TEXAS
The University of Texas at Austin

Texas Education Research Center

July 2025

Office of Internal Audits
UT Austin's Agents of Change

OFFICE OF INTERNAL AUDITS
THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

1616 Guadalupe St. Suite 2.302 · Austin, Texas 78701 · (512) 471-7117
audit.utexas.edu • internal.audits@austin.utexas.edu

Executive Summary

Texas Education Research Center
Project Number: AUS25RQ0005

Audit Objective

The objective of this audit was to determine whether the Texas Education Research Center (Texas ERC) complies with the State of Texas Interagency Cooperation Contract (Contract) between The University of Texas at Austin (UT Austin) and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB).

Conclusion

Overall, the Texas ERC complies with the Contract terms, and there were no reportable issues. Several information technology (IT) controls were observed, as follows:

- Access controls are implemented to ensure that only authorized users can access active and archived project files, preventing unauthorized access.
- The IT infrastructure has the necessary controls limiting confidential data to authorized users.
- Policies and procedures are in place to safeguard data and support compliance with FERPA, helping to prevent disclosure of protected information.
- Remote access controls are in place for authorized users accessing confidential data.

Audit Observations

No recommendations were provided.

Engagement Team[1]

Mr. Paul Douglas, Partner, EisnerAmper
Mr. Matthew Stewart, Director, EisnerAmper
Mr. Bentley Greenfield, Staff, EisnerAmper

[1] This project was co-sourced with EisnerAmper Gulf Coast, LLC.

Additional Risk Consideration

Texas ERC works with the THECB to conduct an annual external network penetration test and web application scan. Both are carried out by a third-party vendor. The most recent test was performed by AT&T in June 2023. In preparation for the next assessment, Texas ERC has contacted the THECB to initiate the process. As of the date of this report, Texas ERC has not received a response from THECB regarding the upcoming test.

Scope, Objectives, and Methodology

This audit was conducted in conformance with The Institute of Internal Auditors' Global Internal Audit Standards. Additionally, we conducted the audit in accordance with Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards and meet the independence requirements for internal auditors. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain sufficient, appropriate evidence to provide a reasonable basis for our findings and conclusions based on our audit objectives. We believe that the evidence obtained provides a reasonable basis for our conclusions on our audit objectives.

In accordance with the Contract, we are required to annually certify that the Texas ERC complies with the Contract terms. In general, the Contract requires the Texas ERC to secure electronic data, restrict and monitor access to electronic data, obtain reviews by the UT Austin Information Security Office and the Texas Department of Information Resources, certify researchers are approved and sign non-disclosure agreements, and submit payments to the THECB for costs necessary to prepare and maintain ERC data. To certify compliance, we reviewed policies and procedures on operations, research, and security; reviewed access and required documentation; interviewed staff; tested data security; and tested limited fiscal year financial transactions.

Report Submission

We appreciate the courtesies and cooperation extended throughout the audit.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sandy Sutton Jansen

Sandy Jansen, CIA, CCSA, CRMA, Chief Audit Executive

Distribution

Mr. James E. Davis, Interim President
Dr. Celeste Alexander, Director, Texas Education Research Center
Dr. Charles Martinez, Jr., Dean, College of Education
Dr. Pedro Reyes, Executive Director, Texas Education Research Center
Ms. Christy Sobey, Director of President's Office Operations
Dr. Melissa Taylor, Interim Chief of Staff and Senior Strategic Advisor, Office of the Executive Vice President & Provost
Dr. David Vanden Bout, Interim Executive Vice President and Provost
The University of Texas at Austin Institutional Audit Committee
The University of Texas System Audit Office

Legislative Budget Board
Governor's Office
State Auditor's Office