

2025 - 2030 STRATEGIC PLAN

Texas Children in Nature
Network



ABOUT TEXAS CHILDREN IN NATURE NETWORK

Mission: To ensure access and connection to nature for ALL children in Texas.

Vision: A Texas in which children have access to the benefits of nature everywhere they live, learn and play.

Texas has one of the fastest-growing populations in the United States, now home to 10% of the nation's school-aged children. For decades, children have become increasingly disconnected from nature. The negative impact of this disconnect is profound, leading to physical and emotional health problems as well as a growing sense of isolation.

Easy access to nature is also complicated by a lack of public land in Texas, where only 5% of the land is open to the public. There are not enough safe outdoor spaces close to home for most Texas children, especially for children from economically disadvantaged families. There is also a vast body of research that supports that children who play and learn in nature are healthier, happier, and perform better in school.

Texas Children in Nature Network is committed to working on a solvable problem. We do this by strengthening and leveraging the work of over 1000 state and local partners across Texas. We work in three main categories of work: Connect, Empower, and Amplify. We also work in four large-scale initiatives to advance this work: Partner Support and Development, Nature Smart Libraries, Green Schoolyards, and Early Childhood Education Outdoor Learning Environments.

We hope you will join us in this work over the next five years.





LETTER FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

I am incredibly proud of the Texas Children in Nature Network Board for its dedication in crafting this comprehensive Strategic Plan. This document is more than just a plan; it is a roadmap that will guide our organization into a future where every child in Texas has meaningful access to the natural world. This plan establishes a bold vision, setting TCINN up to be a more impactful and decisive force in statewide initiatives dedicated to increasing nature access and connection. Furthermore, it commits us to becoming more agile and diverse in securing the necessary resources—through new partnerships and innovative funding streams—to sustain and expand the valuable, life-changing work of connecting children and families with nature across our great state.

• Dr. Demekia Biscoe, Board Chair

CONNECT

Goals

- Goal 1: Be a trusted hub for providers in the nature-outdoor community across the state
- Goal 2: Foster strong connections within the network

Objectives:

- Objective 1: By 2030, have 500 or more active members
- Objective 2: Achieve 12 operational regional collaboratives
- Objective 3: Host an annual summit that meets the needs of our communities' professional development and networking needs, scoring a customer satisfaction score of 4.5 on a 5-point scale



EMPOWER

Goals

- Goal 1: Build community capacity that fosters collaboration and systems change
- Goal 2: Provide high-quality resources and training that empowers members

Objectives:

- Objective 1: By 2030 increase the number of communities participating across Texas Children in Nature Network projects, ie, Nature Smart Libraries, Green Schoolyards, and Outdoor Learning Environments for Early Childhood Education, to 150 communities or more
- Objective 2: Create and implement an evaluation plan for our resources and training
- Objective 3: Increase and diversify funding sources and revenue streams that support our projects



AMPLIFY

Goals

- Goal 1: Champion organizations and opportunities that increase children's access to nature across the state
- Goal 2: Showcase the work of the Texas Children in Nature Network community through impactful, data-driven storytelling
- Goal 3: Share research-driven, best practice strategies to engage children in nature

Objectives:

- Objective 1: Increase the organization's marketing engagements and efforts by 10%
- Objective 2: Prepare at least 12 Facilitators for Texas Children in Nature Network presentations and trainings
- Objective 3: Create at least one educational resource biannually to inform stakeholders of our position



THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO HELPED PUT THIS PLAN TOGETHER

BOARD MEMBERS

Chair: Dr. Demekia Biscoe
Past Chair: Dr. April Conkey
Vice Chair: Marsha Towns
Secretary: Jimena Vivanco
Treasurer: Keiji Asakura
Alferd Molina
Amalia Sollars
Britney Huynh

Dr. Courtney Crim
David Buggs
Dr. Jay Maddock
Dr. Kelly Albus
Melissa Mullins
Dr. Rene Bartos
Richard Heilbrun - Ex Officio
Ted Stevens

REGIONAL LEADERS

Paso Del Norte: Kasi Munoz
Caprock: Sarah Coles
North Texas: Cheryl Potemkin and
Anna Lewis
Heart of Texas: Sarah Coles
Austin: Ashleigh Pettus

Hill Country: Helen Holdsworth
San Antonio: Stephanie Regets
Pineywoods: Ted Stevens
Houston: Sarah Coles
Coastal Bend: Angie Arredondo
Rio Grande Valley: Marisa Oliva

