Engaging Texas Academic Institutions
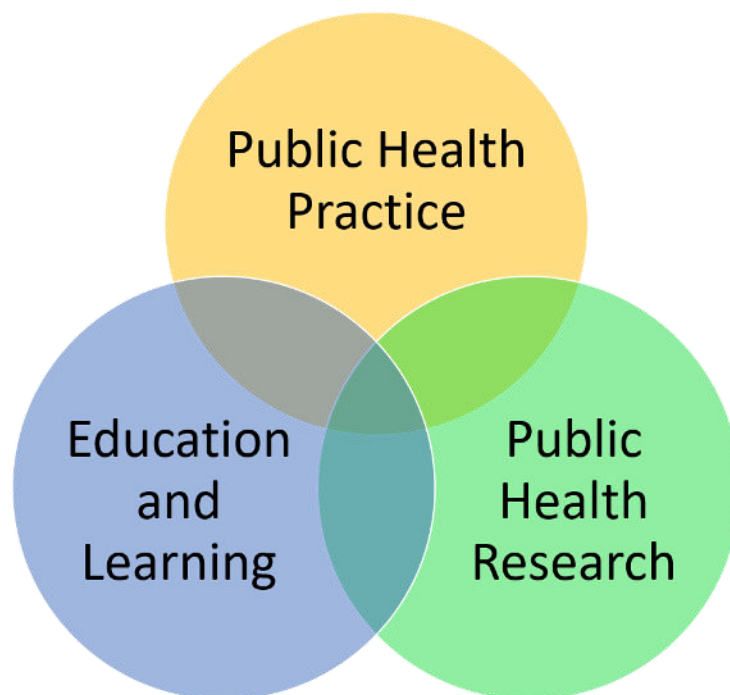## Strategic Plan 2019

Executive Summary
Academic and health department partnerships add value to public health through student and faculty engagement, practice-based research, workforce development and service to Texas communities.

Engaging Texas Academic Institutions is a DSHS Operational Plan project focusing on strengthening our relationships with academia. This project includes four phases:

1. Assessment to inform our engagement plan, including workgroup activities, SWOT analysis and staff survey.
2. Strategic planning and development to operationalize our strengths and opportunities with a clear and cohesive approach.
3. Communication and outreach to engage our academic partners with tangible projects and practical applications for collaboration.
4. Evaluation to measure if our efforts are making the desired change.

The Office of Academic Affairs established a cross-division workgroup to provide insight, expertise and ideas in developing a strategic plan for engaging academic partners. The workgroup developed goals and strategies for three priority areas:

Priority Area 1: Public Health Practice

DSHS will facilitate <u>public health in action</u> by:

1. Connecting the public health needs of the community with academic resources
2. Creating a platform to communicate, educate and disseminate public health practice activities
3. Replicating evidence-based projects, initiatives, and interventions to the broader system

Goal 1:   Connect the public health needs of the community with academic resources.

Strategies

1.1:   Create an interactive GIS map of DSHS offices in relation to public health, medical/osteopathic, nursing, public policy, social work, informatics and communications schools

1.2:   Conduct a needs assessment for DSHS, regional offices, and local health departments to inventory a list of projects that need support (research, quality improvement, community health assessments, survey development, or other public health needs)

1.3:   Post opportunities by region on the DSHS Academic Affairs website

1.4:   Host regional academic workshops to connect practice and academic partners

Goal 2:   Create a platform to communicate, educate and disseminate public health practice activities.

Strategies

2.1:   Encourage DSHS staff presentations at conferences (poster and break-out sessions) to highlight and disseminate public health interventions

2.2:   Provide information to DSHS staff on opportunities to present their work (e.g., call for abstracts for conferences, webinar presentation opportunities)

2.3:   Give students opportunities to pilot their ideas at DSHS (e.g., theses, dissertations, practicums)

Goal 3:   Replicate evidence-based projects, initiatives, and interventions to the broader system

Strategies

3.1:   Encourage joint grant opportunities with academic partners
3.2:   Pilot student projects into the community
3.3:   Explore activities that move evidence-based research into practice

Priority Area 2: Education and Learning

DSHS will achieve a <u>well-prepared, fully trained and motivated public health workforce</u> by:

1. Creating high value, high quality student learning experiences at DSHS
2. Bridging gaps between public health theory and practice
3. Facilitating connections between academic faculty and DSHS staff

Goal 1:   Create high value, high quality student learning experiences at DSHS

Strategies

1.1:	Develop a yearly preceptor orientation and training
1.2:	Develop toolkits for best practices in developing internship projects and supervisor/mentoring
1.3:	Host interest group for new preceptors
1.4:	Create incentives for hosting interns (e.g., administrative leave, travel/conference funds)
1.5:	Increase number of paid internships
1.6:	Create a standardized process for onboarding interns
1.7:	Establish an orientation for all interns
1.8:	Explore development of a DSHS fellowship
1.9:	Explore development of public health rotation for medical students and/or medical residents
1.10:	Add teaching and mentoring activities to performance measures

Goal 2:   Bridge gaps between public health theory and practice

Strategies

2.1:	Identify areas where gaps exist between public health theory and practice
2.2:	Identify DSHS staff with active university adjunct appointments
2.3:	Encourage and facilitate DSHS staff participation in classroom learning through guest lecturing, real-world classroom projects, and consulting on curriculum development
2.4:	Create a "public health 101" curriculum to deliver to undergraduate and graduate non-public health majors

Goal 3:   Facilitate connections between academic faculty and DSHS staff

Strategies

3.1:   Coordinate main campus and regional academic workshops to connect practice and academic partners

3.2:   Identify a "Champion Academic Liaison" for each DSHS region/division

3.3:   Identify a list of champions or liaisons at Texas universities

3.4:   Discover how academia can train and support the professional development and education of DSHS staff

3.5:   Education and recruiting activities on public health careers to classrooms, student groups or other events

3.6:   Create a regular seminar series on public health practice with university and health department staff

Priority Area 3: Public Health Research

As faithful stewards of public resources, DSHS will utilize data <u>to produce, advance and disseminate public health research, best practices and innovation</u> by:

1. Educating and demonstrating the value of public health research
2. Building internal capacity for developing and understanding research
3. Improve collaboration with external research stakeholders

Goal 1:   Educate and demonstrate the value of public health research

Strategies

1.1:	Identify, clarify and educate on DSHS data
1.2:	Inventory of DSHS led research
1.3:	Education on how research impacts health of Texans, including case studies from DSHS
1.4:	Press releases on DSHS research
1.5:	Align research to strategic goals and health priorities

Goal 2:   Build internal capacity for developing and understanding research

Strategies

2.1	Develop research skills for DSHS staff on research through professional conferences and trainings
2.2	Revise position descriptions to allow for research
2.3	Performance measures tied to published, peer-reviewed research
2.4	Create an internal DSHS advisory council to inform DSHS research goals
2.5	Education for staff on the DSHS Institutional Review Board
2.6	Create research-related internships, fellowships or student projects

Goal 3:   Improve collaboration with external research stakeholders

Strategies

3.1	Improve forms for data and research requests
3.2	Integration of DSHS data into classroom curriculum and projects
3.3	Create infographic on how to request data (e.g., decision trees, visuals)

3.4   Host "data discovery" workshops at universities to inform on what data we have, how to access it and how students and faculty can utilize data for research and classroom projects

3.5   Host a Student Research/Poster Day at DSHS