic High School, Austin ISD, Roscoe ISD, Albany ISD, Eden Consolidated ISD, San Angelo ISD, Amarillo ISD, Borger ISD, Canyon ISD and Harlandale ISD
5. Education Service Centers:
   * Phase Two: Region 7, 10, and 11
   * Phase Three: 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14 , 15, 16 , and 20

Project Focus:

* Creation of horizontal and vertical alignment processes for mathematics and science standards between secondary and two/four year postsecondary institutions to support college and career readiness
* Implementation of the horizontal and vertical alignment process with three pilots (Dallas, Fort Worth, East Texas ISDs)
* Design and implement statewide Training of Trainers (TOT) of vertical alignment process model with at least five ESCs, two P-16 Councils and three pilots. The Training of Trainers sessions will be open to all 20 ESCs and 40 THECB P-16 Councils.

Project Design and Delivery Phases

**Phase 1: Plan and Develop Training Components for Vertical and Horizontal Curriculum Alignment (September 2011-May 2012)**

* Plan, develop, and evaluate materials, programs, and options for curriculum alignment in multi-level partnerships, with the intention of creating training components and follow-up technical assistance (process, content, and course profiles) for use by secondary and postsecondary faculty and administrators.

**Phase 2- Pilot and Evaluate Implementation of the Components Developed in Phase 1 by Three Curriculum Alignment Partnerships (June 2012-May 2013)**

* Three pilot programs will be implemented to determine effective and efficient Vertical Alignment Training components and follow-up technical assistance. The pilot training and technical assistance will be coordinated through Education Service Centers regions 7, 10, and 11. As pilots, these curriculum partnerships will focus on courses in the STEM areas (mathematics and science) and include emphasis on English Language Arts and cross disciplinary standards connections.
* Pilot programs will involve the following partners:
  + **Stephen F. Austin's University STEPS Project Partners (Brenda Hill, Lead):** Stephen F. Austin University; Angelina College; Hudson ISD, Lufkin ISD, Nacogdoches ISD, and Woden ISD high schools, Region 7 ESC; and Deep Texas P-16 Council
  + **Dallas Partners (Chris Kanouse, Lead):** Dallas ISD, Dallas County Community College District, Brookhaven Early College High School, Texas Woman’s University, University of North Texas, Region 10 ESC, and North Texas Regional P-16 Council
  + **Fort Worth Partners (Francine Holland and Kathy Wright-Chapman, Leads):** Fort Worth ISD, Tarrant County College, University of North Texas, Region 11 ESC, and North Texas Regional P-16 Council
* Partnership Roles and Responsibilities:
  + Universities and Community Colleges: Identify staff members who will be part of a working team to design and develop project vertical alignment modules in the areas of algebra II, chemistry, and related postsecondary mathematics and science courses.
  + Districts: Identify teachers and district leadership who will be a part of a working team to design and develop project vertical alignment modules in the areas of algebra II, chemistry, and related postsecondary mathematics and science courses.
  + Education Service Centers: Identify staff members who will be part of a working team to design and develop project vertical alignment modules in the areas of algebra II, chemistry, and related postsecondary mathematics and science courses.
* Evaluation of content, process, and course profiles will be completed by each pilot project using processes developed in phase 1.

**Phase 3- Disseminate Vertical Alignment Model through Training and Technical Assistance across the State (June 2013-August 2013)**

* Based on phases 1 and 2, a training and technical assistance model for vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment will be created and then disseminated using a train-the-trainer model.
* A one to two day symposium will be hosted by Education Service Center Region XI (Francine Holland) and the North Texas Regional P-16 Council (Jean Keller) with an invitation extended to all 20 TEA regional Education Service Centers and the 40 THECB regional P-16 councils to receive the training on the model vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment process and components developed through this project.
* To be accepted into the training, the ESCs and P-16 Councils must form a partnership and agree to implement at least one vertical and horizontal curriculum alignment partnership program in their regions. Regions with the greatest need will be encouraged to participate.
* It is anticipated that at least 25% (5) of the regional Education Service Centers will participate. The three (3) pilot programs: Nacogdoches, Dallas, and Fort Worth will be sustained throughout the entire project. Additionally, this work will be disseminated through the National Institute for the Study of Transfer Students and other sources.
* Partnership Roles and Responsibilities:
  + Universities and Community Colleges: Identify staff who will be part of a working team to develop and deliver project vertical alignment statewide Training of Trainers (TOT) vertical alignment process model with at least five ESCs, two P-16 Councils and three pilots.
  + Districts: Identify teachers and leadership who will be part of a working team to develop and deliver project vertical alignment statewide Training of Trainers (TOT) vertical alignment process model with at least five ESCs, two P-16 Councils and three pilots.
  + Education Service Centers: Identify staff who will who will be part of a working team to develop and deliver project vertical alignment statewide process model with at least five ESCs, two P-16 Councils and three pilots.

**The Role of the AVATAR Facilitator/Coordinator**

*Please come prepared, enthusiastic, friendly, as a good listener, and able to think on your feet. You must be able to create an inviting atmosphere of cooperation and trust where each partner and team member is comfortable sharing his or her opinions and ideas. You are not a teacher. You do not have answers to all questions; you help the group find their own answers.*

*Thank you for being an AVATAR Facilitator/Coordinator.*

**Tips for Effective Discussion Leadership**

**Be Prepared**

Be the best prepared person in the room. This means understanding the goals of each AVATAR session, being familiar with the subject, and thinking ahead of time about the directions in which the discussion may go. Prepare discussion questions to help team members in considering a subject. Solid preparation will enable you to give your full attention to team dynamics and to what individuals in the group are saying.

**Set a Relaxed and Open Tone**

Welcome everyone and create an atmosphere where each partner and team member feels at ease to share and respond. Refreshments often help people to relax. Humor is always welcomed by others and helps people focus on the difference in ideas rather than on personalities.

**Establish Clear Ground Rules or Norms**

At the beginning of AVATAR , ask partners and team members to help you create a list of ground rules and norms. Cohesion and ownership are heightened when all individuals are a part of this process. Keep the list and post it at each meeting as a reminder. Some norm examples are: everyone is encouraged to participate; allow everyone to be heard; all views are respected; and disagreements will not be personalized (no put-downs, name-calling, labeling, or personal attacks).

**Identify the Goal or Purpose**

Make sure AVATAR team members and partners know why they are there and what are the expected outcomes. Keep these outcomes posted as a reminder. Review the meeting agenda ahead of time and adjust it as needed. Share and discuss the minutes of past meetings and hold each other accountable for action items.

**Assist the Group Process**

Guide the team discussion according to the ground rules, but remain neutral. Aim to keep the team focused on the content and monitor the communication among partners and team members to ensure fairness and equality. To facilitate further examination of multiple topics or viewpoints, consider splitting into smaller groups, each with specific tasks. After separate discussion, have them report back to the whole group. Do not assume a need to respond to all questions; allow the group to respond directly to each other, but guide the conversations toward accomplishing the outcomes. Avoid anyone dominating the process, and become comfortable with silence. Some members may need more time to think prior to responding. Remember that the AVATAR process should never be an argument but rather a series of critical conversations.

**Help the Group Grapple with the Content**

Guide team members and partners to consider multiple viewpoints based on a solid foundation of data, facts, information, and research. Place your materials on the website (http://www.ntp16.notlb.com/avatar) to enhance foundational understanding of the standards and key concepts. Please utilize the resources on the AVATAR website.

**Reserve Adequate Time for Closing the Discussion**

Use the last 15 minutes to wrap up and end the team meeting on a positive note. After each session, provide informal or formal feedback and evaluation, such as sharing aloud or writing a brief statements or reflections. For example, you may wish to ask each partner and team member to share new ideas or thoughts learned as a result of the discussions. Acknowledge the group’s work and contributions. Ask the team for any last comments or thoughts about this session. Remind the group of the focus of the next session and supply any readings needed. Meeting minutes should be completed as soon as possible and posted to the website by contacting Kerry Quinn, AVATAR Graduate Assistant, by email at kerryquinn@my.unt.edu or by phone at (940) 565-4486.

**AVATAR Website**

Please use the website to support all AVATAR work and to document all regional efforts and successes. The website address is http://www.ntp16.notlb.com/avatar.

**AVATAR Website Guide**

**Link:** <http://www.ntp16.notlb.com/avatar>

By clicking **Files** in the top left box titled AVATAR Menu, you will gain access to files from the Pilot Project, your regional folder, and many resources.

Once you click on **Files**, several folders will drop down and a table titled “All Files” will appear in the center of the webpage.

If you click on **Pilot Testing** under the Files tab, the **Pilot Testing** folder with several tabs will now appear in the center of your webpage. Here you will find files under the tabs “Region XI”, “Region 10”, “Reference Course Profiles”, “Supplemental Materials”, and “Training Modules” that were used by or products of the pilot testing phase of this project. Feel free to read through them and use them to assist you in your own process.

If you click on the next folder titled **Training of Trainers/Statewide Network**, you will find several useful tabs. In the “Training Modules” tab, you will find all of the PowerPoints used during the Training of Trainers meeting, past TETN meetings, and the most current Training Modules to use with your region. Under the “Forms” tab, the sample action plan, meeting summary document, expenditures summary, and activities and outcomes log are all available. In the “Technical Assistance” tab, AVATAR staff will post all phone conference or follow-up call summaries. The TETN and TOT recordings are available to view in the “Video Links” tab. All documents handed out at the TOT event are posted in the “TOT Documents” tab.

You will also find in the AVATAR Menu each region has their own folder with several tabs to post all files. As the process continues and develops, we hope this will be helpful to you all to organize your files and to share files with all your regional partners. All files that are not Action Plans or Reference Course Profiles will be posted to your regional folder under the “Regional Materials/Forms” tab.

The last folder in the list, **Resources**, we believe will be quite useful for you all during this process. There are links to useful sites, files on several educational topics, and links to other college and career readiness programs. The folder is broken into tabs named “Curriculum & Instruction”, “Education Policy”, “Standards & Assessments”, and “Training Modules”. All documents that are needed to fulfill an activity in the Training Modules will be posted in that last tab.

We hope you all explore the site and it assists you in this process. Please report any issues or concerns to Kerry Quinn, AVATAR Graduate Assistant, by email at [kerryquinn@my.unt.edu](mailto:kerryquinn@my.unt.edu).



**Module 1 Planning Guide**

*AVATAR Partnerships and Teams, Getting Started*

1. Goals

*The Vertical Alignment Team (VAT) participants will be able to*:

1. State what AVATAR stands for and explain the AVATAR process
2. Define the various players and their roles within the AVATAR process
3. Describe the goals and outcomes of the AVATAR process
4. Identify and acknowledge the importance of agreed upon team member and partner norms in order to carry out the AVATAR process
5. Sections of this module:
   1. AVATAR Process
   2. Roles and Responsibilities of AVATAR Team Members and Partners
   3. Group Norms Information
6. Method:

How you present Module 1 depends on the time and configuration of your team member meetings.

1. *One 2 hour meeting:*

* Use Module 1 to lead discussion of the AVATAR process and roles and responsibilities at each level
* Develop an agreed upon set of group norms

1. *Two 1 hour meetings:*

* Break Module 1 into two parts
* In the first meeting, cover slides 1-28 to discuss an overview of AVATAR, the need for AVATAR, and the AVATAR process
* In the second meeting, cover slides 29-48 to discuss roles and responsibilities of each partner and member and establish group norms

*\*\*It is recommended that all main topics (AVATAR process, roles and responsibilities, and norms) in this module are addressed at the very beginning of the AVATAR sessions and reinforced throughout all meetings.*

Module 1 Overview:

Partners are essential to the AVATAR processes and must be chosen with care. Partners will be selected from leaders who deal with the college and career readiness curriculum at the high school, two-year higher education institution, four-year higher education institution, regional education service center, and regional P-16 council (see slide 5). These individuals will provide the leadership for the AVATAR process.

Partners will make decisions about which discipline specific courses to align based on student data and previous work. The team members may be partners or other selected educators with specific content expertise. Teams are defined as educators and leaders from all five educational systems represented in AVATAR who are committed to addressing discipline specific course and instructional alignment needs to create environments where students can make successful transitions between and among regional education systems (see slide 30).

The AVATAR process is built on the concept of critical conversations between partners and team members representing the five key educational systems within a region: high schools, two-year institutions of higher education, four-year institutions of higher education, education service centers, and P-16 councils.

The critical conversations pyramid is fluid, and conversations will move around on it (see slide 34). Some topics will be covered in depth and others briefly mentioned based on the partners’ and team members’ needs and backgrounds. For instance, one AVATAR pilot team had extensive training in Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS), yet had never reviewed course syllabi or curriculum. Thus, limited time was spent on foundational work and the team moved quickly to explore the actual course content, instructional materials, and grading practices. Another team believed they were well-versed in TEKS and CCRS, yet when they discussed the CCRS, they realized how limited their understandings were of discipline content and cross disciplinary standards. In this second example, a significant amount of time was spent on the foundational aspects of the critical conversations prior to moving into the course alignment processes.

The Facilitator/Coordinator will need to do an assessment of the team’s knowledge of the Texas CCRS. The readiness assessment should identify the team members’ knowledge of and skills to build vertical course alignment. Once the assessment is completed, the module can be adapted for the team members and partners.

Use of Module 1:

The PowerPoint slides are to be used to aid the Facilitator/Coordinator. The Facilitator/Coordinator should be intentional and select the slides that seem most appropriate for the team members and partners. Not all slides must be used. For example, within Module 1 there are three slides focused on workforce needs (see slides 9, 10, and 11). If a region’s P-16 council already has access to data and information on region-specific workforce needs, these three slides may be replaced with specific regional slides.

Please update data as students continue to make progress to becoming college and career readied. Also, measures of student success may change. Please refer to websites such as: Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (www.thecb.state.tx.us/) and the Texas Education Agency (www.tea.state.tx.us) for the most current information. The regional education service centers and P-16 council leaders are excellent resources for current data and information to update and add to the slides.

Much of the AVATAR work is built on the “Closing the Gaps by 2015” initiative. Please visit the Closing the Gaps Higher Education plan website: http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/index.cfm?objectid=858D2E7C-F5C8-97E9-0CDEB3037C1C2CA3. Progress reports from 2003-2012 and updated plans are available at this website to use as a resource. Once again, the website should be consulted to secure the most current information.

The Facilitator/Coordinator will focus regional partners and teams on the AVATAR outcomes: 1) identify key leaders and educators who make up a regional “pipeline” needed for students to be college and career ready and successful; 2) establish shared regional and college and career readiness foundations/understandings; 3) use regional data to guide decision-making; 4) design and implement a vertical alignment action plan which will include critical conversations around specific courses needed for students to make academic progress; 5) design and implement a sustainability plan; and 6) prepare more students for college and career success. *Intentionality* is vital to effectiveness; work by keeping the desired outcomes in mind. The Facilitator/Coordinator will record progress on the meeting/session documentation form (see pages 18-20). It is available on the website at: http://ntp16.notlb.com/avatar/files/training/forms.

The Facilitator/Coordinator will establish sound working norms that will allow the partners and team members to complete the AVATAR process (see slides 41-48). It is essential to establish formal norms and hold each other accountable for their actions. The Facilitator/Coordinator will establish the norms *with* partners and team members. Norms should include: standards/expectations by which individuals have agreed to operate while working together on AVATAR, ways to maximize productivity and effectiveness in achieving the AVATAR outcomes, means to ensure individuals are respected and heard, and means to ensure AVATAR sustainability (see slides 46-48).



**Module 2 Planning Guide**

*Common Foundations and Data for Understanding College and Career Readiness and Success*

1. Goals of this Module

*The Vertical Alignment Team (VAT) participants will:*

1. Gain a working definition of Career and College Readiness that is consistent with the work of David T. Conley and foundational to the Texas College and Career Readiness Standards (CCRS).
2. Acquire a common language and understandings of the standards and assessments used in Texas to define College and Career Readiness in K-12 education, higher education, and across our two systems of education.
3. Explore the implications of regional data that indicate the college and career readiness and success of students in secondary and post-secondary education.
4. Compare the career and college readiness and success indicators of students from our region with the state data.
5. Define the action plan for the work of our regional VAT.
6. Sections of this module:
   1. College and Career Readiness: Features, Standards, and Assessments
      1. Defining College and Career Readiness

* Resources needed: “Redefining College Readiness” article by David T. Conley, “College and Career Ready: Helping All Students Succeed Beyond High School” Abstract of David T. Conley’s Book
* Resources available at: http://www.ntp16.notlb.com/avatar/files/resources/training-module-resources
  + 1. Standards and Assessments for Readiness and Success
  1. Indicators of Student Readiness and Success
     1. Local Student Performance Data
     2. State Student Performance Data
  2. Action Planning

1. Method

How you present Module 2 depends on the time and configuration of your team member meetings.

1. *Two 2 hour meetings*

* Assign the Conley readings to be read before the first meeting.
* Show Section A1 “Defining College and Career Readiness” at the first meeting, using the discussion ideas provided.
* Assign viewing and discussing Section A2 “Standards and Assessments for Readiness and Success” as homework through e-mail, Moodle, Blackboard, etc.
* Show and discuss Section B1 “Local Student Performance Data” at the second meeting.
* Use Section B2 “State Student Performance Data” as a follow-up electronic assignment through e-mail, Moodle, Blackboard, etc. Encourage participants to compare local to state date by creating discussion boards or written assignments to bring to next meeting.
* Use the information learned to determine next actions and edit Action Plan.

1. *One 4 hour meeting*

* Assign the Conley reading to be read before the first meeting.
* Use Section A1 to lead discussion on “Defining Career and College Readiness?”
* Use Section A2 to facilitate discussion of standards and assessments.
* Show simultaneously Section B1 on one screen and Section B2 on another to assist the discussion of the local data through state comparison.
* Revisit your action plan in light of the comparative presentation.

1. *One 2 hour meeting*

* Assign reading of the Conley articles and viewing of Section A2 as homework to be completed before the meeting.
* View and discuss Section A1 “Defining College and Career Readiness”.
* View and discuss Section B1 “Local Student Performance Data”.
* Make Section B2 “State Student Performance Data” available for follow-up discussion in a digital format through Moodle or Blackboard.
* At the start of the next meeting, revisit your Action Plan in light of the comparative presentation.

Preparations Prior to the Meeting

1. Assure that Section B1 “Local Student Performance Data” is prepared using local data. Use the instruction sheet from the TOT meeting (see pages 14-18; available at: http://www.ntp16.notlb.com/avatar/files/training/tot-documents) to assist you in this process. Although each region may do it differently, this job is the role of the P-16 council representative.
2. Ask participants to read the Conley article and abstract prior to meeting. Anticipating the group activity in slides 7 and 8, you might ask individuals to come prepared to report certain issues to the group. This will save time during the session. Copies of these handouts should be made available for each participant prior to the meeting and during the meeting.
3. If you do not plan to show a section during the meeting, make it available to participants ahead of time using the AVATAR website, Moodle, e-mail, Blackboard, etc.
4. If you plan to use the state comparison data, set up the room so that two sections can be viewed on side by side screens.
5. As you work at this session, be sure to keep good notes about action suggestions made by group members. Refer to this list as you contemplate your most important task: developing a group action plan that is relevant and important!

Use of Module 2

1. Section A1: Defining Career and College Readiness (slides 3-22)

As participants view the PowerPoint, the following slides call for discussion or response from participants. Using this PowerPoint with reading and discussion will take 45 to 60 minutes.

* Slide 4. Discuss briefly who is responsible for getting students college and career ready.
* Slide 5: How well did you anticipate this response? Who did you leave out?
* Slide 7: Divide the group into groups of 2 or 3, and, using the jigsaw method, assign each group to report on one or two of the assigned topics.
* Slide 8: Report key findings from the jigsaw groups.
* Slide 9: In dyads or triads, ask participants respond to the question listed on the slide. These call for reflection on their own personal experiences as first time in college students.
* Slide 10: This slide calls for participants to review copies of the abstract of *College and Career Reading: Helping all Students Succeed Beyond High School.* It is available on the AVATAR website in the Resources folder, under Training Modules.
* Slide 13: In the dyads or triads used earlier, use sentence completion as a means for participants to reflect on how their ideas have changed.
* Slides 14-18. Which of these College and Career Readiness skills are emphasized in high school? How do you know?
* Slide 20: Have each participant list 5 items with an elbow partner.
* Slide 22: How well did you anticipate the career skills preferred by employers?

1. Section A2: Standards and Assessments for Readiness and Success (slides 23-44)

This PowerPoint includes important information for all participants. The tools for measuring Texas secondary and postsecondary performance are changing rapidly.

If this PowerPoint is shown in a group setting, point out that at the end of the presentation, participants will be asked to note 3 learnings, 2 questions, and an action they will take. Compare and contrast the learnings, questions, and anticipated actions of the group. If the participants view the PowerPoint electronically, set up a discussion tool by which these same questions may be discussed. If you do not have access to a program or site to create discussion boards, assign the same and compare and contrast responses at next meeting. Be sure to save group notes about the anticipated actions of the members.

1. Section B1: Local Student Performance Data (slides may vary)

As you begin, assign individuals to look for the answers to the listed questions. Show the PowerPoint slowly, allowing time for discussion and questions. After this presentation, discuss action. What are the implications for action based study of the data? What questions do we have? Be sure to save the suggestions for action from this discussion.

1. Section B2: State Student Performance Data (slides 72-94)

It is most helpful and meaningful to be viewed side by side with B1. Viewing may take place in a group or by an individual who can view the two sets of slides simultaneously either in separate windows or with one set printed while the other is projected.

1. Section C: Action Planning (slides 95-103)

Good notes taken earlier in the meeting will help with this section, for which the guiding question should be “What action should be taken by our group to better assure college and career readiness in our region?” Section C offers suggestions for the collection of additional local data that might be important.

**AVATAR Local Data PowerPoint Instructions**

*The first* ***7 slides*** *are based on data from the Texas Education Agency. On the TEA website, enter Testing and Accountability on the left side panel. The enter AEIS on the lower menu, and select the most recent year. Or go directly to* [*http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/index.html*](http://ritter.tea.state.tx.us/perfreport/aeis/index.html)

*Select “school,” and enter the name of the campus of interest following the directions provided. This should take you to the complete AEIS report for your campus. These can be printed, but the entries are very small, so it is easier to read these online.*

**Slide 1** School Data.

For data about numbers of students by grade, scroll down to STUDENT INFORMATION, about 2/3rd through the report. The size of the graduating class and the percentages of students who completed the different kinds of curriculum are in this section, under the ethnicity and other demographic information.

**Slide 2** Ethnicity.

These data are from the STUDENT INFORMATION.

**Slide 3** Other Descriptors.

Also, from STUDENT INFORMATION.

**Side 4** Advanced Placement Dual Enrollment.

Scroll back to the section immediately before the STUDENT INFORMATION, COLLEGE READINESS INDICATORS. Advanced course/dual enrollment completion is the first indicator. The order of the entries by ethnicity is always the same and in the order presented on the slide. Also, the campus data are in red.

**Slide 5** AP/IB Percentages Tests and Examinees who Met Criteria.

The statistics appear soon after the Advanced Placement Dual Enrollment Completion section.

**Slide 6** Texas Success Initiative.

These statistics are in the same section, with a separate header.

**Slide 7** College Ready Graduates.

These data are at the end of the COLLEGE READINESS INDICATORS section of the AEIS report.

*The* ***remaining slides*** *are based on data from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board site. From the main site, enter Data Resources and Tools.*

**Slide 8** Where Graduates Attend College.

This information is in the High School to College section on the upper right of the screen. Click on High School Graduates in Higher Education. Then enter High School Graduates Enrolled in Higher Education the Following Fall by High School County, School District, High School. Select your year, county, and high school. For a direct link <http://www.txhighereddata.org/index.cfm?objectid=4BDC74A8-06D9-51A7-6DB57DE4B71C5C9>

**Slide 9** Public Education First Year Grades of High School Graduates.

Stay in the High to School to College part of the site. Enter High School Grads GPA in Higher Education. Choose your year, and click on the first letter of the county of your school, to find your data. For a direct link <http://www.txhighereddata.org/Interactive/HSCollLinkFilters/HSGradAcademicPerformance.cfm>

**Slide 10** Higher Education Enrollment Data.

Back on the Data Resources and Tools homepage, enter the Online Institutional Resumes section in the Online Application Section. <http://www.txhighereddata.org/Interactive/Resumes/>

Use the menus to get resumes for your 2 and 4 year partners. Select the version for Prospective Students, Parents, and the Public. These are intended to be printed and used for reference. The enrollment data is in the upper left on each report.

**Slide 11** Graduation/Completion Numbers.

This slide conveys the degrees/certificates awarded by the institutions and the number of completers for one year. Look on the institutional resumes for data. For 2-years, see Degrees and Certificates Awarded. For 4-years, see Degrees Awarded. These are both on the right side of the resume.

**Slide 12** Dual Credit Enrollment.

Go to the High School to College area, and look under Dual Enrollment for Dual Credit Enrollments and Semester Credit Hours by Institution <http://www.txhighereddata.org/Interactive/HSCollLink2.CFM>

The example includes dual credit for the 2-year only, but some 4-years offer dual credit, so check on this.

**Slide 13** Participation Data in Developmental Education.

In the Participation section of the Data Resources and Tools, go to Dev Ed Data. <http://www.txhighereddata.org/reports/performance/deved/>

Select your 2-year and 4-year institutions to get reports, all based on data collected for one cohort. The slide uses data tracked for 2 years, not 1. The Number of FTIC Students is reported at the top. The FTIC Students Not Needing Developmental Education are the ones who “Met state standards in all areas” on page 2 of the report. The percentages that appear on the top table are from columns 5, “Percent Attempting College-Level Course,” and Column 7, “College-Level Course Completion (Grade A, B, C) (Percent of Those Attempting College Level.”

In the lower table, the data reported are from the section on Page 2 under “Met state standards in at least one area.” For each area, math, reading, and writing, select the number of students who were Requiring DE and then the percentage of those who Attempted College-Level Course (Column 5) and who achieved College-Level Course Completion (Column 7).

**Slide 14** Student Migration Data.

These data are found in the Participation section of the Data Resources and Tools page. Go to the Student Migration Data report. <http://www.txhighereddata.org/reports/performance/ctcsmigr/>

The menu will take you to the 2-year institution of interest. A table for each institution provides information about non-graduates, graduates, and core curriculum completers after their transfer to various types of institutions.

**Slide 15** Academic Performance of Transfer Students, Developmental Education vs. No Developmental Education.

These four-page reports are available for your 2-year and 4-year partners. To get them, go to the Success menu, and enter “Transfer Students’ Success”

<http://www.txhighereddata.org/reports/performance/ctctransfer/>

Slide 15 is based on page 1 of a 2-year college report. It shows the institutions to which students were and were not enrolled in developmental education most frequently transfer by their GPA range and retention rate at the new institution. On this slide the students who took developmental education are on the first table and those who did not participate in developmental education are in the table below.

**Slide 16** Academic Performance of Transfer Students, Academic or Technical Associate Degrees.

This slide is similar to the previous one. It shows transfer GPA and retention data for students who completed AA and TA degrees at their first institution. These data appear on page 3 of the reports.

The report also enables examination of students who left their first institutions having completed the core curriculum, those who met field of study requirements at their first institutions, and those who did and did not complete certificates. I did not include all of these on my slide because I thought they were not interesting for the institution chosen, but you might make a different decision.

**Slide 17 and 18** Academic Performance of Transfer Students, Developmental Education vs. No Developmental Education.

These two slides show for one 4-year institution the performance of students after transfer based on GPA and retention. This information is the same as appears on slide 15 for a 2-year institution but is presented on two slides for the 4-year institution because of the large number of institutions of transfer.

**Slide 19** Academic Performances of Transfer Students, Earned Core Curriculum Completed Prior to Transfer.

These data, available on page 2 of the report, were included because they show the clear advantage to transfer students of completing the core from the perspective of GPA and retention.

**Slide 20** Academic Performance of Transfer Students, Academic or Technical Associate Degrees.

These data from page 3 of the report are included for Academic Associate degrees only because technical degrees are rare for 4-year institutions.

**Slide 21** Participation Data in Developmental Education.

This is the same as slide 13 except for a 4-year instead of a 2-year institution. See the notes for slide 13.

**Slide 22** Percent of Students Who Transferred to a 4-year Institution with Less than 30 SCH, etc.

These data are from an Institutional Resume for a 2-year institution. The statistics come from two tables at the bottom of the report.

**Slide 23** Graduation Rate of First-time, Full-time Degree-Seeking Students.

These data are from the Institutional Resume for a 4-year institution. They appear at the center top, under Baccalaureate Success.

Note: many other and more detailed success indicators are on the website.

***Please contact Mary Harris for assistance by email at*** [***mary.harris@unt.edu***](mailto:mary.harris@unt.edu) ***or by phone at 940-565-4327***



**Module 3 Planning Guide**

*AVATAR Teams: Aligning Courses through Critical Conversations*

1. Goals of this Module

*The AVATAR Vertical Alignment Team (VAT) participants will be:*

* 1. Aware of the College and Career Readiness Standards in the course content selected along with the cross-disciplinary standards,
  2. Knowledgeable about the changes in the Texas Common Core and its implications for course alignment and students’ success,
  3. Aware of the Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) and its use to help align courses and promote students’ readiness and success in college,
  4. Familiar with Texas assessments and programs related to college and career readiness and success (State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness (STAAR), End of Course (EOC), Texas Success Initiative (TSI), Dual Credit, Early College High Schools (ECHS), Advanced Placement (AP),
  5. Knowledgeable about reference course profiles and the significant role they play in the AVATAR process and the critical conversations, and
  6. Able to align courses by content, cross-disciplinary standards, instructional strategies, grading procedures, assessment methods, and resources*.*

1. Topics in this module:
   1. Review of the CCRS and TEKS
   2. University Common Core
   3. Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM)
   4. Reference Course Profiles
   5. Review of relevant data and assessments
2. Method

How you present Module 3 depends on the time and configuration of your team member meetings.

* 1. *One 3 hour meeting:*
* Use Module 3 to lead discussion of the CCRS, Texas Core, ACGM, related data and assessments, and Reference Course Profiles.
* Through discussion and work groups, examine and compare current syllabi and curriculum plans to begin work to align courses.
  1. *Two 1.5 hour meetings:*
* Break Module 3 into two parts
* In the first meeting, cover slides 1-26 to discuss the CCRS, Texas Core, and ACGM
* In the second meeting, cover slides 27-69 to discuss Reference Course Profiles, review related data and assessments, and begin work to align courses.

Module 3 Overview:

In order to build a common foundation for the AVATAR team to complete its work, the members and partners must possess a shared understanding of the CCRS and what it means for students to be college readied and successful. The Facilitator/Coordinator will use AVATAR critical conversations throughout Module 3 to align courses by way of the CCRS, using both content and cross disciplinary standards. Discovering the background of individuals with respect to the CCRS will be helpful.

Over the years, much work has been completed to assure sound alignment between the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) and the CCRS. According to the College and Career Readiness Project’s Vertical Team Gap Analyses there is adequate to strong alignment between the TEKS and CCRS in English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies (http://www.txccrs.org/more/research.htm;

http://www.txfacultycollaboratives.org/mathematics/2012-03-02-20-35-58/resources/100-teks-and-ccrs-alignment-analyses). As the Facilitator/Coordinator, you may want to show examples of the TEKS and how well they correlate to the CCRS.

With a focus on the course your team is working to align, examine and explore the relationships among the standards, cross-disciplinary skills, and the new university common core. Discuss this from a developmental perspective. Please remind your AVATAR partners and team members this is all “work in progress”.

You may want to review “Creating and Facilitating Effective Statewide Transfer Pathways” by Raymund A. Paredes, Ph.D. Commissioner of Education (February 21, 2012). This PowerPoint is available through the THECB website at: http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/download.cfm?downloadfile=A07E5EAE-FF89-77DC-96B72C28707C3FD4&typename=dmFile&fieldname=filename.

Along with the Texas Common Core, the Texas Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) is a good tool to support the reason for aligning courses and how to do so. Please visit the website located at: http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/AAR/UndergraduateEd/WorkforceEd/acgm.htm for the current and past manuals. To learn more about the ACGM visit: http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/index.cfm?objectid=DE96F52A-D583-AE1B-C7265EA2CD5E90B3.

Members of your group may be unfamiliar with the Texas Common Course Numbering System (TCCNS). Often two- and four-year institutions of higher education do not use the TCCNS to number their courses. You may want to suggest this be added, along with the institution course number, to each course syllabi. The Facilitator/Coordinator will review the student learning outcomes (SLOs) in the ACGM with team members and partners for the courses to be aligned. Secondary partners and team members will be interested in this critical conversation due to the growing emphasis on dual credit.

Some team members may be familiar with Reference Course Profiles. Please remember neither AVATAR nor THECB are requiring these, yet they may serve as useful tools to explore all aspects of a course and to make the alignment process and critical conversation easier. Please see slide 40 and the three examples listed in the PowerPoint as guides for what you may want to include. During the course alignment process, please include: title of the course, TCCNS course number, course description, hours of credit, prerequisites/co-requisites, prior knowledge and skills, related CCRS, student learning outcomes, class policies and practices, required texts and materials, grading and testing practices, method of instruction, sample class schedule, sample assignments and/or exams, and available campus resources.

An important aspect of vertical alignment is assessment. You should determine ample time for critical conversations related to assessment based on team members’ and partners’ past experiences and backgrounds. The slides created by Ed Vara and Barbara Lerner cover this topic in depth (TOT Module is available at: http://www.ntp16.notlb.com/avatar/files/training/training-modules; slides 85-142) and you may find them useful. Texas assessment information is continuously developing and changing. It is important to stay up-to-date and to discuss new information to ensure the topics are understood from both the secondary and postsecondary perspectives. Please regularly check both the TEA and THECB websites for assessment updates (http://www.tea.state.tx.us/ and http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/).

As specific and intentional interventions are designed to align courses, the following websites may provide helpful strategies and resources:

1. Texas College and Career Readiness Profile Planning Guide: www.txccrsc.org

*(This is an excellent recourse. Please consult your regional ESC to identify who is the assigned Master Trainer for this initiative. This individual has access to the full guide. If your ESC did not send someone to be trained, email txccrsc@esc13.txed.net.)*

1. Texas Faculty Collaborative: www.txfacultycollaboratives.org/
2. Texas College and Career Readiness Program: www.txccrs.org/index.html
3. Pathways Project: share.thecb.state.tx.us/sites/Pathways/default.aspx
4. Texas State University’s Correlated Lesson Plans: www.cose.txstate.edu/mathematics/mixitup/Correlated-Lesson-Plans.html

Use of Module 3:

The Facilitator/Coordinator will assess the knowledge and understanding of vertical alignment team members related to Texas CCRS course content and cross disciplinary standards prior to the beginning of Module 3. Other items to expose the team members and partners to are: Texas Common Core Curriculum and the Academic Course Guide Manual.

Module 3 is the essence of course vertical alignment work. While team members can review each other’s course syllabus or curriculum materials online, there should be face-to-face critical conversations as team members align the courses selected. Reviews of the CCRS, including both content and cross-disciplinary standards, may be completed online if all members and partners have similar experiences with them. Slides 7-17 review the Texas CCRS. The Facilitator/Coordinator will determine the amount of time needed to explore these topics. Slides 18-24 focus on the core curriculum. The common core is developing and will be fully implemented in 2014 so that it aligns with the Texas CCRS and TSI. Please review the THECB website at thecb.state.tx.us to remain current on the Texas University Common Core Curriculum.

Please review the Texas Academic Course Guide Manual (ACGM) and make the team members and partners aware of it and its purpose (http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/acgm). Review of the ACGM is an easy transfer to reference course profiles. Slides 25 and 26 provide an overview and an example.

Slides 35-40 provide an overview of reference course profiles and slides 41-53 examine the parts of the vertical alignment process and construction of a course profile. The Facilitator/Coordinator will guide the team members and partners to produce a document with the information outlined on slide 40 for the course selected to be aligned. These documents will support secondary and postsecondary instructor in creating clear expectation for students as well as themselves. Slide 54 facilitates discussion and comparison of team member’s syllabi and/or curriculum plans.

Slides 55-65 address the connections between standards, instruction, and assessments. This is a brief, supplemental overview and the most current information should be consulted. The Texas Success Initiative (TSI) is developing and the Facilitator/Coordinator is encouraged to go to the THECB website for the most current updates. On the AVATAR website in the Resources folder under the “Standards & Assessments” tab, resources are available on this topic.

As the critical conversations between secondary and postsecondary team members progress to intention interventions, slides 66 and 67 have excellent resources. The AVATAR teams and partners may explore the resources together or separately. Also, please contribute resources so other regions can benefit.



**FORMS**

**AVATAR Partnership Region: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Meeting/Session Documentation Form**

Form should be completed after each meeting and given to the Regional AVATAR Coordinator/Facilitator

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Meeting:** |  | | | | |
| **Meeting Purpose:** |  | | | | |
| **Date:** |  | **Start Time:** |  | **End Time:** |  |
| **Meeting Coordinator/ Facilitator:** |  | **Location:** | |  | |
| **Meeting Recorder:** |  | **Meeting Timekeeper:** | |  | |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Time** | **Topic** | **Format** | **Discussion Leader** | **Desired Outcome** |
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**Agenda Format Key:** P = Presentation, F = Feedback, D = Decision-Making, W = Work Group, O = Other, with explanation

**AVATAR Meeting Minutes**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action Item** | **Person Responsible** | **Due Date** |
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| **Notes** | | |
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**Meeting Participant List**

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SAMPLE

Action and Sustainability Plan – August 2012 to July 2013

(See Items for Consideration)

Region:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Vertical Alignment Actions | Resources Required and Persons Responsible | Evidence of Implementation | Evidence of Impact |
|  | **Regional Data Collection, Reporting, Use in Decision Making, and Follow Up1** |  |  |  |
| September 17, 2012 | Regional Data PowerPoint Completed | P-16 Council Partner | Discussed and used in creating region’s action plan on Sept. 2 | Selected English as discipline and will focus on freshman composition |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Partnership Goals Related to Critical Conversations, Actions, and Outcomes for Students’ Success2** |  |  |  |
| September 17, 2012 | Action and Sustainability Plan Completed | Coordinator/Facilitator/All Partners | Discussed and approved at planning meeting on Sept. 2 | Outcomes reported at the May10, 2012 Reflections, Celebrations, and Next Step Meeting |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Course Syllabi and Reference Course Profile Information Review3** |  |  |  |
| November 10, 2012 | Review English 1301 Course Syllabi - All Partners Post their Syllabus by October 20, 2012 | English vertical alignment team members | English partners will meet Oct. 1, Nov. 3, and Dec. 2 to review English 1301 | English Department Chairs will discuss the results on the teams work on Jan. 15th |
|  | **Shared Understandings/Foundations** |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
|  | **Creating and Training 2013-2014 Vertical Alignment Team** |  |  |  |
| On or before  May 1, 2013 | Hold Training for 2013-14 Vertical Alignment Team | P-16 Council Leader and AVATAR Coordinator/ Facilitator | English 1302 team begin work by August 20, 2013 | Sustaining Vertical Alignment Partnerships in Region |

**Items to Consider in Developing Your AVATAR Regional Vertical Alignment Action and Sustainability Plans for August 2012 to July 2013:**

**Partner and Team Relationships: Norms, Logistics, Expectations, and Documentation**

1. Setting meeting dates, times, locations, agendas, refreshments, session format (on-line, face to face, or blended)

2. Attendance records, meeting minutes, and follow up items (Please use AVATAR Meeting and Document Form)

3. Are other partners or team members needed - who?

4. Are there ways to support the team members in conducting the course alignment work?

**1Regional Data Collection, Reporting, Use in Decision Making, and Follow Up**

1. What sources will be used to gather data?

2. What benchmarks are relevant?

3. Use data to benchmark regional student college and career readiness and success

4. Use data to guide partnership decision making

5. Use data to sustain and develop regional course alignment efforts

**Shared Understanding of College and Career Readiness Standards and Assessments among Educational Partners and Team Members**

1. What do we know about CCRS and student success?

2. What do we need to know to create a shared foundation for vertical alignment work?

**2 Partnership Goals Related to Critical Conversations, Actions, and Outcomes for Students’ Success**

Ideas to consider in prioritizing goals (modified from Conley 2010):

1. Create and maintain regional college-going and completion cultures;

2. Create and deliver core academic programs leading to college and career success (consider disciplines);

3. Teach and expect student self-responsibility and management;

4. Make academic “real” with opportunities for work applications;

5. Align grading, assignments, and educational practices among educational systems;

6. Engage educational leaders in developing, implementing, and evaluating regional priorities/actions;

7. Engage in regional career readiness and employment continuous improvement planning

**3 Course Syllabi and Reference Course Profile Information Review**

Ideas to consider (modified from THECB 2012 and Conley 2011):

Regional College and Career Readiness related to:

1. Content knowledge;

2. Cognitive strategies;

3. Learning skills and techniques; and

4. Transitions between educational systems

5. What course(s) will be reviewed and why?

**Communications with Vertical Alignment Partners and Team Members Regarding Critical Conversations, Progress, Outcomes, and Outreach Efforts**

1. P-16 Council meeting dates and minutes reflecting AVATAR reports presented;

2. Partnership leaders/administrators meeting dates and minutes reflecting AVATAR reports presented;

3. Presentations at local, regional, state, and national meetings; and

4. Articles, newsletters, reports, etc. where information about regional vertical alignment is shared

**Sustainability of Regional Vertical Alignment Partnership and Work**

1. Select courses for 2013-2014 vertical alignment team
2. Select team members 2013-2014 vertical alignment team
3. Train 2013-2014 course alignment team



**FORMS**

***Vertical Alignment Outreach Activities and Outcomes Log***

***An AVATAR goal is to promote secondary and postsecondary vertical alignment sharing of best practices and lessons learned.***

***Please document all of your outreach efforts and have those participating sign-in on the attached.***

***Please ask participants to sign in on attached list.***

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| **Region:** |  |
| **Your Name:** |  |

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| ***Date*** | ***Title of Presentation, Name of Group Presented to, and Location*** | ***Description of the Activities & Outcomes*** | ***Type of Participant(s)*** | ***Number of Participant(s)*** |
|  |  |  | *Secondary* |  |
| *Postsecondary* |  |
| *Other* |  |
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| *Other* |  |
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| *Postsecondary* |  |
| *Other* |  |

***Please keep your logs up to date and share them with your Facilitator/Coordinator by December 10, 2012 and May 6, 2013***

***Vertical Alignment Outreach Activities and Outcomes Participant Sign-In***

***Activity Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_***

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2012-2013 AVATAR Regional Facilitators/Coordinators

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| REGION | NAME | TITLE, INSTITUTION | EMAIL |
| 1 | Laura Saenz | Associate Vice Provost, University of Texas Pan American | SaenzL@utpa.edu |
| 2 | Janet Cunningham | Executive Director, Citizens for Education Excellence | JCunningham@edexcellence.org |
| 6 | Joe Martin | Education Certification Coordinator, ESC Region 6 | JMartin@esc6.net |
| 7 | Jane Silvey | Associate Director, ESC Region 7 | JSilvey@esc7.net |
| 9 | Kathy Harvey | Education Specialist, ESC Region 9 | Kathy.Harvey@esc9.net |
| 10 | Chris Kanouse | Program Director, ESC Region 10 | Chris.Kanouse@region10.org |
| 11 | Kathy Wright-Chapman | Director of Curriculum, Instruction, & Assessment, ESC Region 11 | KWC@esc11.net |
| 12 | Christine Holecek | Education Specialist I, ESC Region 12 | CHolecek@esc12.net |
| 13 | Ed Vara | Deputy Director of Academic Services, ESC Region 13 | Ed.Vara@esc13.txed.net |
| 14 | Christy Barnett | Consultant of Curriculum, Eduphoria, & Counselors, ESC Region 14 | CBarnett@esc14.net |
| 15 | Karan Duwe | Director of Curriculum & Instruction, ESC Region 15 | Karan.Duwe@netxv.net |
| 16 | Robin Adkins | P-16 Specialist, Panhandle P-16 Council | Robin.Adkins@esc16.net |
| 20 | Ravae Shaeffer | Education Specialist, ESC Region 20 | Ravae.Shaeffer@esc20.net |