CAN Dashboard Steering Committee 10/24/2023

Attendees: Akram Al-Turk, ECHO; **Tracy Ayrhart,** Central Texas Food Bank; **Dan Brown,** Children's Optimal Health; **Sarita Clark-Leach,** Central Health; **Greg Cumpton,** UT Ray Marshall Center; **Matthew Figg**, Austin Community College; **Brooke Hammond**, Integral Care; **Andrea Jacks**, E³ Alliance; **Rochelle Olivares**, Travis County HHS;

Staff in Attendance: Raul Alvarez, Carlos Soto, Jelina Tunstill

Welcome and Introductions: The meeting was called to order at 1:04 pm, and an overview of the agenda was provided.

Approval of minutes: The 08/24/2023 meeting minutes were approved after a motion submitted by Greg, which was seconded by Akram. The minutes were approved, with one abstention.

Executive Director Update: The 4ᵗʰ training series on the Race Equity Action Framework has just been completed. The 2023 Dashboard Report will also be published on November 6. We would like to move to publishing the Dashboard Report in the first half of the year, but it depends on when the data are available. The new Mental Health Toolkit (Spanish version) was published last week. It was developed over the past year, in collaboration with several advisory groups. We also plan to have a Regional Summit next year, with a focus on "earn & learn" opportunities and how they can help local residents take advantage of the workforce opportunities that exist in Austin at the moment.

Discuss "We achieve our full potential" indicators: This section includes 3 education indicators and an unemployment indicator. Updated data, published within the past few weeks, are available for High School Graduation and Postsecondary Completion. The way Kindergarten Readiness is measured has changed significantly since the measure was created and when it was most recently measured (2021). Starting in 2020-2021, TEA moved to a measure of KG readiness that is only a literacy measure that does not include other factors. Due to issues during the 2020-2021 school year, a different assessment that gives a different picture had to be administered, making data incomparable. Because of the issues with the measure, TEA announced that this year they will be re-doing how they measure KG literacy assessments to resemble more closely what was before. The HS Graduation rate has declined slightly over the past 5 years. Male students form low-income households continue to have the lowest graduation rates in our region, but 2022 data show that the biggest shifts were a decline in female students' graduation rates, especially female Hispanic students and female black students had lower graduation rates than they had in the past. The Postsecondary Completion rate, on the other hand, has been increasing in the past 5 years. However, there are limitations in that it does not measure all students (only those that enroll within one year of graduating HS), nor does it measure all institutions (only public institutions located in Texas). Also, enrollment rates are decreasing.

The unemployment rate decreased from 4% in 2021 to 2.8% in 2022. However, there are disparities when disaggregated by race. The target is at its current level in part because, despite a delinking between unemployment and inflation for many years, the pandemic seems to have brought that back. We currently have a high inflation rate with a very low unemployment rate. Historically, low unemployment drives inflation. Things to keep an eye out for: after the Great Recession, it took a long time for unemployment rates to decline among some racial/ethnic groups.

2023 CAN Dashboard Report Highlights: The 2023 Report release press conference is scheduled for November 6, 2023. From 2020 to 2021, there was a decrease in the property crime rate and an increase in the violent crime rate. However, the violent crime rate in Travis County remains lower than the rate in other Texas urban counties and the state as a whole. The 2022 gubernatorial election had a lower turnout than the 2018 election. The 2023 ECHO homeless

Point-In-Time count found a lower number of people experiencing homelessness on a particular night in 2023 than in 2020, when the count was most recently carried out. The mental health indicator had the sharpest 1-year change, increasing from 27% in 2020 to 32% in 2021. Obesity has remained relatively unchanged over the past 5 years (1% increase compared to 2020, 1%decrease compared to 2017). Smoking decreased significantly in 2021, from 12% in 2020 to 7% in 2021. Since, at the previous meeting, we discussed e-cigarette use and how it had been increasing, at the next meeting we can discuss approaches we can take to measure tobacco use (in different forms) more accurately. Air quality has also been declining since 2020, which had 260 days of good air quality, compared to 246 days of good air quality in 2022. In addition, there are indications that our region may fall out of compliance with national ozone standards, which may negatively impact federal funding available to local government entities.

Discussion: Regarding mental health, in the past it may have been a topic that was not often discussed or acknowledged, and treatment options were much more limited. With the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth services became more accessible for many people. However, some of the flexibilities that had been implemented into the system have had their requirements changed, making it more difficult for some to access services. Regarding some of the crime statistics we share that counter some of the narratives out there that diminish certain cities and certain communities within, and are used to support initiatives related to incarceration or policing, what can be done to popularize these data more or create a counter-narrative from findings in the data?

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 2:01 p.m.