



NEWS

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TEXAS CONSORTIUM ON SCHOOL RESEARCH FOCUSES ON THE USE OF DATA TO IMPROVE COLLEGE READINESS

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SAN ANTONIO - The highly anticipated, second meeting of the **Texas Consortium on School Research (TCSR)**, convened leadership from 21 Texas School Districts and Educational Organizations in San Antonio, Texas on Friday, February 26th. These districts represent more than **1.2 million students – or 25% of all students** - in the state.

The theme of the Consortium focused on College Readiness and centered around four primary areas:

- Understanding Research and its Practical Application
- Use of Longitudinal Data Sets
- Building a Community of Practice
- Developing District Capacity

TCSR is an **action-oriented Consortium** managed by the [Regional Educational Laboratory - Southwest \(REL Southwest\) at Edvance Research \(Managing Partner\)](#) in partnership with [The University of Texas at Dallas Education Research Center \(UTD-ERC\)](#) and [Consortium on Chicago School Research \(CCSR\)](#). It creates a forum which allows participating member districts across the state to collaborate in building research capacity to address critical issues to support school improvement efforts.

Education leaders and researchers are anxious to understand data and find the most effective methods to utilize this knowledge in their daily work. TCSR member districts are heavily involved with building capacity for leadership around research, identifying and sharing best practices, conducting research to know what works and what doesn't work in their districts and analyzing data to find new ways to address issues. TCSR provides a safe venue for its members to interact and share data, ideas, successes and challenges that lead to collective and ongoing improvements in the interpretation and application of data. **The members of TCSR are building a dynamic Community of Practice around school research.**

Following the initial TCSR meeting in October 2009, Klein ISD created an internal team devoted to College Readiness efforts. At this meeting, Drs. Cecilia Oakeley and Dorothea Weir of Dallas ISD shared findings on their *Freshman Year Success Initiative* with the group.

James Steinhauser, Assistant Superintendent of Research and Evaluation at El Paso Independent School District, who spoke about *Pursuing a Career and Preparing for College* at the meeting states, “*The Texas Consortium on School Research is an excellent partner for school districts. The information learned from TCSR benefits El Paso Independent School District by creating strategies that increase the number of students that will graduate from college. Our current focus is collaboration with TCSR on studying persistence in college as it relates to several variables including course grades in high school, norm & criteria-referenced test data, reading levels and academic rigor of the receiving colleges*”.

Representation at the Texas Consortium included participants, from 21 geographically and demographically diverse school districts in the state that have demonstrated impactful approaches to school improvement including Austin ISD, Beaumont ISD, Carrollton-Farmers Branch ISD, Corpus Christi ISD, Cypress-Fairbanks, Dallas ISD, El Paso ISD, Fort Bend ISD, Fort Worth ISD, Galena Park ISD, Grapevine-Colleyville ISD, Harlingen ISD, Houston ISD, Kingsville ISD, Klein ISD, Lubbock ISD, North East ISD (San Antonio), Northside ISD (San Antonio), Plano ISD, Southwest ISD (San Antonio) and YES Prep Public Schools (Houston). An added benefit for districts is the Continuing Professional Education credits earned through attendance at the meeting.

In addition, leadership from the Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, Texas Education Agency, Texas Charter Schools, Dallas Education Foundation, Texas High School Project and the Texas Association of School Administrators participated in the event. Education leaders from Louisiana and California also participated in the event to observe the Consortium and potential benefits of a like consortium in their states.

TCSR (tcsr.edvanceresearch.com) is continuing to build momentum as participating districts share peer data and develop and enhance district practices. The Consortium continues its primary focus on the use of data to improve College Readiness and is actively identifying plans with the Districts to expand topic areas in the near future. TCSR plans to convene the expanding group twice more in 2010 with additional districts joining this growing Consortium. Districts requesting more information on TCSR may contact Dr. Loral Logan-Fain at lloganfain@edvanceresearch.com.

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