Centralized Application Service for Texas Nursing Schools

Feasibility Findings and Implementation Roadmap

Prepared for Texas Health Education Service

By Sophos Strategies LLC

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Contents

Appendices

Attachments

Executive Summary

House Bill 2851 directed Texas Health Education Service (TXHES) to evaluate incorporation of nursing education programs into a centralized application service. The legislation builds upon Recommendation 8 of the Governor's Task Force on Healthcare Workforce Shortages' October 2024 report, which identified fragmented admissions pathways, uneven information for applicants, and limited statewide visibility into the nursing education pipeline as barriers to maximizing Texas' existing training capacity.

Together, the statute and the Task Force recommendation call for a model that can improve transparency for students while strengthening the State's ability to understand demand, capacity, and outcomes, without transferring admissions authority away from institutions.

To fulfill this charge, TXHES engaged Sophos Strategies LLC to provide independent analytic support, stakeholder facilitation, and comparative evaluation of potential approaches. The project combined a feasibility study with development of an implementation plan designed to translate findings into a practical path forward.

Context: Why Change Is Needed

Today, nursing program admissions in Texas occur through a largely decentralized landscape. Application processes, timelines, and documentation requirements vary across institutions. While some programs participate in national or discipline-specific centralized application services, participation is uneven.

As a result:

- Applicants must navigate multiple systems and duplicative requirements.
- Policymakers lack real-time, comparable insight into where seats are available, where demand is concentrated, and how applicant flows translate into enrollment.

Improving visibility into nursing education capacity and reducing unnecessary complexity for students are central motivations for considering a centralized application service.

Options Evaluated

The feasibility study considered four options for meeting the objectives of HB 2851 and Recommendation 8:

- **Option 1** – Implementation of a Texas-configured version of a technology owned by the largest national CAS vendor, Liaison, branded as "TexNCAS"
- **Option 2** – Development of a TXHES-built, TXHES-operated TexNCAS
- **Option 3** – A hybrid approach combining a state-built platform with institutional opt-out
  Option 4 – A data warehouse and reporting model without a common application portal

Each option was assessed across five domains derived from the Task Force framework: governance, stakeholder, technical, operational, and financial feasibility.

What the Feasibility Analysis Found

Multiple pathways could theoretically advance various elements of the legislative and policy directive. However, risk and practicality are not evenly distributed across options. Options that preserve current institutional practice tend to produce limited improvement in the relevant policy objectives, particularly improved applicant experience. Options that maximize direct state ownership tend to concentrate development, operational, and financial risks within TXHES and significantly slow the timeline for implementation.

Across domains, one model consistently scored at or near the top across feasibility domains without creating critical barriers.

Recommended Approach

Option 1, a Texas version of Liaison's established CAS platform, represents the strongest cross-domain performer. It combines:

- Proven, already-operating technology
- Observable workflows already functioning in diverse environments
- The earliest readiness for launch
- Preservation of institutional admissions authority
- Meaningful opportunity to improve applicant transparency and usability
- Avoidance of large upfront development appropriations
- The ability for TXHES to direct policy, participation expectations, and configuration through governance and contract mechanisms.

No statewide shared service is risk-free. The feasibility findings indicate, however, that the risks associated with Option 1 are familiar and manageable within existing authority.

Implementation Summary

Building on these findings, the implementation framework establishes a measured, risk-managed pathway for adoption. Key features include:

- **TXHES-led Governance and Vendor Oversight.** The vendor supplies and operates the technical platform, while TXHES maintains authority over participation expectations, policy direction, fiscal stewardship, and system sustainability.
- **Structured Stakeholder Participation.** An advisory group and topic-focused workgroups provide continuing input on design choices, sequencing, usability, and improvement priorities, while final decisions remain with TXHES.
- **Phased Adoption Tied to Readiness.** Programs initiate CAS participation in phases based on defined criteria. This allows validation of capabilities and readiness prior to onboarding to ensure program success.
- **Robust Training and Stabilization Support.** Institutions receive preparation resources before launch, heightened assistance during initial cycles, and ongoing access to help services thereafter.
- **Continuous Improvement Pathways.** Formal intake, review, and prioritization processes enable adaptation over time while preserving predictability and fiscal discipline.
- **Affordability and Financial Sustainability.** Partnering with an experienced vendor to customize its existing technology to Texas needs allows TXHES to avoid significant cost associated with developing its own CAS. Early years may require management of temporary funding gaps typical of shared services. Defined oversight mechanisms allow TXHES to evaluate performance and adjust pacing or commitments over time as needed.

The Path Forward

Taken together, the feasibility findings and the implementation plan provide Texas with a practical bridge from analysis to execution. The approach is deliberate, transparent, and designed to mature over time while improving the applicant experience, enhancing state insight into the nursing education pipeline, and maximizing utilization of nursing education capacity.

Organization of Supporting Materials

This report serves as the primary volume summarizing the work conducted to fulfill the HB 2851 directive, including the study approach, principal findings, and recommended path forward. Several attachments and two companion documents provide additional detail.

Appendices A through F provide detail on the advisory committee process and discussions.

Attachment 1, the Feasibility Study, presents the analytic framework used to evaluate potential approaches. It includes descriptions of the options assessed, domain-specific analyses, cross-domain synthesis, and the overall feasibility determination. Appendices to the Feasibility Study contain the detailed ratings and justifications by domain, stakeholder engagement materials that informed the evaluation, and advisory committee feedback on the results.

Attachment 2, the Implementation Plan, translates the feasibility determination into a structured pathway for execution. It defines governance mechanisms, operational and technical responsibilities, financial considerations, phasing, and change management activities necessary to move from recommendation to implementation. Advisory committee feedback on the implementation plan is provided in an appendix to that document.

1 Background

1.1 Legislative and Policy Context

House Bill 2851 (89th Texas Legislative Session) directed Texas Health Education Service (TXHES) to evaluate incorporation of nursing education programs into a centralized application service. The legislation builds on the work of the Governor's Task Force on Healthcare Workforce Shortages, which identified fragmented admissions pathways, limited statewide visibility into qualified applicants, and uneven information for students as barriers to maximizing Texas's existing nursing education capacity.

1.1.1 House Bill 2851

As enacted by the 89th Texas Legislature in 2025, House Bill 2851 amends the Texas Education Code by adding Section 51.765, titled *Nursing School Application Consolidation*. Under this new provision, any service or organization that provides consolidated application services for medical or dental school applications (including the Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service operated through The University of Texas System) must include applications for nursing schools in this state.

To implement that requirement, the bill directs Texas Health Education Service (TXHES) to establish an advisory board composed of representatives of professional nursing programs in Texas and individuals with expertise in professional nursing program applications. That advisory board is charged to develop recommendations for including nursing school applications in the consolidated application service and an implementation plan for those recommendations. HB 2851's requirement becomes effective beginning with applications for admission to a nursing school for the fall 2027 semester.

The feasibility assessment described in this report was conducted within that statutory structure, with the advisory committee providing input on priorities, risks, and practical considerations.

1.1.2 Governor's Task Force Recommendation 8

As part of its October 1, 2024 report to the Governor and the Legislature, the Governor's Task Force on Healthcare Workforce Shortages recommended actions to modernize the education and training pipeline for critical health professions in Texas. Among the Task Force's recommendations, Recommendation 8 called for streamlining the nursing school admissions process by including nursing programs in the consolidated application service currently used by medical and dental schools.

This recommendation reflected the Task Force's finding that a more coordinated statewide application process could reduce barriers for prospective nursing students and improve visibility into demand for nursing education programs. The Task Force emphasized that stronger information architecture is foundational to workforce planning and to more efficient use of training resources. The feasibility study and resulting implementation direction are intended to translate that recommendation into an actionable pathway.

1.1.3 TXHES and the Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service

TXHES serves as the state entity positioned to convene institutions, establish participation expectations where authorized, and oversee shared services that support health professions education. Through its administration of the Texas Medical and Dental Schools Application Service (TMDSAS), TXHES already operates a centralized model for other health disciplines. That experience provides an operational and governance reference point for understanding how statewide application infrastructure can function while institutions retain control over admissions decisions.

1.2 Current State of Nursing Program Admissions in Texas

1.2.1 Decentralized Admissions Landscape

Nursing program admissions in Texas are highly decentralized. Institutions establish their own application timelines, prerequisite structures, documentation requirements, and evaluation processes. While this autonomy allows programs to tailor admissions to their own accreditation requirements, institutional mission, and local workforce needs, it also means applicants must navigate different procedures, terminology, and submission expectations across programs.

Because there is no single entry point, applicants frequently manage multiple portals, duplicate document uploads, and separate communication channels as they pursue admission to more than one program.

1.2.2 Use of Centralized Application Services Today

Some Texas nursing programs participate in centralized application platforms, while others rely entirely on institution-specific systems or combinations of local and third-party tools. Adoption patterns vary by institution type, historical practice, and operational preference.

As a result, centralized infrastructure exists in parts of the market but does not function at a statewide scale. Applicants may encounter a centralized experience for one program and a fully local process for another, limiting the potential for uniform visibility or coordinated management of demand.

1.2.3 Difficulty Assessing Unmet Demand and Open Seats

Under the current structure, most nursing program systems count applications rather than individual applicants. A single applicant applying to multiple programs appears multiple times in statewide tallies. At the same time, information about seat availability typically resides within institutions and changes throughout the admissions cycle as offers are extended and declined.

This combination makes it challenging to determine:

- How many unique individuals are seeking entry into nursing education
- Where and how many qualified applicants are unable to secure placement due to program capacity
- Whether capacity exists elsewhere in the system that might be utilized by qualified applicants denied admission due to program capacity.

Without consistent identity resolution and timely visibility into available seats, opportunities to redirect applicants and maximize utilization of training resources are limited.

1.2.4 Administrative Burden to Applicants

Under the current nursing school application environment, applicants must navigate multiple application environments, which can be time-consuming and confusing. Repeated entry of biographical and academic information, varied prerequisite interpretations, different deadlines, and inconsistent presentation of program expectations create friction in the pathway to enrollment.

For applicants balancing employment, family responsibilities, or geographic constraints, these complexities can influence where they apply or whether they continue pursuing admission at all.

1.2.5 Transparency and Comparability of Program Outcomes

In addition to variation in application procedures, prospective students face challenges in obtaining clear and comparable information about program quality and outcomes. Many institutions make data available regarding measures such as cohort size, graduation or completion rates, licensure examination performance, and estimated cost of attendance. However, the manner in which these data are defined, calculated, updated, and presented differs across schools. As a result, applicants attempting to evaluate options may struggle to determine whether programs are being compared on equivalent terms. Differences in reporting periods, methodologies, or levels of detail can make it difficult to understand relative performance or to assess the likelihood of progression and success.

From a statewide perspective, inconsistent availability and structure of program outcome information also limit the ability to aggregate data to support workforce planning, identify capacity constraints, or align prospective students with programs that match their goals and preparation.

1.3 Objectives and Scope of Feasibility Study and Implementation Plan

The purpose of this project was to assist TXHES in determining whether, and under what conditions, a centralized nursing application service could be implemented consistent with legislative direction and Recommendation 8 of the Governor’s Task Force.

The feasibility study evaluated four alternative models across governance, stakeholder, technical, operational, and financial domains. The objective was to identify the tradeoffs and risks associated with each model and determine which provides the most practical and sustainable path toward a centralized application system that meets legislative and state policy priorities.

The study results establish the analytical foundation necessary for development of an implementation strategy that can be refined through subsequent planning, procurement, and stakeholder collaboration.

The implementation planning component builds on the feasibility findings by outlining major workstreams, sequencing considerations, and areas requiring continued policy development or institutional engagement.

2 Methodology

2.1 Data Sources

The feasibility study drew upon multiple categories of information to ensure that findings reflect legal requirements, operational realities, stakeholder perspectives, and market experience associated with centralized application services.

Sources included Texas statutes and policies governing the authority of TXHES and participating institutions related to nursing school applications, including applicable provisions affecting admissions practices, data governance, privacy, procurement, and program oversight. Sources also included accreditation requirements for nursing schools and stakeholder input related to institutional admissions autonomy. The study considered how these requirements collectively define the environment within which a statewide service must operate.

The study incorporated existing TXHES program structures and operational experience, including processes associated with TMDSAS, current data collection activities, and prior implementations of shared services within Texas higher education.

Stakeholder input formed a central evidence base. Information was gathered through advisory committee meetings, roundtable discussions, an institutional survey, student engagement activities, and targeted consultations with legislative and policy representatives. These inputs provided direct insight into readiness conditions, perceived risks, and implementation priorities.

To understand technical and financial implications, the study team reviewed TMDSAS information; results of the 2024 Texas Department of State Health Services' Nursing Education Program Information Survey; vendor materials; and implementation models used in other markets. Discussions with TXHES staff and external partners further informed judgments regarding integration requirements, support models, and sequencing considerations.

Together, these sources allowed the study to evaluate not only whether an option is theoretically possible, but whether it can function responsibly within Texas's institutional, fiscal, and policy landscape.

2.2 Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement was a foundational element of the project and was designed to ensure that feasibility findings and implementation plan reflect operational realities across Texas nursing education while remaining aligned with legislative direction.

2.2.1 Advisory Committee

Consistent with HB 2851, TXHES established an advisory committee composed of representatives of nursing programs and other stakeholders with expertise in admissions, institutional operations, and applicant experience. Committee participation is shown in the table below.

Table 2.2.1-A Nursing Advisory Committee Participants

Name	Institution	Role
Dr. Diane Santa Maria	School of Nursing, The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston	Dean
Dr. Holly Jeffreys, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, PMHNP-BC, CRHCP	College of Nursing and Health Sciences West Texas A&M University	Distinguished University Ware Professor and Dean
Dr. Ruth Eby	Texas Lutheran University	Director of Nursing
Dr. Gary Sayed	College of Health Professions, St. David's School of Nursing at Texas State University	Dean
Dr. Jene' Hurlbut, Ph.D., RN, CNE	Texas Tech Health El Paso, Gayle Greve Hunt School of Nursing	Associate Dean, Interim Dean
Dr. Eun Ok Im, PhD, MPH, RN, CNS, FAAN	The University of Texas at Austin College of Nursing	Dean, Laura Lee Blanton Chair & Maureen Healy Decherd '73 Distinguished Professor
Dr. Leann Horsley, PhD, MBA, RN, CHSE, CNE	Texas A&M University College of Nursing	Dean and Professor
Dr. Linda Plank, PhD, RN, NEA-BC	School of Nursing, Baylor Louise Herrington School of Nursing	Dean

Name	Institution	Role
Dr. Holly Wei, PhD, MBA, CPN, NEA-BC, FAAN	Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center	Dean and Professor
Dr. Jerry S Findley	Health Sciences & Nursing Tarrant County College Nursing Program	Dean
Dr. Cindy Weston, DNP, APRN, FNP-BC, FNAP, FAANP, FAAN	The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth	Dean and Professor
Dr. Kathryn Tart, EdD, MSN, RN, FNAP	University of Houston Andy and Barbara Gessner School of Nursing	Dean and Professor
Kristen Starnes-Ott, PhD, BS, CRNA, FAANA, FNAP	UTMB School of Nursing	Dean, ad interim Vice Dean Academic Affairs and Professor
Dr. Stephanie L. Woods, PhD, RN	College of Nursing, Texas Woman's University	Dean
Dr. Kandice Bledsaw, PhD, RN	University of Texas Medical Branch School of Nursing	Chief Nursing Information Officer
Tony Murry	The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston	Associate Vice President, IT Infrastructure
Caroline Hunter	The University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth	Director of Technology & Systems
Jack Frazee, J.D.	Texas Nurses Association	Director of Government Affairs and General Counsel
Dr. Maja Djukic, PhD, RN, FAAN	The University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston	Professor Cizik School of Nursing
Elizabeth Mayer, M.P.A.	TX Higher Education Coordinating Board	Assistant Commissioner of Academic and Health Affairs
Dara M. Newton, M.Ed.	The University of Texas Rio Grande Valley	Senior Associate Vice President for Outreach & Access
Celestina Martinez	University of the Incarnate Word	President of Texas Nursing Students' Association
Dr. Joel Robles	Texas Health Education Service	Executive Consultant

The advisory committee provided input on evaluation priorities, institutional readiness considerations, sequencing concepts, and areas of potential risk. Participants provided feedback on draft materials, highlighted practical implementation challenges, and identified opportunities to improve clarity and fairness for applicants and institutions. The project team met with the committee on the following dates to obtain direction and feedback on progress.

Table 2.2.1-B: Nursing Advisory Committee Meetings and Key Agenda Topics

Meeting Date	Key Agenda Topics and Discussion Highlights
November 18, 2025	• Purpose, role, and composition of committee • Background: HB 2851, Task Force Recommendation 8, projected nursing workforce shortage, unfilled seat data, nursing program survey findings • Overview of approach to feasibility study and implementation plan • Plan for stakeholder roundtable sessions **Discussion Highlights.** The committee identified key priorities and indicators of success, such as being able to distinguish unique applicants from duplicate applications, maintain affordability, preserve institutional autonomy, and understand

	system integration implications. Participants also identified essential stakeholder groups for engagement, including registrars, admissions staff, IT leaders, and students.
January 20, 2026	• Findings from six statewide roundtables and related surveys • Feasibility framework and draft criteria • Centralized application system options **Discussion Highlights.** Participants weighed potential benefits of a centralized service, such as improved transparency and statewide data visibility, against concerns about cost, applicant burden, and institutional flexibility. They emphasized the importance of clear definitions of "qualified applicants not admitted," strong data governance protections, and phased implementation based on readiness. *The committee was provided an opportunity to provide written feedback after the meeting on the feasibility domains and criteria and the four CAS options.*
February 10, 2026	• Student and community college survey results • Feasibility ratings by option and cross-domain feasibility findings. • Features and benefits of the highest-feasibility option • Implementation plan highlights **Discussion Highlights**. Participants discussed phased onboarding, readiness assessments, governance clarity, vendor accountability, and continuous improvement strategies. *The committee was provided an opportunity to provide written feedback after the meeting on feasibility ratings and the draft implementation plan.*

Consistent with HB 2851, the NAC was provided the opportunity to review and provide recommendations on the feasibility domains and review criteria, feasibility study results, and the draft implementation plan. Feedback received through this process was compiled into thematic summaries that are included as attachments to the feasibility study and the implementation plan. These summaries describe areas of alignment, questions raised, and considerations identified by participants. This approach ensures that NAC perspectives are documented transparently while allowing TXHES to fulfill its responsibility to advance a coherent, actionable pathway consistent with legislative direction.

TXHES distributed a brief evaluation survey following each of the three NAC meetings to assess clarity, engagement, facilitation effectiveness, and overall value of meetings. Survey responses reflect feedback from all three meetings (13 total respondents across all meetings).

Table 2.2.1-C: Nursing Advisory Committee Responses to Meeting Effectiveness Survey

%	Responses
77	Indicated they were active participants in discussion
77	Described the meetings as very productive or productive
100	Indicated that the meeting technology worked well
92	Reported that the purpose of the meeting was clear

92	Indicated that the advisory committee meetings were a good use of their time
100	Described facilitation as very effective or effective
77	Reported that they had the materials needed to participate
85	Indicated that the meeting date and time worked well
100	Reported that there was adequate time for discussion and input

Open-ended responses across meetings reflected NAC appreciation for collaborative dialogue, transparency in presenting data and options, and the opportunity to shape feasibility criteria and implementation planning. Respondents also encouraged continued clarity around objectives, definitions, and timelines, emphasized affordability considerations for students, and supported ongoing stakeholder engagement as implementation planning advances.

2.2.2 Other Stakeholder Input

To supplement advisory committee discussions, the project incorporated additional engagement activities intended to capture a wide range of perspectives.

Table 2.2.2 Stakeholder Engagement Activities

Stakeholder Roundtable Sessions	Facilitated sessions were conducted with institutional representatives and operational leaders to explore process impacts, integration considerations, and transition risks. A summary of themes is provided in *Attachment 1, Appendix B. Feasibility of a Centralized Application Service for Texas Nursing Schools: Feedback from Stakeholders*.
Student Engagement	Applicant perspectives were gathered through a statewide survey and small-group discussions. Participants described navigation challenges, information gaps, and priorities for system usability. Detailed findings are included in *Attachment 1, Appendix C. Texas Nursing Program Application Experience Survey Report.*
Nursing Program Survey	A structured survey collected information on the current admissions environment and perceived barriers to participation. While intended as a survey of community college programs, responses were received from other institution types as well. Results, which informed the implementation plan, are summarized in *Attachment 1, Appendix D. Survey of Texas Nursing Programs.*
Legislative and State Policy Perspectives	Consultation with individuals familiar with development of Recommendation 8 and related legislative objectives to confirm that evaluation constructs remained aligned with state intent.

2.2.3 Advisory Committee and Stakeholder Voice in Implementation Plan

Advisory committee and other stakeholder input helped the study team understand where implementation complexity is likely to arise, which risks are most salient to institutions and applicants, and what conditions would improve probability of success. These perspectives were integrated into development of the implementation plan. For example, the implementation plan includes a crosswalk of stakeholder concerns with recommended mitigation strategies.

2.3 Applicant Voices

Amy Mannon

Amy entered the nursing application process with clarity and intention. Having already worked alongside nurses from her chosen community college in North Dallas, she had seen firsthand the quality of graduates the program produced. Reputation, affordability, and long-term planning ultimately shaped her decision. As an older student with five children in college and a husband pursuing his master's degree, cost was a central consideration, not just tuition, but uniforms, skill kits, books, and other hidden expenses. Amy deliberately chose a lower-cost pathway for her bridge program so she could invest more in a future master's degree aligned with her long-term goals.

Amy's life stage significantly influenced her geographic choices. While she briefly considered programs an hour or two away due to limited seats and competitive acceptance rates, staying local ultimately made the most sense. Her age, financial responsibility, and time urgency shaped her strategy, noting "I don't have ten extra years to wait."

Amy applied through a non-NursingCAS system and valued the highly personalized experience. Because she was already completing prerequisites at the institution, she had strong access to faculty and advisors. Instructors were accessible, enrollment staff were responsive, and the process felt relational rather than mechanical. That "handholding," as she described it, built Amy's trust and loyalty to the program.

When reflecting on centralized systems, Amy emphasized several priorities:

- Transparent total cost, including non-tuition expenses
- Clear acceptance rates and seat availability
- Standardized prerequisite requirements across Texas programs
- Clarity on program length and structures
- Retention of personal elements that speak to applicants' assets beyond grades, such as references and interviews

- A simple, streamlined process that does not require accessing numerous websites, emails, and platforms

Amy expressed concern that complex, multi-step digital systems can unintentionally disadvantage older or second-career applicants. She believes mentoring and word-of-mouth are so important and continue to shape how students choose programs.

Janae Miller

Janae approached the nursing application process with flexibility, but strong practical priorities. Timing was her primary driver. After experiencing waitlists years earlier, she was determined not to lose time again. Janae researched programs that offered multiple start dates per year and flexibility to transfer campuses, if needed. With her husband's job requiring potential moves between Austin and Houston, adaptability was essential.

Janae applied to two programs, one through NursingCAS and one through a direct institutional application, and experienced both systems side-by-side. While she appreciated NursingCAS's ability to apply to multiple schools simultaneously and track application progress in one place, the experience felt impersonal. Most communication came through automated system updates. She did not receive proactive outreach from the program itself.

In contrast, the non-NursingCAS school contacted Janae immediately after she completed an online intake form. An enrollment counselor guided her through transcript evaluations, Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS) requirements, and credit transfers. When one course did not initially transfer, staff invited Janae to submit a syllabus for review. The process included a campus visit and felt interactive, culturally aligned, and supportive. Because Janae was paying out-of-pocket for an accelerated BSN, she reports that this responsiveness and relationship-building played a decisive role in her final choice.

Janae identified several key data points she would want in a statewide centralized system:

- NCLEX pass rates
- Seat availability and cohort start frequency
- Acceptance rate transparency
- Prerequisite clarity and consistency across programs

- Realistic assessment of admission likelihood
- General grant and incentive information by school
- Program length and curriculum structure

She also recommended enhancements such as:

- Early-stage guidance for first-time applicants
- Timely access to real advisors, not just automated updates
- System-generated recommendations suggesting programs aligned with a student's transcript and interests

For Janae, responsiveness and timing were not minor details, they determined where she ultimately enrolled.

Celestina Martinez

Celestina's pathway was shaped by continuity and convenience. She completed her prerequisites at the same university where she ultimately enrolled in nursing school. Recently married and rooted in San Antonio, she prioritized staying close to home. The school's mission, reputation among local hospitals, and transferable scholarships reinforced her decision.

Celestina applied using NursingCAS, but only to one school. While she acknowledged the benefit of being able to apply to multiple institutions through a centralized system, that feature did not affect her personally. Her experience felt structured and transactional. She attended a one-time lecture explaining how to use the system and relied on her advisor when questions arose. Most communication occurred through automated updates, and she reports that she waited three to four months before receiving an admission response.

Celestina found transcript handling confusing, especially since she was already enrolled at the same university yet still had to request and upload her transcript into the centralized platform. She recalled peers with multiple transcripts encountering even greater difficulty.

Celestina highlighted several improvements she would value in a centralized model:

- Clear prerequisite requirements to avoid unexpected missing coursework
- Transparent total cost and scholarship information
- Program length comparisons, including number of semesters and summer requirements
- Acceptance rates and seat capacity
- Streamlined transcript processes
- More human connection within the system

Celestina's information-gathering occurred through internet searches, campus tours, nursing events, and word of mouth. Visiting campuses helped Celestina assess environment, facilities, and program culture, factors that influenced her comfort level and final decision. Celestina noted that life circumstances matter, had she been single or without geographic ties, she would have applied more broadly. For Celestina, proximity, stability, and mission alignment outweighed broader exploration.

Cross-Cutting Themes Across All Three Students

Across Amy, Janae, and Celestina's experiences, several shared themes emerged:

- Life circumstances strongly shape geographic and application decisions
- Cost transparency must extend beyond tuition
- Seat availability and acceptance rates influence application strategy
- Prerequisite inconsistency across schools creates frustration
- Non-NursingCAS systems felt more relational and responsive
- NursingCAS offered efficiency and multi-school access, but felt mechanical
- Students value both streamlined technology and human connection
- Word of mouth, tours, and reputation heavily influence program choice

2.4 Analytic Framework

The feasibility study applied a structured analytic framework to evaluate the relative practicality of alternative models for implementing a statewide nursing centralized application service. The framework builds on the approach developed by the Governor's Task Force. See *Attachment 1, Appendix B: Feasibility Analysis and Recommendations for a Texas Centralized Nursing School Application Service* for a full description of the analytic framework.

2.4.1 Feasibility Domains and Criteria

The framework used for analysis organizes feasibility into five domains representing the core conditions necessary for successful implementation: governance, stakeholder, technical, operational, and financial.

Within each domain, specific criteria translated broad policy objectives into observable tests of whether an option could function effectively in Texas's legal, institutional, and fiscal environment. Criteria were informed by statutory direction, stakeholder input, operational realities across nursing programs, and consultation with TXHES subject matter experts.

Draft criteria and rating structures were reviewed with the HB 2851 advisory committee and with individuals familiar with development of Recommendation 8 and related legislative intent. Feedback from these discussions resulted in refinement of several measures to strengthen clarity and alignment with state policy objectives.

2.4.2 Rating Scale and Scoring

Each option was evaluated against every criterion using a three-level scale of High, Medium, or Low feasibility. Ratings reflect the degree to which implementation can occur within existing authority, systems, and institutional practices, as well as the level of mitigation required. For purposes of cross-domain comparison, ratings were assigned numeric values (High = 3, Medium = 2, Low = 1) and aggregated within domains to identify patterns of relative strength and risk.

Numeric scoring is used to promote transparency and comparability. It is not intended to imply artificial precision or replace judgment about where risks concentrate and whether they can be effectively managed through implementation planning.

3 Options Evaluated

The study team evaluated four approaches for implementing a statewide centralized application service (CAS) for nursing programs. These options surfaced during initial research and through stakeholder input.

The options differ in terms of system ownership, responsibility for operations, needed investment, degree of application process standardization, and the pace and complexity of implementation. Each model is capable of advancing at least some subset of the legislative and state policy objectives driving this study. The feasibility analysis focused on identifying strengths, tradeoffs, and risks of each option. For more detail on each option, see *Attachment 1. Feasibility Analysis and Recommendations for a Texas Centralized Nursing School Application Service.*

3.1 Option 1: Liaison's CAS configured for Texas (TexNCAS)

Option 1 establishes a Texas-configured version of Liaison's centralized application service technology, branded for statewide use as TexNCAS. At system maturity, all nursing programs statewide participate.

Under this model, TXHES establishes participation expectations and defines and implements policy parameters, data standards, and configuration choices through a contract with the vendor. Institutions would use a common application infrastructure while maintaining control over admissions criteria, review processes, and final selection decisions. Both in- and out-of-state applicants would interact with a unified system that enables submission of materials to multiple participating Texas nursing programs through standardized workflows defined by TXHES through the vendor contract.

Table 3.1 Option 1 Overview

Dimension	Option 1: Vendor-Supported TexNCAS
System ownership	Technology owned by the vendor. TXHES controls policy, configuration, and oversight for the TexNCAS version through a contract with the vendor.
System operator	Vendor operates and maintains the platform in accordance with contract requirements and TXHES direction.
Role of TXHES	Establishes and leads governance structure, participation expectations, statewide policies. Defines configuration standards and provides system oversight through vendor contract.
Role of institutions	Establish admissions requirements, review applications, make selection decisions, and participate in TexNCAS governance input processes.
Applicant experience	Applicants create a single application profile for use across all Texas nursing programs to which they apply using standardized submission steps. TXHES can configure the CAS to present applicants with program-specific quality data (e.g., graduation rates, NCLEX pass rates) to support their enrollment decisions.
Statewide standardization	Core application data elements, workflow stages, and reporting structures are standardized across all programs.
How program-level variation is handled	Program-specific requirements, prerequisites, and evaluation processes are accommodated through configurable elements within the common platform. -specific requirements, prerequisites, and evaluation processes are accommodated through configurable elements within the common platform.
Existing technology vs new build	Built on an established, operational CAS platform adapted to Texas requirements.

Dimension	Option 1: Vendor-Supported TexNCAS
Data collection and reporting	The system collects and reports desired data across all programs.

3.2 Option 2: TXHES-Built CAS

Option 2 establishes TexNCAS as a Texas-built, Texas-operated centralized application service. This model represents the most direct structural alignment with the legislative direction and Task Force recommendation to include nursing programs within a consolidated application environment under TXHES ownership and control.

Under this model, TXHES would develop a new technology platform and assume responsibility for its ongoing operation, maintenance, enhancement, and support. At system maturity, all nursing programs statewide participate.

TXHES would establish participation expectations and directly define and implement policy parameters, data standards, and configuration choices. Institutions would use a common application infrastructure while maintaining control over admissions criteria, review processes, and final selection decisions. Both in- and out-of-state applicants would interact with a unified system that enables submission of materials to multiple participating Texas nursing programs through standardized workflows defined by TXHES.

Table 3.2 Option 2 Overview

Dimension	Option 2: TXHES-Built CAS
System ownership	Technology owned by the State of Texas.
System operator	TXHES or its designated technology partner operates and maintains the platform.
Role of TXHES	Establishes and leads governance structure, participation expectations, statewide policies. Directly defines and implements configuration standards and accomplishes system oversight through internal mechanism.
Role of institutions	Establish admissions requirements, review applications, make selection decisions, and participate in TexNCAS governance input processes.
Applicant experience	Applicants create a single application profile for use across all Texas nursing programs to which they apply using standardized submission steps. TXHES can directly configure the system to present applicants with program-specific quality data (e.g., graduation rates, NCLEX pass rates) to support their enrollment decisions.
Statewide standardization	Core application data elements, workflow stages, and reporting structures are standardized across all programs.
How program-level variation is handled	Program-specific requirements, prerequisites, and evaluation processes are accommodated through configurable elements within the state platform.
Existing technology vs new build	Requires development of a new CAS.
Data collection and reporting	The system collects and reports desired data across all programs.

3.3 Option 3: Hybrid Model (TXHES CAS with opt-out)

Option 3 establishes a framework that allows nursing programs to choose whether to participate in the TXHES-built CAS or to maintain their existing application pathways and instead deliver defined reporting on unique number of applicants, qualified applicants denied admission due to limited program capacity, and number of open seats. Under this model, TXHES would define participation expectations, application data standards, and transparency requirements only for nursing programs choosing to participate in the CAS. At system maturity, not all nursing programs statewide necessarily use the same application system but all provide data to TXHES (either via CAS participation or via standardized reporting) support visibility into the nursing education pipeline and maximization of capacity.

Institutions choosing the CAS operate under a common application infrastructure governed by TXHES, while those maintaining local processes are responsible only for transmitting required information to TXHES. Across both pathways, institutions would retain control over admissions criteria, review processes, and final selection decisions. Applicants encounter different application environments and availability of program quality data depending on the program to which they apply.

Table 3.3 Option 3 Overview

Dimension	Option 3: Hybrid Model
System ownership	TXHES-built CAS and a data warehouse owned by the State of Texas; some institutions retain their own application systems.
System operator	TXHES and institutions operate their respective systems within applicable rules.
Role of TXHES	Defines governance framework, participation expectations, data requirements, and oversight mechanism for TXHES CAS. Establishes and oversees data reporting standards and timeframes.
Role of institutions	Establish admissions requirements, review applications, make selection decisions, and either use the centralized system or maintain their own application pathway and report required data.
Applicant experience	Applicants may use different systems depending on where they apply and have access to standardized program-specific quality data only for those programs that participate in the CAS.
Statewide standardization	Application processes may differ by institution. Reporting standards and required data elements are standardized.
How program-level variation is handled	Configurable elements within the TXHES platform enable customization for program-specific requirements, prerequisites, and evaluation processes for participating programs. Non-participating institutions maintain their own application pathways.
Existing technology vs new build	Requires development of a new CAS as well as a data warehouse and dashboards for data collection from non-participating programs and aggregation with data from CAS participants.
Data collection and reporting	Data for participating programs is extracted automatically from the CAS and aggregated in a data warehouse with data reported by non-participating institutions.

3.4 Option 4: Data Warehouse and Reporting

Option 4 establishes a statewide data aggregation and reporting environment without implementing a centralized application service. Under this model, nursing programs would continue to use their existing application systems while providing standardized data to TXHES to support visibility into the nursing education pipeline and efforts to maximize capacity utilization. At system maturity, application processes remain institution-specific but all programs participate in reporting.

TXHES would establish participation expectations and define data standards, reporting formats, and submission timelines. Institutions would maintain control over admissions criteria, review processes, and final selection decisions and would be responsible for transmitting required information to TXHES. Applicants would continue to interact with individual institutional application environments rather than a unified statewide platform.

Table 3.4 Option 4 Overview

Dimension	Option 4: Data Warehouse
System ownership	Data warehouse and reporting infrastructure owned by the State of Texas. Institutional application systems remain locally owned or supported by a vendor of each institution's choice.
System operator	TXHES or its designated technology partner operates the data warehouse. Institutions operate their own application systems.
Role of TXHES	Establishes data reporting participation expectations, statewide data definitions, reporting standards, and oversight mechanisms.
Role of institutions	Establish admissions requirements, review applications, make selection decisions, and transmit required data to TXHES.
Applicant experience	Applicants use institution-specific application systems. Access to standardized program quality data would require development of an alternate solution.
Statewide standardization	Data definitions and reporting requirements are standardized. Application workflows vary by institution.
How program-level variation is handled	Institutions maintain their own processes. Variation exists across application environments.
Existing technology vs new build	Requires development of a statewide data warehouse, reporting interfaces, and submission mechanisms.
Data collection and reporting	Institutions submit required data to TXHES for aggregation and statewide reporting.

4. Feasibility Study Results and Recommendation

This section summarizes the results of the detailed feasibility study report provided in *Attachment 1*.

Across domains, the analysis demonstrates that feasibility is not evenly distributed across the four options considered. While every option has strengths, tradeoffs, and risks, Option 1 emerged as the highest-feasibility option overall.

4.1 Governance Feasibility Results

Option 2 received the highest score in the domain, followed closely by Option 1. Option 4 scored somewhat below Option 1, with Option 3 scoring the lowest.

Table 4.1 Governance Feasibility Results

Option	1 TexNCAS	2 TXHES CAS	3 Hybrid	4 Data
Domain Score	19	21	11	14

Option 2 received the highest score because authority, ownership, and accountability sit fully within TXHES. Decision rights and oversight structures are direct and internally managed.

Option 1 scored nearly as high. Through contractual mechanisms, TXHES can set participation expectations, policy direction, data standards, and performance requirements. Governance remains strong, but certain system priorities move through a vendor partnership structure rather than unilateral state action.

Option 3 divides the governance landscape between CAS participants and non-participants, creating complexity and weakening TXHES ability to ensure statewide achievement of legislative and state policy objectives. **Option 4** narrows governance to reporting compliance and does not materially influence how admissions activity itself occurs.

4.2 Stakeholder Feasibility Results

Options 1 and 2 tied for the highest stakeholder feasibility score, but for different reasons. Options 3 and 4 received the same score, somewhat below the other two options.

Table 4.2 Stakeholder Feasibility Results

Option	1 TexNCAS	2 TXHES CAS	3 Hybrid	4 Data
Domain Score	18	18	15	15

Option 1's strength is visibility. Institutions already using versions of the platform demonstrate that centralized intake can coexist with institutional autonomy. Stakeholders therefore evaluate the model based on lived experience rather than assumption. Many concerns raised during engagement are viewed as policy or configuration choices rather than structural flaws.

Option 2's strength is state ownership. Participants value the idea of a Texas-directed system and believe it could be designed to respect autonomy and transparency. At the same time, the absence of an operating example means trust would need to build gradually through development and early cycles.

Option 3 appeals to those who prefer optionality, but stakeholders recognize that uneven participation weakens network benefits and perpetuates complexity for applicants.

Option 4 produces comfort because nothing changes institutionally, yet many participants question whether limited improvement to the student journey justifies statewide effort.

4.3 Technical Feasibility Results

Option 1 scored highest in the technical domain, followed closely by Option 2. Options 3 and 4 scored the same, significantly lower than the other options.

Table 4.3 Technical Feasibility Results

Option	1 TexNCAS	2 TXHES CAS	3 Hybrid	4 Data
Domain Score	38	36	23	23

Option 1's advantage comes from being based on an established, operational platform that already supports application intake, workflow management, identity handling, and reporting at scale. Because core architecture already exists, the technical effort centers on configuration, integration, and Texas-specific policy alignment rather than original system creation and development. This significantly reduces implementation uncertainty and shortens the path to statewide functionality.

Option 2 can ultimately meet many of the same objectives as Option 1 but requires TXHES to design, build, test, secure, and maintain a complex enterprise environment. This introduces significantly higher technical, operational, and financial risks.

Option 3 introduces additional complexity and risk because Texas would need to build and support both a CAS and a data collection and submission solution. This option includes the same technical, operational, and financial risks as Option 2 plus additional risk of building and maintaining the data collection and submission solution, multiplying integration and reconciliation demands.

Option 4 requires TXHES to build a data warehouse, define reporting requirements, and integrate data from across programs, which carry some development and maintenance risk. However, there is no capability under this option to centralize the application intake function.

4.4 Operational Feasibility Results

Option 1 scored highest in the operational domain. Option 2 scored somewhat lower, while Options 3 and 4 scored significantly lower.

Table 4.4 Operational Feasibility Results

Option	1 TexNCAS	2 TXHES CAS	3 Hybrid	4 Data
Domain Score	20	14	11	11

Option 1 scored highest because it is based on an existing model already in operation, a version of which is in use by many Texas nursing programs. Because comparable implementations already exist, institutions can see how workflows function in practice. The model supports phased onboarding, training pathways, and migration toward standardized processes while preserving institutional admissions work.

Option 2 has the potential to achieve comparable operational alignment once mature. In the early years, however, institutions would be onboarding while workflows, integrations, training models, and support responsibilities are still being defined. That simultaneous build-and-operate environment introduces variability and elevates risk to admissions cycles, reducing near-term feasibility.

Option 3 creates persistent dual pathways. TXHES must operate a CAS while also managing reporting relationships with non-participants, reducing uniformity and increasing administrative coordination.

Option 4 preserves existing institutional operations and therefore minimizes disruption, but it also leaves most inefficiencies and applicant complexity untouched.

4.5 Financial Feasibility Results

Option 1 scored highest in the financial domain, followed by Option 2 and Option 3 which scored similarly. Option 3 scored lowest.

Table 4.5. Financial Feasibility Results

Option	1 TexNCAS	2 TXHES CAS	3 Hybrid	4 Data
Domain Score	22	18	11	16

Option 1 avoids large upfront state investment in system creation and shifts primary responsibility for platform maintenance and evolution to the vendor environment. This reduces exposure during early years and provides a clearer trajectory toward sustainability as participation scales.

Option 2 places the full burden of development, enhancement, staffing, and lifecycle risk on TXHES. While ownership is maximized, so is financial responsibility.

Option 3 requires TXHES to finance both a CAS and a data aggregation environment, sustaining dual infrastructures.

Option 4 is less expensive than building a CAS but also yields narrower policy return because it does not transform application processes.

4.6 Cross-Domain Comparison and Identification of Highest Feasibility Option

When results are synthesized across domains, clear patterns emerge.

- **Option 2** leads in governance but introduces elevated technical, operational, and financial exposure.
- **Option 4** minimizes disruption to institutions but delivers limited system change or improvement to the applicant experience.
- **Option 3** combines the tradeoffs and risks of both Options 2 and 4, requiring TXHES to manage a bifurcated model that weakens statewide consistency and reduces the benefits of centralization.

Option 1 is the only model that performs strongly across all domains simultaneously. It combines:

- TXHES policy control through governance and contractual authority
- proven, already-operating technology
- the earliest path to implementation
- preservation of institutional authority over admissions decisions
- meaningful benefit to applicants
- reduced system development risk
- advancement of legislative and state policy objectives within existing TXHES authority.

Table 4.6 Cross-Domain Feasibility Scores

Domain	Option 1 TexNCAS	Option 2 TXHES CAS	Option 3 Hybrid	Option 4 Data Warehouse
Governance	19	21	11	14
Stakeholder	18	18	15	15
Technical	38	36	23	23
Operational	20	14	11	11
Financial	22	18	11	16
TOTALS	**117**	**107**	**71**	**79**

Looking across domains, the feasibility findings show that Option 1 offers the strongest and most responsible path forward. Accordingly, it is recommended as the model TXHES should implement for a centralized statewide nursing school application service.

Selecting this path does not eliminate risk. No statewide shared service is risk-free. Rather, it provides TXHES with a model for which risks are identifiable, manageable, and typical of large public system implementation, such as governance design, onboarding sequencing, stakeholder communication, and financial monitoring. Those responsibilities form the core of the implementation plan described in the next section.

5. Implementation Plan

The implementation plan converts the feasibility findings into a practical pathway for establishing a statewide nursing centralized application service while managing risk, institutional diversity, and fiscal responsibility. See *Attachment 2. Texas Centralized Application Service for Nursing Schools Implementation Plan* for the full plan.

The plan recognizes that successful implementation depends not only on technology deployment but also on durable governance structures, clear allocation of responsibilities, sustained stakeholder engagement, and disciplined oversight of vendor performance. Accordingly, the framework emphasizes controlled sequencing, defined accountability, and continuous improvement rather than a single event or statewide "go-live."

The plan establishes the governance structures, sequencing, and responsibilities required to advance the recommended approach. Operational tools required to carry out the plan (e.g., readiness criteria and assessment tool, decision logs) are products of implementation that will be developed during Phase 1 under TXHES oversight and with stakeholder participation.

5.1 Governance, Advisory Input, and Contract Oversight

Under the recommended model, the application platform is provided and operated by a contracted vendor. TXHES governs the CAS through policy direction, participation requirements, and formal contract management rather than through direct system ownership.

TXHES responsibilities include:

- Setting statewide expectations for participation
- Defining required data elements and reporting parameters
- Approving configurations affecting applicants or institutions
- Overseeing vendor performance, service levels, and deliverables
- Managing financial sustainability
- Ensuring continued alignment with legislative intent.

The governance structure incorporates advisory mechanisms that ensure ongoing stakeholder involvement in development and oversight of the model. A standing advisory group and topic-specific workgroups provide input on operational priorities, applicant experience, sequencing, and improvement opportunities. These bodies ensure institutional expertise is embedded in customization, onboarding, and ongoing evolution of the service, while final authority remains with TXHES.

The implementation plan establishes clear processes for change requests, issue escalation, and performance review so that accountability is maintained across the TXHES–vendor relationship.

5.2 Phased, Readiness-Based Participation

The plan advances TexNCAS adoption through defined phases rather than a single statewide launch. Entry into each phase depends on demonstrated preparedness across policy alignment, data readiness, staffing, training completion, and communication planning.

TXHES, in consultation with advisory participants and the vendor, will establish clear readiness criteria that describe the capabilities and conditions required for successful onboarding. These criteria are intended to create transparency for institutions, provide sufficient time for preparation, and reduce the likelihood of disruption to applicants.

TXHES will use these criteria to conduct an initial readiness assessment of all programs statewide. Assessments will examine factors such as local process alignment, ability to support new workflows, integration preparedness where applicable, and availability of trained personnel. Results will guide sequencing decisions, identify areas where additional support may be required, and inform targeted technical assistance. This approach allows TXHES and the vendor to validate workflows in live environments, refine guidance, and incorporate lessons learned before expanding participation. Institutions requiring additional preparation time may enter later phases without penalty, ensuring that readiness, rather than schedule alone, determines timing.

Programs that are ready to move forward after the initial assessment will be eligible to participate in Phase 1, which is timed to ensure alignment with the fall 2027 legislatively-directed timeline. For programs that are not ready, assessment results will be used to guide technical assistance and a capacity-building period. Reassessment will occur prior to these programs entering an onboarding cycle to ensure all identified readiness issues have been addressed and the program can participate successfully in TexNCAS.

5.3 Training, Support, and Stabilization

Stakeholder engagement emphasized that successful transition depends on sustained operational preparation and reliable access to assistance, particularly during early adoption cycles. The implementation plan therefore establishes a structured support model that begins well in advance of each onboarding period and continues after programs enter live operation.

Prior to go-live, institutions receive coordinated preparation resources that include orientation sessions for leadership, role-based training for admissions and advising staff, configuration guidance, and access to practice environments where users can become familiar with workflows. Training materials are standardized statewide to promote consistency while allowing programs to tailor internal procedures.

During launch windows, support intensity increases. The vendor provides expanded help desk coverage, rapid response pathways, and active monitoring of system performance. TXHES maintains oversight visibility into emerging issues and works with institutions and the vendor to prioritize resolution where applicant impact is greatest.

Following initial stabilization, programs transition to steady-state operations supported by ongoing access to documentation, refresher training opportunities, and established escalation mechanisms. This structure allows institutions to build confidence in routine use while ensuring that assistance remains available as new staff, policy changes, or enhancement releases arise.

5.4 Continuous Quality Improvement and Change Management

The implementation plan recognizes that TexNCAS must evolve as institutional practices, applicant expectations, and workforce priorities change. To support that evolution without introducing instability, the plan establishes formal, repeatable processes for identifying, evaluating, and implementing enhancements.

Requests for system changes may originate from institutions, applicants, advisory participants, or TXHES leadership. Proposed modifications are documented through standardized intake mechanisms that allow impacts to be assessed consistently across policy, operational, technical, and financial dimensions.

Advisory groups and topic-specific workgroups provide structured input regarding urgency, user experience implications, and unintended consequences. This consultation ensures that institutional knowledge informs decisions while maintaining statewide perspective.

TXHES retains final authority for prioritization and approval. In exercising that authority, TXHES balances anticipated benefit, cost, implementation complexity, vendor capacity, and alignment with legislative objectives. Approved changes are incorporated into planned release cycles, communicated in advance, and supported by updated training and documentation.

By organizing improvement activity through defined governance pathways, the model enables innovation and responsiveness while preserving predictability, fiscal discipline, and system stability.

5.5 Financial Stewardship and Sustainability

Because institutional participation in TexNCAS increases over time, early operating years may not immediately generate sufficient revenue to offset fixed obligations. Based on planning assumptions derived from current negotiations and anticipated application volumes, TXHES may need to manage a temporary funding gap during the ramp period.

Under conservative participation scenarios, the potential exposure is estimated in the range of approximately $450,000 to $600,000 in the first year of operations, with a reduced gap of roughly $50,000 to $150,000 in the second year if growth is slower than anticipated. Under more moderate adoption patterns, operations in later years could generate a positive balance of approximately $100,000 to $250,000 as participation broadens.

This trajectory reflects the practical reality of shared service models: core capability must be established before full utilization occurs. As additional institutions join and processes mature, the probability and magnitude of negative operating positions are expected to decline.

These estimates are planning parameters rather than contractual commitments or budget requests. TXHES will refine projections as commercial terms are finalized and will incorporate updated information into formal budgeting processes.

Ongoing financial governance is therefore embedded in the implementation framework. TXHES will maintain visibility into application volumes, revenue flows, vendor obligations, and applicant impact throughout each admissions cycle. Defined review points allow leadership to reassess pacing, enhancement priorities, or funding strategies if actual experience diverges from projections.

Conclusion

This project fulfills the HB 2851 directive to TXHES through structured analysis, stakeholder engagement, and careful consideration of legal, institutional, operational, technical, and financial conditions.

The feasibility study identifies a viable path to meet HB 2851 and Recommendation 8 goals. While each option considered presents tradeoffs, the vendor-supported TexNCAS model provides the most balanced combination of preservation of institutional admissions authority, operational reliability, implementation readiness, and near-term ability to deliver benefit to applicants and the State. Importantly, it does so within existing authorities and without requiring TXHES to assume the full burden of building and sustaining a complex enterprise technology platform.

The accompanying implementation plan translates that conclusion into action. It establishes governance mechanisms, readiness safeguards, advisory participation, financial oversight, and continuous improvement processes necessary to move deliberately from concept to operation. These responsibilities are not unique to this initiative; they are the standard obligations of any statewide shared service.

With these structures in place, TXHES is positioned to improve the application experience of prospective nursing students, strengthen understanding of nursing education demand, and better align applicants with available nursing education capacity.