



# Educational Research In Texas

James P. Van Overschelde, PhD

Director, Educational Research & Policy

[Jim.VanOverschelde@tea.state.tx.us](mailto:Jim.VanOverschelde@tea.state.tx.us)

(512) 936-1873

- Confidential data
  - Student-level data
  - Summaries of student-level data with values less than 5 – small cells
  - e.g., 4 Asian students in Grade 9
- Limits our ability to share these data

# Conducting Research

## External Research

- Two options for student-level data
  - Ask agency, but get masked data
  - Contract with 1,000 + districts
  - Neither was great option for high-quality longitudinal analyses

## Internal Research

- Hire vendors
- Build capacity and pay employees

- TEC §1.005 authorized creation of three Education Research Centers (ERCs)
  - Texas A&M in College Station
  - U of Texas at Austin
  - U of Texas at Dallas
- ~\$1,000,000 each in startup but then self supporting.

- TAC §95.1001 authorized creation of Joint Advisory Board (JAB)
  - Commissioner of Education (co-chair)
  - Commissioner of Higher Education (co-chair)
  - Plus 10 education researchers
  - Authorize research using confidential data
  - Sets policies and rules for ERC operations

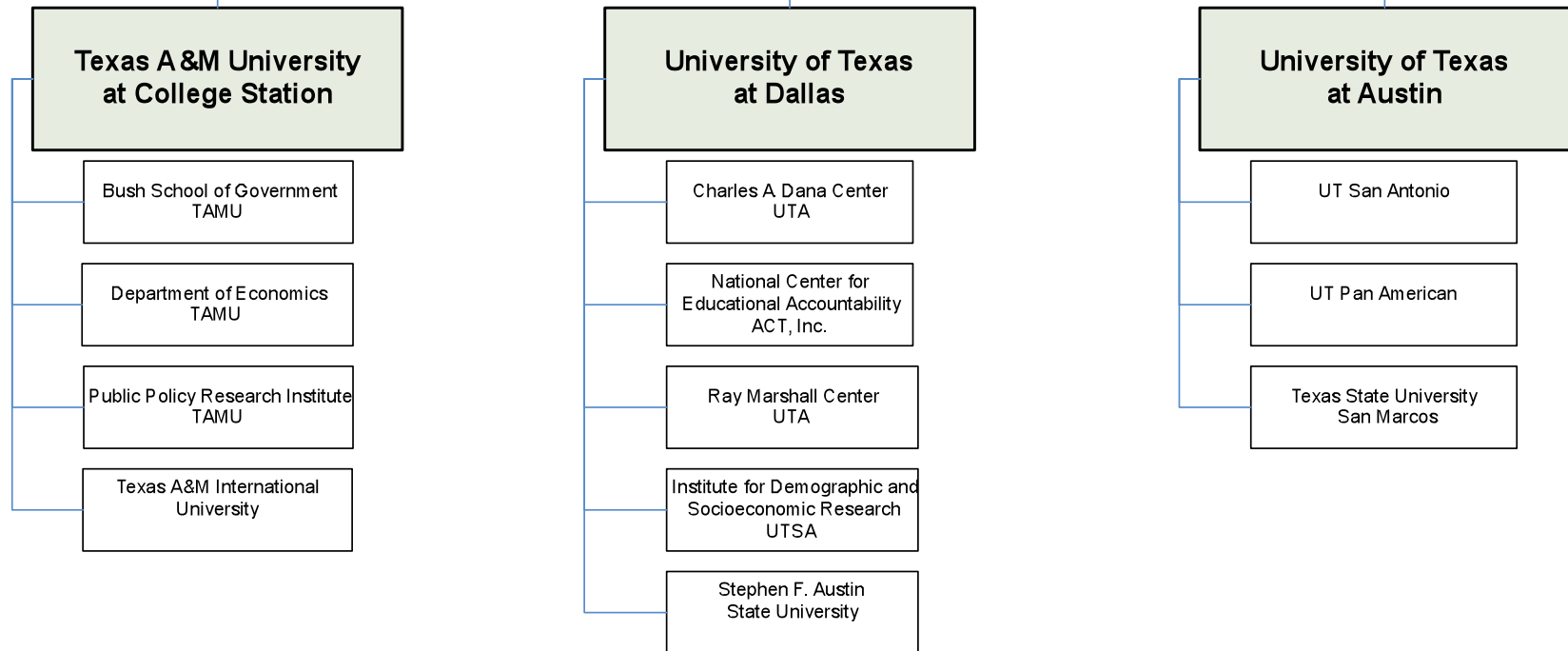


## Texas Education Research Centers



**Joint Advisory Board**

Chairs:  
 Commissioner of Education  
 Commissioner of Higher Education





# Texas ERCs & FERPA

“...we anticipate that the ERC approach will become the preferred method for conducting longitudinal educational research with State education data.”

~LeRoy Rooker, Director  
Family Policy Compliance Office  
US Department of Education

- De-identified student- and employee-level data
  - No SSN, name, DOB, or other identifying info
  - Replaced with unique ERC IDs
- P-12 student data and Gr 3-11 assessment data from 1991
  - enrollment, spec ed, graduation, attendance
- Employee and district financial data from 1992
- Gr 13-20 student data from 1993
- Teacher certification, GED, SAT, ACT, AP/IB, TELPAS, workforce, juvenile justice, and growing...
- 1 master plus 3 copies

- Loss of control of data

- Dramatically expand research capacity in the state
- Increase breadth and timeliness of research topics
- Potential for improving education and student learning
- Lower cost to taxpayers
- Greater autonomy by researchers

## Still Needed

- Data to link students and teachers to classrooms – coming in 2011
- More timely data from districts and schools
- Greater integration of data systems around agency