

# TX-NCAS

## *Nursing Advisory Council (NAC)*

Meeting 2, Jan 20, 2026

*Working together to build a new admissions application service to strengthen the nursing workforce in Texas*



# Welcome to our NAC meeting!

## **We will be recording this meeting to:**

- Share with those who are unable to join us
- Create thematic notes to inform the next phases of this work

**Please contact [erin@collectinsight.com](mailto:erin@collectinsight.com) if you have questions or concerns pertaining to how this recording will be used.**

# Agenda

## **Our Topics for Today**

- Review of Project and NAC Focus
- Progress to Date
- Roundtable Findings
- Feasibility Criteria and Options Surfacing
- Next Steps

## **Discussion Time Dedicated**

- Roundtable Findings
- Feasibility Criteria
- Options Surfacing

# Meeting Guidelines

- Please use your camera when possible
- Keep microphones muted unless speaking
- Jump in during discussions or raise your hand
- Use Chat to add to the conversation
- Welcome differences in opinions and experiences
- Avoid using acronyms when possible
- Keep to the agenda and try to stay on topic
- End on time
- Take breaks when needed

**Keep the conversation going after the meeting by contacting us directly.**

# **Project Overview and NAC Focus**

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# Project Overview

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## Background

Legislative directive (HB 2851) to TXHES to centralize nursing school applications in order to capture data needed to support statewide workforce development planning.

## Purpose of Our Project

- Develop a feasibility study to determine the viability, design, and operational requirements of a centralized nursing application service for Texas.
- Support development of recommendations and an implementation plan that provides a clear, actionable roadmap that enables the nursing community to meet the pressing enrollment needs of their institutions statewide and strengthen the state's pre-health pipeline through an equitable, efficient, and sustainable system

# NAC Focus

- Provide recommendations on integrating nursing school applications into the consolidated service outlined in HB 2851
- Inform an implementation plan for deployment of that service
- Guide stakeholder communication, system adoption, data infrastructure, and continuous improvement

**Shape a shared vision for a more efficient and equitable nursing admissions ecosystem across Texas**

# Progress to Date

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# What We Have Accomplished So Far

## **November**

- Initiated research to identify technical, operational, financial, governance requirements for a centralized system
- Established NAC and held first meeting

## **December**

- Continued research into technical, operational, financial, governance requirements for a centralized system
- Planned and completed stakeholder feedback round 1 – six roundtable sessions, post-session survey
- Analyzed round 1 feedback
- Identified options to meet the goals of HB 2851 and support nursing workforce planning

## **January**

- Completed report on roundtable sessions
- Continued research into technical, operational, financial, governance requirements for a centralized system
- Planned and initiated stakeholder feedback round 2 - applicant survey and possible forum
- Developed feasibility criteria for evaluating options
- Planned second NAC meeting

# November NAC Meeting Survey (n=8)

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## **100% respondents reported:**

- They were active participants in discussions
- Had adequate time for discussion and input
- That meeting technology worked well

## **88% respondents reported:**

- That the meeting purpose was clear
- That the facilitation was very effective
- That the NAC was a good use of their time

## **75% respondents reported:**

- Having the materials they needed
- That the meeting date/time worked
- Discussions were productive/ very productive

## **Comments on NAC Process**

- Continue to clarify our goal/ objectives
- Materials in advance would be helpful

## **Project Priorities**

- Keep application costs affordable for students
- Engage registrars, admissions, student affairs, nursing deans/directors, and CAS partners
- Tailor CAS approach to differences in program requirements and capacity
- Make CAS data collection purposeful and actionable

Overall sentiment supported continued engagement and collaboration moving forward.

# Roundtable Sessions

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# Roundtable Purpose & Methods

## Purpose

- Inform the feasibility study for a statewide nursing centralized application service (CAS)
- Ground feasibility and implementation considerations in real-world experience of Texas nursing programs
- Surface opportunities, constraints, and design considerations from frontline users

## Approach

- 6 virtual roundtable sessions held December 11–15, 2025
- Facilitated by Sophos Strategies
- Sessions recorded and analyzed for thematic synthesis
- Post-roundtable survey used to capture additional feedback

# Roundtable Representation

40 participants representing 23 institutions statewide

Role	Examples of Titles Included	Number of Participants
<b>Deans and Senior Academic Leadership</b>	Dean, Dean of Nursing, Chief Nurse Administrator	11
<b>Associate/Assistant Deans</b>	Associate Dean, Assistant Dean (Academic Affairs, Admissions, Undergraduate, Student Success)	6
<b>Nursing Program Chairs</b>	Division Chair, Department Chair of Nursing	4
<b>Nursing Program &amp; Department Directors</b>	Director, Program Director, Director of BSN, Senior Director	12
<b>Enrollment, Admissions, &amp; Student Services Leadership</b>	Associate VP of Enrollment, Director of Admissions, Assistant Director of Admissions, Student Services Manager, Academic Advisor	7
<b>Total Participants</b>		<b>40</b>

## Public Universities & Health Science Centers (18)

- Texas A&M University - Texarkana
- Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
- University of Texas at Austin
- University of Texas Health Science Center - Houston
- University of Texas Health Science Center - San Antonio
- University of Texas - Rio Grande Valley
- University of Houston
- University of Houston - Downtown
- Sam Houston State University
- Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center - Lubbock
- Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center - El Paso
- University of North Texas Health Science Center

## Independent/Private Universities (9)

- Abilene Christian University
- Texas Christian University
- Howard Payne University
- Concordia University Texas
- Southwestern Adventist University
- Wayland Baptist University

## Community & Technical Colleges (6)

- Weatherford College
- San Jacinto College
- Trinity Valley Community College
- Western Technical College - El Paso
- Collin College

# CAS Perceived Benefits & Opportunities

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- Improve access to accurate, actionable data (6)
- Expand applicant awareness of available programs to address unfilled seats (6)
- Help applicants make informed decisions (4)
- Reduce administrative burden for institutions (4)
- Improve transcript management (4)
- Assist with applicant review and ranking (4)
- Provide support to applicants during the admissions process (3)



*“I think that the NCAS system is 100 times better than the homegrown systems. I can say that from experience, but there are tweaks that I think we have the opportunity to do now, especially if we're building off of the national [NursingCAS]. So, we take the current NCAS and we tailor it for Texas. And, I think that those quality metrics is one of those things that would stand out as a state to be able to say, hey, not only are we increasing the accessibility and making this more user-friendly, but now we're increasing the transparency across our systems and our schools and working collectively to be able to manage the nursing shortage.”*

**-Roundtable Participant**

# CAS Perceived Challenges & Concerns

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- Reduce institutional admissions flexibility (6)
- Result in multiple application systems for one program (6)
- Increase applicant burden (5) and decrease support available (3)
- Too complex due to variation in admissions criteria and processes (5)
- Increase costs for institutions and applicants (4)
- Reduce or eliminate institutions' return on investment for own systems (4)
- Increase competition among institutions (4)
- Present options that appear accessible, but are not feasible (3)
- Cause application delays (3)
- Complicate the verification process (2)



*“As a matter of fact, we... at one point, did use Nursing CAS, and our applicant numbers dropped. Part of it was associated with cost. Especially if they were anywhere close to the university, they wanted to be able to come into the university, get someone to help them and make sure they understood it. We had some students who were kicked out... because they answered a question wrong. So, they wanted that hands-on, personal touch.”*

***-Roundtable Participant***

# Data-Related Themes

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## Data Needs

- Ability to distinguish:
  - Applications vs. unique applicants
  - Applicant vs. qualified applicants
- Visibility into:
  - Application status and progression
  - Unfilled seats
- Program- and system-level metrics:
  - Graduation rates
  - NCLEX pass rates
  - Costs and outcomes

## Data Governance Concerns

- Who can access applicant data
- How data will be used
- Safeguards against inappropriate recruiting or “poaching”

# Implementation & Timeline Considerations

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## **Strong Consensus**

- Implementation must be phased and deliberate
- Multi-year timelines are realistic and necessary

## **Commonly Referenced Timeline**

- Year 1: Planning and design
- Year 2: Pilots and refinement
- Year 3: Broader deployment

## **Implementation Needs**

- Early IT and security review
- Pilot programs selected by readiness
- Staff training and change management focus
- Time for applicant and institutional awareness

# Governance & Oversight Expectations

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- Clear governance and oversight structures are essential, particularly around data access, decision-making authority, and ongoing system stewardship
- Advisory governance model with representation from diverse institution types, users, regions, etc. to inform design and ongoing changes
- Include those who deeply understand existing institutional systems in oversight roles to ensure continuity, informed decision-making, and alignment with current admissions operations

# Questions Raised

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- Do we have a choice, or is this happening regardless?
- Is this going to cost us money? Cost students money?
- Is this an immediate requirement for nursing programs, or are we looking for it to be in the future?
- Will this require uniformity across all programs?
- How will different types of programs be included or impacted?
- How are we defining filled and unfilled seats?
- What is the benefit of this to programs that do not have unfilled seats?
- Who will have access to data, and what will they do with it?
- Will students lose individualized, local support?

# How Roundtable Input Informs Next Steps

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- Inform feasibility criteria across technical, operational, stakeholder, governance, and financial domains
- Shape design guardrails for any centralized service
- Guide recommendations on:
  - Phasing
  - Governance
  - Data standards
  - Stakeholder engagement strategies

# Roundtable General Takeaways

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# **Feasibility Framework and Draft Criteria**

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# Domains for Analysis



**Technical Feasibility** – System compatibility and data architecture issues, scalability, change management.



**Operational Feasibility** – Workflow alignment, staffing/training needs, complexity, need for manual workload or workarounds.



**Stakeholder Feasibility** – Perceptions and concerns of nursing programs, applicants.



**Governance Feasibility** – Statutory authority, data ownership, decisionmaking and oversight.

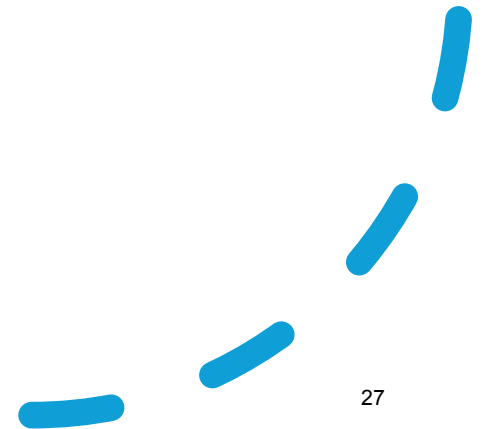


**Financial Feasibility** – System implementation and operating costs, financial impact to applicants, predictability and sustainability of costs over time

# Approach to Developing Feasibility Criteria

**Stakeholder domain:** Key themes from November NAC meeting and roundtable sessions.

**Other domains:** Findings from research into technical, operational, financial, governance requirements plus relevant themes from stakeholder feedback.



# Technical Criteria

- Ability to identify unique applicants and capacity-constrained denials
- Ability to capture, update, and synchronize open seat status across institutions in a timely and reliable manner.
- Enables bi-directional data exchange with institutions' application platforms and related systems
- Provides role-based access to functions, data, and reporting (applicant, Nursing Program, evaluator, etc.)
- Supports efficient operations and application volumes via scalable architecture
- Ability to support configurable workflows, data fields, and rules without requiring institution-specific custom development.
- Has auditable change management capabilities
- Can be implemented within realistic timeframes using identified available resources and technologies
- Maximizes TXHES control over system architecture, data models, and future enhancements
- Ability to incorporate varied admissions criteria, prerequisites, and verification requirements
- Ability to meet all applicable federal and state data privacy, security, and compliance requirements.

# Operational Criteria

- Ability to operate across varied admissions models, timelines, and program pathways (BSN, ABSN, RN-to-BSN, ADN) while minimizing impact on institutional cycles.
- Ability to support program-specific admissions requirements and workflows with minimal need for workarounds
- Delivers a common applicant-facing process that also accommodates individual program variation and branding
- Minimizes workflow complexity and the need for manual workload for admissions staff, registrars, and committees
- Offers support for training, onboarding, and user assistance
- Can be implemented within a reasonable timeframe and in phases based on institution readiness and program type
- Minimizes complexity in workflows requiring supplemental student application systems or parallel systems.
- Minimizes the effort required to reconcile CAS-verified data with institutional prerequisite, eligibility, and admissions requirements

# Stakeholder Criteria

- Delivers clear value to community colleges, universities, private institutions, and programs with varying demand
- Preserves institutional autonomy over admissions criteria and decision-making
- Delivers transparency to applicants on:
  - Seat availability
  - Costs (total cost of attendance, not just tuition)
  - Graduation and NCLEX pass rates
- Does not increase applicant burden, particularly for first-generation and high-need students
- Maintains access to individualized navigation and advising support
- Engages stakeholders in all implementation and operational phases through small groups, pilots, and ongoing feedback loops

# Governance Criteria

- TXHES has clear and sufficient authority under existing statutes and regulations to implement and govern the option without requiring legislative or regulatory changes.
- Participating institutions can implement and participate in governance of the option within existing legal, accreditation, and institutional governance constraints.
- Clear, enforceable data ownership, access, privacy, and confidentiality frameworks can be established that meet legal, institutional, and stakeholder expectations.
- The option can be governed through a shared or advisory model that is viable across institution types, systems, and regions.
- Governance structures can meaningfully incorporate operational expertise (e.g., admissions and registrar perspectives) in decision-making.
- Governance processes can clearly define decision rights, change control mechanisms, and dispute resolution approaches to manage system evolution and conflicting institutional priorities.
- Governance processes can support transparent decision-making, accountability, and clear communication regarding system selection configuration, data use, and future enhancements.

# Financial Criteria

- Maximizes affordability of initial development, integration, and launch costs
- Minimizes extent to which costs change as the system scales (ie, from pilot to all BSN programs to broader program inclusion)
- Has predictable, sustainable cost structure for ongoing operating, maintenance, support, and enhancements
- Minimizes the impact of fees and related costs on applicants, particularly first-generation and financially-constrained students
- Extent to which costs are equitably distributed and aligned with ability to pay and commensurate with anticipated benefits (e.g., small vs. large institutions)
- Minimizes net change in institutional administrative costs, accounting for both efficiencies and new workload
- Minimizes exposure to pricing escalation, transaction-based fees, and long-term vendor lock-in
- Extent to which the cost structure reasonably supports HB 2851 goals (e.g., identifying unmet demand, improving seat utilization)

# Feasibility Framework Thoughts, Questions?

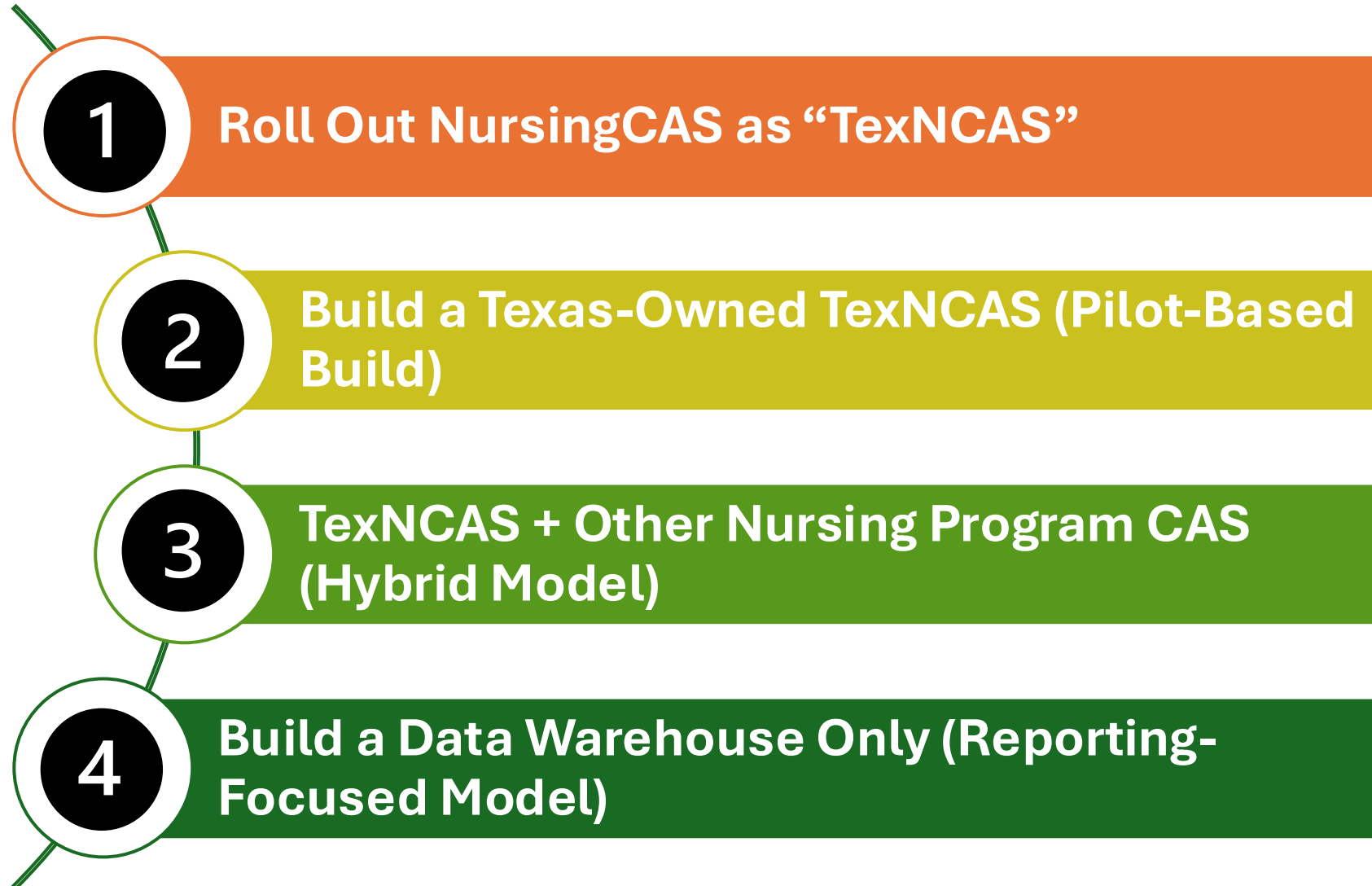
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# Centralized Application System Options

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# Centralized Application System Options



# Approach to Identifying Options

Reviewed information about current systems and operations in the context of HB 2851 and Task Force Recommendation 8

- Background information on Texas nursing programs
- Current TMDSAS functions and operations
- Input from IT subject matter experts and staff at TXHES, institutions (e.g., UNT, UTMB, UT Houston Health Sciences, University of Houston)
- Current NursingCAS system and operations
- Stakeholder feedback from first NAC meeting and the 6 roundtable sessions, as well as survey data from April and October 2025.

# Option 1

## Roll Out NursingCAS as “TexNCAS”

### Model Overview

- Uses **Liaison’s NursingCAS**, configured specifically for Texas as the statewide centralized application system, while still enabling a nationwide view within NursingCAS.

### Institutional Participation

- Applicants apply through NursingCAS
- Programs transition common admissions workflows into the centralized system
- Integration with institutions' student information system or customer relationship management system (e.g. Slate, PeopleSoft) as needed.

# Option 1

## Roll Out NursingCAS as “TexNCAS”

### Core System Elements

- Single, scalable centralized application platform for all Texas nursing programs
- Common application processing managed through NursingCAS
- Texas-specific configuration wherever possible for:
  - Residency indicators
  - Coursework verification fields
  - State-required data elements
  - Application processing workflows
  - Data reporting on unique number of applicants and open seat capacity
- Dashboards for:
  - State-level reporting
  - TXHES administration
  - Nursing programs

## Option 2

### Build a Texas- Owned TexNCAS (Pilot-Based Build)

#### Model Overview

- Development of a new, Texas-owned centralized application system
- System designed/built for Texas nursing programs
- Initial implementation through a small group/ pilot institutions

#### Institutional Participation

- Nursing programs receive applications through TexNCAS
- Participating programs configure program-specific requirements within TexNCAS
- Programs use TexNCAS reviewer tools to support application review
- Institutions connect TexNCAS to internal systems via application programming interfaces (APIs) (where applicable)
- Additional nursing programs onboard in later phases as the system expands

## Option 2

### Build a Texas- Owned TexNCAS (Pilot-Based Build)

#### Core System Elements

- Applicant, advisor, and evaluators portals
- Nursing program reviewer portal
- TXHES administrative portal
- Identity management for security/confidentiality as well as unique applicant identification
- APIs and/or batch file capabilities to connect with institutional systems (e.g., Slate)
- Reporting portal (initially limited in Phase 1)
- Workflow to support application processing

# Option 3

## TexNCAS + Other Nursing Program CAS (Hybrid Model)

### Model Overview

- Combines TexNCAS with continued use of existing nursing program application systems
- Participation in TexNCAS application system is optional for nursing programs
- Statewide reporting supported through data submission from all programs

### Institutional Participation

- Programs choose whether to use TexNCAS for applications
- Programs not using TexNCAS submit:
  - Unique applicant-level data
  - Open seat capacity data

# Option 3

## TexNCAS + Other Nursing Program CAS (Hybrid Model)

### Core System Elements

- TexNCAS application system for participating programs
- Data submission mechanisms for non-TexNCAS programs to TexNCAS reporting database:
  - Batch flat file uploads
  - API-based data feeds
  - For both of above: Applicants matched through multiple identifiers
- Applicant identity matching process across systems
- Dashboards for:
  - State reporting
  - TXHES
  - Nursing programs

# Option 4

## Build a Data Warehouse Only (Reporting-Focused Model)

### Model Overview

- No centralized application system is built
- Nursing programs continue using their existing application systems
- Focus is on statewide **data aggregation and reporting**

### Institutional Participation

- Nursing programs submit applicant and seat data
- No change to institutional application or admissions workflows
- Data supports state-level analysis and reporting requirements

# Option 4

## Build a Data Warehouse Only (Reporting-Focused Model)

### Core System Elements

- TXHES-managed reporting data warehouse
- Two data submission methods for nursing programs
  - Batch flat-file uploads
  - Real-time API submissions
  - For both of above: Applicants matched through multiple identifiers
- Statewide dashboards for:
  - Applicant counts
  - Open seat capacity
  - Workforce-related reporting



# Discussion

- General takeaways?
- What is clear/unclear?
- Additional considerations as we move forward?

# Thank You!

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YJ3VZBW>



## Next Steps

- Findings from round 2 of stakeholder feedback
- Finalize feasibility framework
- Finalize options to be evaluated
- Evaluate feasibility
- Develop implementation plan

**Email any feedback on feasibility criteria to [hopemorrison@gmail.com](mailto:hopemorrison@gmail.com) by end of day Friday 1/30**

## Check NAC Sharepoint for:

- Slides, roundtable report, student flyer, meeting notes

## Next Meeting Date and Time

- February 10, 2:00-4:00pm central