

Benchmark 5: Resources for TSI Support Webinar

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Kim: Good morning, everyone. Welcome to the webinar entitled, “Resources for TSI Support.” My name is Dr. Kim Woodson, and I’m with Region 13, the coordinator for college and career initiatives. Today, I am joined by Yvette Cavazos; she is an ECHS Leadership coach, Linda Hinojosa, from Freer Early College High School, who is an early college high school administrator; and Jonathan Martinez, from Texas A&M International Writing Center, Interim Director.

Before we begin, let me just give you a little background information about TSI. Students must be in compliance with Texas Success Initiative (TSI) to enroll in Texas public institutions of higher education. The law requires all interim college students to be assessed for college readiness in reading, writing, and math, unless the student qualifies for an exemption, or demonstrates college readiness through successful completion of college-level work.

This program also helps to determine what type of course or intervention will best meet the student’s needs and assist in becoming better prepared for college-level course work. Today, we’ll be discussing some of these best practices that have been implemented in Freer ISD.

However, just a little bit of housekeeping, before we get started. If you have any questions, please feel free to type them in the Q&A box at the top of your screen. We will answer them as time permits or send the responses out on the ECHS listserv. There is also a chat box at the top of your screen. A link for a webinar survey will be posted at the end of this webinar. It’s only five questions, and we ask that you do that to help with our future planning. At the conclusion of the webinar, we will also send out a reminder just to let everyone know that the webinar will be posted to the ECHS web site that is www.txechs.org, along with the survey link, under the resources tab. However the survey link will only be available until next Thursday (4/30/2017) at noon.

Now, with that information, let me go ahead and turn this over to Linda and Jonathan.

Linda: Good morning, and thank you for joining us today. I’m Linda Hinojosa. I know we’re extremely busy with our daily schedules. However, one thing I’ve learned in education is that you can never get enough training or networking opportunities. I hope that at the end of this session, we can take something back to help our early college high school programs with our students.

Jonathan: Good morning. My name is Jonathan Martinez. I'm the interim director of the TAMIU Writing Center. I'm very appreciative of this opportunity to get to speak to you about our program, our collaboration. It's been a very great experience these last two years, so hopefully, the information I provide is informative.

Yvette: Good morning everyone. I'm Yvette Cavazos, one of the Early College High School leadership coaches. Thank you for joining our webinar.

Today's webinar, as Dr. Woodson mentioned, is specific to Benchmark 5: Academic Rigor and Readiness, from the Early College High School Blueprint. It reads: "The Early College High School shall administer a Texas Success Initiative (TSI) college placement exam to all accepted students to access college readiness, design individual instructional plans, and enable students to begin college courses based on their performance."

So, this next slide, you will see an insert from Benchmark 5, from our blueprint. It's hard to read, (I apologize) on the PowerPoint, but I wanted to highlight a few points. Of course, all early college high schools should comply with the initiating requirements and be functioning in the implementing column. The implementing criteria reads, "The Early College High School shall provide a TSI assessment to accepted students as early as possible (however, not as a pre-requisite for admissions to the Early College High School). They also shall implement a plan for TSI success, including academic preparation classes for accepted students, academic interventions for students who do not pass TSI, and assessments fee waivers for all administrations of the TSI test." Of course, also report the TSI administration dates to TEA, and report the number of students who have passed each section of TSI assessment, including the breakdown of TSI testing data for the subpopulations of our targeted student.

Now, Benchmark 4 [sic] outlines the source of data that's listed there on the Blueprint, and the source of data are:

- TSI college placement exam data
- College entrance exam preparation courses and data
- Exam fee waivers, which translates to the exams that should be at no cost to students
- A calendar of family-focused events and participation data
- Program records, documenting nature and number of trips to the college
- Student-level performance data and intervention plans, and
- Tutoring and bridge program schedules and participation data.

Benchmark 5 also lists products. It lists documents used to show evidence of TSI activities or pre-requisite requirements. For example:

- The MOU should target how we're going to address TSI
- Data review plan and calendar, specific to TSI
- Reports of TSI exam performance
- Individual instructional plans
- Tutoring and support schedules Bridge program curricula

On the next couple of slides, we have included guiding questions, which can serve as a guide as you develop and/or tweak your TSI plan, and Freer ISD, together with TAMIU, will be addressing these questions but just questions to think about as we're talking about TSI in relationship to your campus.

- What is your TSI testing schedule and what will determine it?
- When do you test the students for the first time?

- How many times do you test incoming new freshman during the school year?
- How do you manage and keep track of your TSI data?
- What is your academic plan for TSI retakes?
- How do you coordinate a productive summer bridge?
- What is the role of your high school teachers, or together with your middle school (or junior high) teachers, in regards to TSI prep?
- How can you incorporate TSI support into your high school master schedule?
- What is the role of your IHE, in regards to TSI prep?
- How is the TSI data reported to the IHE?
- How do you become a TSI testing site?
- What are some TSI preparation resources schools use?

As we know, TSI Success is a joint effort between the Early College High School and the IHE partner. I'd like to share that the Freer ECHS is a year two school-wide model, located sixty miles from their partner IHE, which is Texas A&M International University in Laredo. They bus their students to TAMIU every Tuesday and Thursday for face-to-face instruction, and together, they have made student success their priority. Linda Hinojosa, from Freer ECHS, the ECHS administrator, together with Jonathan Martinez, the writing center interim director for TAMIU will now share their TSI plan.

Linda: Okay, so with this next slide, "TSI Testing Schedule," let's look at some questions that may arise in the beginning of your planning stages, or when you feel as though your program needs some modifications, when you need to modify your program. First off, what is your testing schedule? When do you test the students for the first time? How many times do you test incoming freshmen, during the school year?

First, and foremost, we begin exposing our students to the TSI at our junior high. Our staff from Freer Jr. High School takes a lot of pride in exposing their students to TSI. These teachers want to see their students show progress, and they want to see mastery with their students. So, our eighth graders at Freer Junior High, who are enrolled in their Algebra I class, take their first math TSI assessment at the completion of their first semester in junior high as an eighth grader. We bring the over here to Texas A&M International University to test for their very first time. Then, in the middle of May, we bring the entire eighth-grade cohort from Freer Junior High over to Texas A&M International University. The students, who have previously mastered their math TSI assessment, will only be required to take their reading and writing TSI exams. All other students will be required to take all three sections in May. One of our early college mandatory requirements, in order to become an early College High School student, is to have completed a mandatory summer bridge for eight days. On the very last day of that summer bridge, our students have an additional opportunity to take their math, reading, or writing assessment that they have not mastered, at that point. So, basically, before any of our students become high school students, they would have had two to three opportunities to take their TSI assessments. Something else I'd like to point out to you is that our district feels as though our students should take their TSI exams in the beginning, at the university. This is a great opportunity for our students to be exposed to the university and to the higher eds, and to also help them with recruitment. While students are in high school, we also offer TSI assessments during the fall and spring semester. So, at the end of their freshman year, they would have already taken it three times, prior to high school, and then, their freshman year, two times, and some even take multiple opportunities for that.

Our next slide is "Managing TSI Data." You may have some questions, such as, how do you manage or keep track of your TSI data? How is a TSI data reported to the IHE? What is your academic plan for TSI retakes?

Beginning with planning our program, we had so many questions, and throughout the years, we come up with an idea and then we tweak it. We feel as though we need to tweak it to adjust our program.

Jonathan: That's where I come in, the TAMIU Writing Center. Typically, here's what happens. I'm going to try to break down, step-by-step, what happens with the data.

In May, when students test for the TSI, typically, Linda, or the director of the testing center here at TAMIU, Alejandro Martinez, he'll send me the scores from the students who have tested, the eighth graders, and I begin analyzing and assessing that data. What happens is I get their essay score, which is either zero, one, two, three, four, five or six, seven or eight, and their sentence skills score, which goes up to 363, which is the minimum for passing. From that point on, I start looking at their scores, and I start grouping them, based off their specific need, the student's. Part of the way we engage in tutoring is we scaffold, so we meet students where they're at, and we try to bring them up to show progress, obviously. Based off the scores and based off that analysis, I start developing an intervention program, lesson plans to target their writing. Typically, for our at-risk program, I put a lot of emphasis on the essay portion, which (to me) is a lot easier to get students to that five, versus trying to get them to a four, 363, because when it comes to the grammar and the sentence skills area, that stuff is very important, but you could teach that in essay writing, versus trying to separate the two different kind of skills, because they're related. At least that just my opinion, and it works, so far. Then, in the fall and winter, we have these other interventions. The same kind of progress happens. The summer is longer, but overall, the same kind of model is still applied.

Linda: We also use a computer program. There, in Freer, our technology director, Mr. Garcia, created a computer program for our students to track their data. We use a spreadsheet, and we highlight different students who have passed. We put in their scores and those that are making progress, and it's just a way to share with your teachers, to share where your students are and what skills you need to be working on. As our students take their TSI assessments here at Texas A&M International University, Jonathan and I, and Mr. Morales (Did she mean Mr. Garcia?), we work hand in hand, and we share that data, and from there they strategically plan out interventions for our students with their TSI.

Jonathan: When it comes to interventions, that's pretty much our Bridge program, so I'm going to talk a little bit about that on our end, since it's a very unique program, but I'll go ahead and let Linda begin, and I'll continue.

Linda: One of the strongest components of our Early College High School program, and certainly one of the most that we are proud of is the success of our Bridge program. When preparing for a Bridge program, it is extremely important to properly plan out your bridge with your higher ed.

Some of the questions that come to mind are:

How do you coordinate a productive Bridge with your IHE?

What is the actual goal of your Bridge program? What is the end goal there?

Our ISD and IHE leadership team group meets to plan out a productive Bridge. We bring in all that are involved to help plan out topics such as: scheduling, locations, orientations, interventions, and of course, how to ensure that our students are having to prove that they are dedicated and committed to our Early College High School program in Freer. While our students are receiving structured TSI interventions at TAMIU, they're also becoming adjusted to being a college student.

So, while we're planning out, we plan out eight consecutive days for our summer Bridge program. However, there will be times that we'll have some students not be able to attend or complete our summer Bridge program. In that event, we have a separate Bridge. This is called our fall Bridge. Remember, for our students, it's mandatory for them to attend in the summer, and if they don't, they cannot become an Early College High School student. So, with our fall Bridge, it gives them that opportunity to become an Early College High School student, if they didn't fulfill their summer Bridge.

Now, we try to mirror those high expectations from the summer Bridge; we try to mirror that with our fall Bridge. However, there is one difference between our summer and our fall [Bridge]. The days are not planned consecutively. We're dealing with high school students and schedules and semesters and everything else that's going on with them, so we have afternoon days scheduled, same days as school, but in the afternoon, after school is over, they attend. They attend on Saturdays, and they attend on Sundays, so that's one particular difference between our summer Bridge and our fall Bridge.

The last, but certainly not our least, is our winter Bridge. This is in between their fall and spring semester. There is a time when our students finish college class, but high school classes are still going on. Thankfully our IHE partner agrees that there is a need to help our students with TSI, so we created our own Bridge, called a winter Bridge. This is for all of our ECHS students, who have not mastered their TSI. These students are expected to still attend classes at Texas A&M International University. We still run the same routine; still on Tuesday and Thursdays, but these students are taking TSI courses, here, at the university.

Jonathan: Let me go into detail about what actually happens during the Bridge programs. I think it's very unique and something that will be very beneficial for Austin. In the summer, it's an eight-day program. There are seven days of instruction, and the last day is testing day. The way I design the writing intervention is each day is focused on a specific skill. For example, students come in on day one; we usually cover the writing process and go over general ideas about the TSI. That way, students understand how they are being assessed, how their being scored for the TSI, so they understand the relation between how they are being scored and how the instructor is going to [them] improve. So, that's day one. Day two follows the writing process, so day two we cover introductions and thesis statements. We also incorporate sentence skills, like coordinating conjunctions, semicolons, subordinating conjunctions, etc., and we do use those specific terms, because students need to learn those specific skills, so using the terminology and the skill is beneficial. Day three, we go into evidence, body, paragraphs; day four, conclusions, and days five, six, and seven, we focus on proofreading, editing, cutting clutter, and how to polish your writing, so these days focus on a specific skill.

Now, I think what makes our program so effective, is that it's a mix of lecture, but also interaction. I'm sure all of us can remember when we were students. Who wants to be just lectured at, right? We try to get our students involved, so we spend a lot of time developing interactive activities that emphasize the instruction that's being given to these students. So, the center Bridge is pretty intensive but fun. We try to make everything high-energy and interactive.

For those who are going to try to form partnerships with other IHE's, that's something to consider and talk about with IHE, how to make a program that is instructional but interactive, which I think is pretty important for these types of students here.

Now, the fall Bridge, as Linda mentioned, is not consecutive days, and it's much shorter than the typical eight days we have in the summer, but we still follow the same model; instruction and interaction are always emphasized. The winter Bridge is a little bit longer but the same idea. What connects all these three bridges is that the goal is pretty much to see TSI development. For example, if a student came in with a score of; say, they are in a bubble, a four and the 361, so they need a 363 in their sentence skills to be college-ready in

writing, right? So, if after they test, they have a four 362, we've seen some more improvement, so they're still in a bubble. They're not going to pass out, yet, but they're still some improvement. Typically, with our program, we've passed students who have come in with scores of two and a full score higher on three, sometimes, even a four. So, that's the measure. We do want them to see progress. We also want them to get an experience of how it is to be a student in college, so our instruction is college-level instruction. For example, I teach English Composition I or II, and some of these students may take this with me in the future, so the way I design the intervention and the program is college-level instruction, so it's not watered down. It's exactly what they're going to experience in college, which I think is highly important with this kind of program.

Linda: So, with this program, the entire time, through AISD, Board of Trustees has seen that's they're committed to our program and to our students. Therefore, they ensure that we provide transportation. We provide transportation for our students for this Bridge program, for the summer, for the fall, and for the winter, as well. The IHE is committed, and they ensure that there [are] classes available for our students, and the tutors from Jonathan's learning center and the student writing center; we have tutors from there who help with these interventions, but all those interventions, all of that is invested and provided by our partner, Texas A&M International University.

Jonathan: Also, when it comes to those classes (this is, to me, the best part about it), I have writing tutors, writing consultants, facilitate the instruction, and the reason why I have them do it, versus me, is that as these students transition into college, eventually, they're going to stay at TAMIU and become full-fledged university students. They're going to be participating in the writing center. They're going to have to go to the writing center, and it is peer tutoring, so to me, it's beneficial to demonstrate, here is a potential peer, someone closer in ages. For example, my tutors in high school who I have hired, because they are fantastic writers. I also have tutors who are graduate students, so it's a wide expanse. We have tutors who are seventeen and eighteen, and older. These students are close in age, they're similar, and getting that kind of instruction by similar peers, millennials, to me is beneficial, versus it coming just from me, because I'm a teacher, or I'm an instructor, versus a peer, and I think that's really the benefit of this program, as well.

Linda: So, I keep saying that they are taking these courses here during their summer, fall and winter Bridge. However, some of you may ask, "Do the students get college credit for these courses?" They DO NOT get college credit for these courses. This goes into their academic support that is offered from the ISD and the IHE. They don't get college credit, but they get lots of academic and social support during each opportunity that they come to TAMIU for their summer Bridge, for their fall Bridge and for their winter Bridge.

Our next slide [is], "High School Schedule for TSI Prep." So, we've talked a lot about collaboration and joint efforts from our IHE. Now, let's talk about our TSI prep in our district.

We ask ourselves, "What is the role of our teachers with TSI?" "How can you incorporate TSI into your high school curriculum?" And, "What is the role of your IHE with TSI prep, while students are in high school?" I believe that your staff must first buy into the program, and they need to take ownership. Those are key to a successful TSI. That's key to be successful in a TSI prep class; when they take ownership and they want to see mastery with their students. They want to see progress. They want to see improvement. In our district, like I mentioned previously, we start with our junior high students. We start with our junior high staff. At Freer Junior High, you're going to see those teachers take a lot of ownership with these course and with their classes. Whether they're in sixth grade, seventh grade or eighth grade, the way we build up our master schedule at our junior high, we double block our ELA and our math courses. During their additional math and ELA block, you're going to see acceleration occurring. You're going to see interventions that will be occurring every other day, during this blocked time. You may see STAR interventions, or you may see TSI prep occurring

during this time. Regardless of the time, this is utilized for either math or ELA, in their specific courses, and they're using that time to expose their students to their TSI curriculum, or to their TSI resources that they use there.

Then, in our high school, our students take TSI prep courses that are counted as a high school elective for their graduation plans. You're going to see those teachers there at the high school also take ownership for this program, and they want to see their students be successful. So, they are constantly looking out to see how they're doing in their class and the interventions that they're serving at school, after school, or at the university. The IHE assists us also. This is something new to our program that we're just starting this semester. We're also using online modules to help with their TSI preparation.

Jonathan: For those online modules, I'm going to talk a little bit about how that works. For example, at the writing center, I focus on the writing, but there is also the university learning center, which is run by David Morales, which has the math and reading portions of the TSI. So, both our centers are offering online modules for students, so they have a course **shell(?)**. On my end, for example, students use Blackboard." On Mr. Morales' end, he uses something called (I think it's), "My Labs Plus," or something similar, where he actually creates lesson plans and lessons, and students are encouraged to log in weekly to complete exercises, so it's constant reinforcement of instruction that they received in the summer, instruction they received in the fall, instruction they received in the winter, and here's online modules, as well, so everything is building upon the interventions that they've experienced. Now, the good thing about these online modules, is that...Well, here at TAMIU, for example, the core curriculum, a lot of the classes are offered online. So, more and more classes are being offered online. There are hybrid courses, but those kind of courses can be tricky, sometimes, even for adults, so getting students used to this kind of environment is essential, so this is their start of getting used to this kind of online instruction. It teaches time-management. It teaches independence, but also, more importantly, it is always reinforcing the TSI support they receive from our centers. Another thing we also offer is supplemental instruction, which you see here on this slide. I want to talk a little bit about Supplemental Instruction, or SI, because it is a very unique program that is international. It's across the globe, and at TAMIU, we offer supplemental instruction. What happens is we offer supplemental instruction for Freer Early College High School in speech. I have a consultant assigned to that specific course. That consultant goes into the classroom, and is in the classroom as a model student. He asks questions and serves as a guide on how to be a college student, essentially. Outside of the classroom, this consultant also offers study sessions. For Freer ECHS, we offer these SI sessions once a week, it's about an hour. He helps these students process the information that they learned in class; so, supplementing the instruction that the students have received from their professor. The benefit of this, just like the online modules, is that as these students transition to becoming full university students, at the writing center we offer supplemental instruction for a lot of other courses. We pretty much target the sophomore literature courses, British, American, and world literature; we also target sophomore philosophy, and upper level philosophy, as well. So, I guarantee every single student has to take a literature course, once or twice, so they're going to be in a course, where we offer SI. That way, when they're in this course, they've already experienced, and they already know what it is; it gives them a head start compared to other students in the university who were not part of an ECHS program. To me, that's the benefit, and that's why we offer it. We try to give these youngsters, at Freer ECHS, as much exposure to different experiences, here at the university, where there is online, Supplemental Instruction, a Bridge program, etc.

Linda: Jonathan brought up an excellent point that I want to talk about. He talked about preparing our students for online courses. Something very unique, that we make sure and always do for our Freer ECHS is we bring them to the campus, and we sit face-to-face in courses, those course that our students take throughout

the entire core curriculum plan, that we have planned out for them is face-to-face courses. However, with the online modules that we have offered with TSI interventions, those are online, and like he said, they are preparing them, because later in their degree plan, they will have opportunities, after high school graduation, to take those online courses, or hybrid courses, and that is preparing our students for their online courses.

At this time, we'll have Yvette Cavazos, and she'll be talking about the resources that are out there.

Yvette: So, as we discussed previously, when we were discussing the Blueprint, to me the exemplar criteria for Benchmark 5, the campus must be a testing site. The process is simple to be a testing site, so this slide shows you exactly how simple it is. Any school interested in administering the TSI assessment can become a testing site, and there is no charge to become a testing site. You can contact Chantel Reynolds at creynolds@collegeboard.org, and she will guide you through the process. It's that simple.

College Board also provides various links with TSI information, and here, we've listed a few of the links that College Board provides. They have, for example, a brochure for students, a brochure interpreting TSI data, TSI test content, and sample questions, to name a few.

So, if you go to the first link of College Board, they have prepared a student information brochure, specifically for TSI. The brochure is ideal to share with parents, students, and teachers. You can download the brochure; it's several pages long, or you can provide the link as a resource, or as a tool to prepare your students on what to expect when taking TSI, and you heard Jonathan talk to this and the importance of the students' understanding how they are going to get tested and how they are going to get scored.

The brochure for students includes...an explanation of "What is the TSI Assessment?" "Do I have to Take the TSI Assessment?" It explains "Students with Disabilities" options. It explains the "Mandatory Pre-Assessment Activity," and "What Does the Assessment Cover?" The brochure for students also explains the "Multiple Choice Section" of the TSI. It explains the "Essay Section." It outlines "How to Prepare" students for TSI, or how the student themselves can prepare for TSI, and the process to retake the TSI, if need be.

Linda: Before she moves on, I want to point out that that is excellent literature to offer to your parents and to your students when you are having those recruitment meetings. Some of them may have never heard of TSI. It's a term that you want to get out there, and you want to have your students exposed to it, and you want your families to become accustomed to it and be familiar with it. So, that's a great resource to use at your parent meetings, or if you have a TSI workshop for your student and your parents later on during the semester.

Yvette: Yes, and for ECHS students, TSI is common language, so everyone should understand "TSI."

A College Board link also provides a brochure with TSI sample questions. Sample questions are provided for reading, writing, and math, and this is just a snapshot of what those sample questions look like. The resource is a great tool for teachers and students. In early college high schools, it's common practice for the content teachers to experience the TSI assessment. Teachers incorporate the TSI strands into their daily instruction or in support classes to prepare students who are still struggling with TSI.

Another resource provided by College Board is a document called "Interpreting TSI Data," interpreting the scores. The more we understand the data, the better we can prepare our students for success, as you heard Jonathan and Linda [discuss]. Jonathan knows the Freer students by name and by objective that he needs to help them with, and he organizes them, utilizing their names. That's commendable. I commend them for putting that much investment into making sure that the ECHS students enrolled at TAMU are being successful.

Another College Board resource is called the TSI Blueprint. This one is critical for developing your curriculum. TSI is fairly new. When it came out in 2014, the schools really utilized the blueprint, the TSI Blueprint, to put together teacher-made curriculums, looking at the TSI strands, what areas were tested, how many questions per each strand would be tested on the TSI in each subject area, and how it correlated to the TEKS. So, this is a great resource. If you haven't already accessed this resource, we suggest you do and provide it to your teachers. The TSI Blueprint, as I mentioned, correlates the TEKS to the TSI strands and lists the number of questions for each strand in reading and writing.

The next slide is the math blueprint. The math blueprint is organized the same way. It has the TSI math TEKS, the TSI math strands, and the number of questions for each strand.

Linda: Okay, so you're going to see with this blueprint; this was one that we found after we started our program, and when we found it, we thought this was gold for our teachers, because they were able to plan our their interventions, because they used the same TEKS with our curriculum at the high school, so they were able to plan out TSI interventions using these blueprints. If you see how each blueprint is broken up, that's how the TSI is assessed, and from there, that's helps to interpret the data from the diagnostic tests. Something else I wanted to point out to you is that one of the strong points that you can do with your faculty, is have each and every one of them take the TSI assessment. This is a good idea. This will give you a good indication on what is assessed and how they can plan out their interventions for their students.

Yvette: Yes. As I mentioned, it is not uncommon for early college high schools to ask their teachers to take the TSI, and help them experience... Pretty much, we tell the teachers, "take the TSI and not do so good, so that you can get the diagnostic and experience what that looks like," and then, take the TSI and see as far as you can go, so you can experience the type of questions the TSI has. Teachers understand TEKS, and once we realized how TSI is correlated to our TEKS, we could surely support the classes through our content areas in our high schools.

John: On my end, as an IHE, I took the TSI, too, when we started this program. I was like, "Okay, well, let me see what the TSI's all about." So, I took the exam, and luckily, I passed, right? (Giggles from everyone) But, also, I had my consultants take it, too. One, because, yes, so they could understand what it is they're going to experience, plus so they could see the differences. A lot of my consultants, they took the test before TSI, which was, I believe the THEA or TCOMP, so that test is different, now. Back when I was in school, I think it was TAAS, or something like that, a long time ago, but... I think when you're developing partnerships with the IHE, the IHE has to be willing to buy into it, like Linda mentioned earlier, and this is my "buying-in" by having my consultants prep by taking a test. I took the test. How can I develop an intervention plan when I don't know what students have to take? Plus, also to understand the stresses of taking a test. Even though I already have two degrees, what-have-you; it's still stressful, because, well, I'm a writing center director; I have to get a perfect score. I did, so I lucked out, but I think it's important for that experience from teachers and your IHE, as well.

Linda: So, as Jonathan talked about, there are several different tests. This is the TSI test. Before that there was the Acuplacer. Some of the other names he brought up were the THEA, COMPASS... However, it is important for your teachers to take the test. Take it and if they pass it first go around, great! If they take it the second go around, you want to have them take it to fail the exam to see what part of diagnostics, what types of questions are going to be asked during the diagnostic. You want to have them take it again and fail it and miss most of the questions, because you want to have them go into the adult basic education diagnostic test to see what other types of questions that our students will be asked during these tests; how you can help them improve it. Basically, we have students on all different levels, and you're going to see all different scores, so it's important

to be able to see how they are testing, and that way you can differentiate your instruction in your classrooms to be able to have different levels that you're teaching, or that your giving your students interventions on. It just helps them prepare for it.

Yvette: So, one last resource that we will share is a document, developed by Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board. This is a lengthy document, but this is page, page 13, that we have uploaded for you is critical. These are what's called our "TSI College-ready Cut Scores." As Linda and Jonathan were mentioning, on the other assessments, we had mastered knowing what the cut score was for Acuplacer, THEA, COMPASS, and were they exempt with our state assessments?, and so forth. So, when the new cut scores came out, we had to become very familiar with what the new TSI cut scores were, so the State pretty much phased them in for us. Right now, we are in Phase One of the cut scores in reading, writing and math, and that will be in effect until this fall, coming up, 2017, which is called Phase Two, and in the fall of 2019, we will be in what's called the "final cut score." It's important that your counselors and your principals, and whoever is helping you schedule the students and helping you test the students, are familiar with the cut scores, because this is critical to the type of college courses that you can expose your students to.

Linda: So basically, right now, where we're in, we're in the first phase. Our students need a 350 in order to master, or to pass, the math TSI exam. Passing score is a 350, right now, for math TSI. Moving on to the reading TSI, the passing score for the reading is a 351. Jonathan talked about the writing score a little while ago. Do you want to talk about that one?

Jonathan: Sure, let me talk a little bit about it. So, as you can see here that the reading score looks kinda funky, but the reason why is that if a student gets an essay score of five (see, right there, they get a five), it doesn't matter what they get in a multiple choice. They could get a "0" on their multiple choice but still pass. Obviously, because if you get a five on your essay, you've demonstrated sentence skills in your writing craft. However, if by chance a student doesn't get that five; they get a four, as long as they get that 360 in their multiple choice, they still are college-ready for writing. In the multiple choice section, the way that section is made up, it is like revision and editing strategy, so you'll get like a passage, and it will have like one, two, three, four, etc., like footnotes, and those are asked to look at number one and identify the best revision, and that's the key word, what's the "best revision?", not the correct one, because when we're writing, and there's nothing that's ever really correct, because writing is always really about revising and editing. So, sometimes, what's actually there is already the best option, and that's why it's really tricky for students, sometimes.

Linda: Okay, so as we close up, priority for early college high schools is to have a plan for TSI success at your campus, to have an understanding of TSI, and have built in TSI academic support, and provide multiple opportunities to TSI test at no cost to the students. So critical is: know your data, know your students, be strategic. As you listened to Freer ECHS and TAMIU, you heard the power of the joint responsibility for student success. As Jonathan stated, the university is vested in the early college high school student, and he even knows his students by name, and I have witnessed that; he really does. And, so it's powerful to see how they are both, of course, the early college high school and the university, are making students their priority. So, we've shared many TSI resources that are out there that you can use to educate your parents, your students, your teachers; there are many more. We've shared a few. We hope that this has been helpful to you. We now turn it over to Dr. Woodson, and we will field questions.

Kim: Absolutely. Well, thank you so much for that information. There were just a couple of things I wanted to make sure that everyone noted. That slide that talked about how the TEKS was aligned, that's how you can get your teachers to make sure, especially, for your content teachers, to be on the same page and understand how important it is for them to make sure that their lessons are aligned to the TEKS to assist these students.

I had a question in regards to a “purchased curriculum.” There was not a purchased curriculum. It was just a curriculum in regards to making sure that they incorporate the state standards.

I had another one that says, “How does the ISD or the IHE report their TSI data?”

I will speak from what I know, and if anyone from Freer would like to jump in, please feel free.

When the students take the test over at the college, the college is able to work with the IHE, or ECHS campus, and track the student’s data that way. If the students take the test over at the high school campus, then that campus has a means of working with their liaison or their partner to share that student’s data. However, all of your scores need to be set up to pass, based upon what is required in the state guidelines.

Yvette: Kim, I’d like to add also, that when the schools are having conversations with their ECHS leadership coach, and we’re having a discussion around the blueprint, we will ask how many students are TSI-ready in reading, and writing and math, and in each grade level, so you’ll have those conversations with your ECHS leadership coach, as well.

Kim: Excellent. There was just one more question that asked about how, and I think we mentioned this, but I’ll ask it again. It says, “What high school credit are you giving them for the TSI prep class?”

I know that that is listed as an elective, so I’m going to turn it over to Freer to say which one that was.

Linda: Okay, so when our students take an ELA TSI prep course, they’re getting a local credit for that also, and the same thing, whenever they are taking their math TSI elective course, they’re also getting a local credit for that. If they do half a semester, it’s a half semester credit course.

Kim: Excellent, excellent. That’s all the questions that we have, as of now, but I just wanted to send out a couple of reminders. The survey has been posted in the comment box. I am going to ask if you can please take just a moment, it’s only five questions, to help us provide information for our next webinar.

I really appreciate the way that Freer, and TAMIU, has also spent a lot of information talking about data, and how you understand how using data is vital for the success of all students and also, if you heard how the ongoing collaboration; whether you are working with the middle school, the ECHS is talking to either IHE, or having district support, all parties and all stake-holders need to be on the same page to ensure student success, so great job of sharing that information, and of course, correlating that to Benchmark 5.

I’ve gotten two more questions, and I’m going to conclude.

It says, “For Phase Two scores, if freshmen take the test in July of this summer 2017, will they be under the Phase One or Phase Two scores?”

What I have, as far as information, is that the coordinating board has said that in the fall, so which date in the fall, I do not know. So, they would be grandfathered in to whichever one, based upon that date. So, since we’re looking at summer, I would assume that they would still be underneath the Phase One scores.

Jonathan: That’s correct, since the fall starts exactly when the fall semester begins, so anything before fall 2017 is under Phase One. So, for TAMIU we start classes, usually the last week of August, so you have up until then to be in Phase One. Once that happens, it’s Phase Two. I can find more specific information, but typically, that’s how it works.

Kim: and, once the students have passed, they are passed. They don’t have to take it again, just because they are in a new phase. If the students are passed, then they are grandfathered in and they’re done, but if they have not passed, come the fall, then they would be required to pass underneath whatever the new guidelines are.

Jonathan: Exactly. So, for example, let's say a student takes it in the summer, and they haven't passed, they take it again in fall, it's Phase Two. They are no longer grandfathered in, because they didn't pass the first time, so it's very beneficial for students to try to pass now, or the score is still in Phase One.

Kim: There are a few more questions. I've got about five more minutes for questions, and then, we will wrap it up, but I just want to make sure that we get to them all, so the next one is, it says, "Is the TSI prep curriculum created by their partnership or is it purchased?" I'm assuming that's going over to Jonathan at your campus. What do you use as materials or resources for instruction at your college?

Jonathan: Actually, I don't purchase anything. I develop it myself, and the way I develop is, like I mentioned, the kind of writing instruction they receive is what they will receive in English instruction, like freshman writing. I use pretty much what we use for our freshman writing program, which focuses on genre writing, so **Marimar(?)**, review, essay, rhetorical analysis, etc. We emphasize argumentation, though, because every piece of writing is an argument, regardless of the purpose, right? Everything revolves around argumentation, but I develop it myself, pretty much; how to write an introduction, grammar, sentence writing, things like that. I kind of create it myself. I've never purchased anything, really.

Kim: Excellent.

Linda: And, with the ISD, we do have some purchases that we have. However, we also use a lot of online resources that are out there. If you just go in and do a Google search of TSI resources, you're going to find an abundance of resources out there, as well. So, our teachers use that, our purchase resources, and of course, their TEKS, and they plan out instruction.

Kim: Excellent. And, there was another questions that says, "How are the TSI scores reported to TEA from the ECHS?"

On your annual designation, you are required to list the dates that the students have been allowed to take the TSI test. I want everyone to note that there was a previous webinar by the TEA that says that they are going to be a lot of changes coming forth on the blueprint for the 2017-18 school year, and so, more information in regards to reporting will come that way. However, all of the scores are at the college for the IHE side, as well.

What are the students taking at the university if they haven't passed TSI?

Remember, as of now, the students have to pass the TSI portions for all of their core courses, your English class, the math class, the algebra classes for later. So, the classes that they're taking at the college, and I'm sure that TAMIU can speak to this, that their freshman-level courses, as of now, are not their core courses that they have to take at the college, so they have time to take their elective classes.

Yvette: Yes, and Kim, I would like to elaborate on that. That's important to know with your partner, because if you're partnered with a college, for example, the ECHS that I lead, my students could take a foreign language, which was Spanish, only with attempting TSI, they could take kinesiology. For example, here, at the university, at TAMIU, they could take communication. Some will allow them to take the EDU1300, but some IHEs do require a cut score, so it just depends, but it is important to know which courses they can take without meeting TSI standard and which ones need the TSI.

Kim: And, that's for, as of now. As things change, that's why it's so important for everyone to spend time with their MOU, and make sure both institutions, the ISD, as well as the IHE, are on the same page, in regards to making sure what's allowed. Remember, there's no cost to the students, so this is an agreement that is arranged through the ISD or the IHE, whoever's going to pay for it at that time.

We actually had time to answer all of our questions. I do appreciate your time.

We have another webinar that is scheduled on April 20, and it's entitled, "Stability and Support Structures with the IHE Partnership."

Don't forget we have our Best Practices Summit, which is scheduled on August 2nd and 3rd, and registration has opened.

That will conclude our webinar for today. Thank you, again, for your participation.

I also want to thank TEA and Stacy Avery, the director of the high school programs; Linda Hinojosa, Jonathan Martinez, Yvette Cavazos, and all of the Region 13 ECHS team for their support in this webinar and making sure that it's gone through.

If anyone has any other questions, the last slide, we'll flip to now, has all of our contact information, so that we can receive emails. Please take just a moment to complete the survey, and once again, this will be uploaded on the TXECHS.org website.

Thank you, all and I hope everyone has a great day. 😊