

Texas Nutrition Advisory Committee (TNAC)

FINAL Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, March 11, 2026

1:00 p.m.

Physical Location: Department of State Health Services (DSHS)

Robert D. Moreton Building

Room M100, First Floor

1100 West 49th Street

Austin, Texas 78756

Teams Virtual Meeting

Agenda Item 1: Call to order, welcome, introductions, roll call, and opening remarks

Dr. Jaclyn Albin, called the Texas Nutrition Advisory Committee (TNAC) meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

Ms. Kaitlyn Quinton, Advisory Committee Coordination Office, Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) read the logistical announcements and stated the meeting was being conducted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act. Ms. Quinton conducted the member roll call and announced the presence or absence of quorum.

Table 1: The Texas Nutrition Advisory Committee member attendance at the March 11, 2026, meeting.

Member name	Attended
Dr. Jaclyn Albin (Chair)	X
Dr. Ann Shippy	X
Commissioner Sid Miller	X
Dr. Natalie Bachynsky	X
Ms. Cheryl Sew Hoy	X
Dr. Kathleen Davis	X
Dr. Padmaja Patel	X

Agenda Item 2: Consideration of January 21, 2026, Draft Meeting Minutes

Dr. Albin referred members to the draft minutes emailed by the program liaison and called for any edits. Hearing none, Dr. Albin called for a motion to approve the minutes of the January 21, 2026, meeting.

Motion: Commissioner Miller moved to approve the minutes as presented from the January 21, 2026, meeting. Dr. Patel seconded the motion. Following a roll call vote, the motion passed by a majority vote with 7 yeas (Albin, Bachynsky, Davis, Sew Hoy, Miller, Shippy, Patel), and 0 nays.

Agenda Item 3: TNAC Overview and Timelines

Mr. Austin Hood, Deputy Director of Government Affairs at the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), gave an overview of:

- TNAC duties and timelines
- TNAC activities to date
- Next steps

He highlighted the annual report and its legislatively mandated deadline for publication of September 1, 2026. The report will be routed by DSHS to the Lt. Governor, the Governor, the Speaker of the House, and standing committees of the legislature with relevant jurisdiction. DSHS will also post the report on the TNAC webpage. Mr. Hood also covered use of the guidelines by the Texas Medical Board, Texas Board of Nursing, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, and the State Board of Education.

Discussion:

- Mr. Hood and Dr. Albin iterated that report contributors have access to DSHS library and archives for research.
- Dr. Davis inquired about a shared location of DSHS library material that all members have access to.

Agenda Item 4: Report on Findings from Workgroups:

Dr. Albin asked the two annual report working groups to give updates on their progress.

- Dr. Davis gave the update for the Ultra Processed Food workgroup. They have acknowledged there is no consensus definition of ultra-processed food. Workgroup is proposing definitions for "whole foods," "healthier processed food," and "ultra processed food." They are proposing to use legal definitions of "additives" and "dyes," as well as to have an outside group review their safety profiles. They are also proposing to use the 2019 version of Nova for classification. She also gave an overview of specific questions the workgroup must attempt to answer when assessing the science to date.

Dr. Davis mentioned that TNAC needs to consider the degree to which the report should be aligned with upcoming federal guidelines on nutrition. Commissioner Miller mentioned that TNAC should be aligned with federal guidelines (to be released in June). Dr. Albin agreed that the report should be aligned with federal guidelines when possible and to use simple definitions in the report's guidelines while describing the 2019 version of Nova and other complex systems and terms in its assessment of the science.

- Dr. Albin gave the update for the Systematic and Scoping Review workgroup. She briefly described what each section in the report will cover. The workgroup is proposing to assess evidence to date by the level of impact of ultra processed food on metabolic health, cancer, gastrointestinal disease, mental health, immune system health, and all-cause mortality (stronger evidence will be emphasized). More recent

human studies and systematic reviews will be favored. The workgroup proposes to collaborate with potential external partners who may have expertise in these areas.

Committee will receive draft reviews for discussion for the April 16 and May 27 meetings. The reviews will then be finalized and TNAC Dietary Guidelines will be developed based on them. TNAC will then develop a plan for educating stakeholders on the guidelines.

Dr. Davis suggested that the review of the evidence on metabolic health should include a review of the impact on diabetes and pre-diabetes. She also suggested that the section on structural barriers be broadened.

Agenda Item 5: Overview of the Texas A&M Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Evidence Center

- Dr. Kelly Casavale, Director, Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Evidence Center, Texas A&M AgriLife Research
- Dr. Maureen Spill, Associate Director, Agriculture, Food, and Nutrition Evidence Center, Texas A&M AgriLife Research

Presentation Highlights:

- Dr. Casavale gave an overview of the Center and what it does. The Center assesses relationships between agriculture, food systems, the food supply, and health outcomes.
- Core Principles: Rigor, Independence, Transparency, Commitment
- Mandate: Global leader for evidence generation
- Dr. Spill gave an overview of the Center's rapid review methods.
- Center is designed to conduct high quality systematic review to inform policy makers.

Discussion

- Dr. Shippy inquired about how the Center can support the committee. Dr. Casavale mentioned that the Committee must request a commissioned study, which requires funding. Dr. Albin mentioned that the Committee is volunteer-based and does not have financial resources.

Agenda Item 6: Committee discussion of early recommendations for domain areas, general scope and framework of initial and future reports

- Dr. Jaclyn Albin, Chair, Texas Nutrition Advisory Committee

Discussion

- Dr. Davis expressed concern that the time constraints for completing the report make collaborating with external partners that require funding problematic. Before TNAC delegates to external groups, the committee needs to identify search terms and develop a straightforward and consistent guide for systematic reviews. Dr. Albin mentioned that TNAC needs to develop a uniform guide for literature searches.
- Dr. Davis recommended that workgroups use the 2019 version of Nova for term definitions and at least 2 research databases for literature searches. She also

recommended that literature searches go back 5-10 years and focus on human studies, meta analyses, systematic reviews, and umbrella reviews. Dr. Albin mentioned that searches should go back 10 years.

- Dr. Shippy suggested that literature searches should focus broadly on the impact of nutrition on health. Dr. Albin asked for input on how to accomplish this. Dr. Davis recommended that the workgroups use a uniform template for assessing risk of bias.
- Dr. Albin proposed that the workgroups refer to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the much larger report that influenced them when trying to balance a rigorous assessment of the science while still drafting palatable guidelines.
- Committee members suggested the report should also include discussions on the following topics:
 - Brain health and mental health
 - Impact of fluoride on mental health
 - Impact of artificial dyes on brain health
 - Impact of whole milk vs. 1% milk on adolescents
 - Impact of environmental contaminants
- Dr. Albin recommended using subsequent annual reports to discuss emerging areas in dietary science.
- Dr. Davis verbally reviewed the search strategy she recommended.
 - Dr. Albin mentioned that "Food as Medicine" is an emerging topic that should be left for subsequent reports to discuss.
 - "Emerging evidence" should be limited to research published within the last 3 years.

Next Steps

- Dr. Davis will prepare a 1-page document outlining the literature search strategy she recommended.
- For next meeting, each workgroup will prepare a summary of their literature search by strength of evidence.
- For next meeting, discussion will be held on report sections 1b, 2, 3a, and 3b.
- For May meeting, each workgroup will have drafts of their respective sections ready for committee discussion.
- Committee will work with DSHS to post to the TNAC website the search strategy and list of questions for the report to address.
- Committee will use TNAC email address to solicit external contributors to report. Each workgroup will review potential collaborators according to the respective subject matter each workgroup is covering.
- Committee will share search strategy with external contributors.
- Engage an external contributor with relevant expertise to do an umbrella review on the impact of artificial dyes/food additives and environmental contaminants on health.

Agenda Item 7: Upcoming Meeting Dates and Times

Dr. Albin gave a rundown of upcoming meeting dates:

- April 16 – 1:00pm
- May 27 – 10:00am
- June 25 – 10:00am
- July 14 – 1:00pm (Committee must have the report finalized by this meeting)
- August 19 – 1:00pm (This meeting will be used to set the agenda for CY 2026)

Next Steps

- Committee will set meeting dates/times a year in advance.
- After report is published, Committee will hold meetings every two months, beginning in September and November 2026.

Agenda Item 8: Review of action items and agenda items for the next meeting

Dr. Albin reviewed action items previously discussed and listed under “Next Steps” in Agenda Item 6:

Agenda Item 9: Public Comment

Ms. Quinton, ACCO facilitator, read the public comment announcement and coordinated with the ACCO production team for requests from stakeholders who registered prior to the meeting or were onsite to provide public comment.

Oral Comment

- **Ms. Rachel Poland**
 - Shared considerations for how nutrition should be taught at the higher education level.
- **Ms. Anne Larson**
 - Shared recommendations for how the measurement of nutrition can be improved to better assess the impact of diet on health outcomes.
- **Mr. Adam Arnwine**
 - Shared recommendations on how “ultra processed foods” should be defined.
- **Ms. Hawley Evilsizer**
 - On behalf of the Texas Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, offered that the Academy could provide relevant expertise to the Committee as it drafts the annual report.
- **Ms. Erin Hudson**
 - Offered to provide expertise for the Committee’s report and provided considerations on how “ultra processed food” should be defined.
- **Dr. Jaimie Davis**
 - Gave a rundown of her research on the impact of school gardens. She also described how her research can inform the education sections of the Committee’s report.
- **Ms. Madeleine Rosenthal**
 - Offered considerations on how her research could inform the education sections of the Committee’s report.

Agenda Item 10: Adjourn

Dr. Albin thanked council members for attending, and adjourned the meeting 3:47 p.m.

Below is the link to the archived video recording of the Texas Nutrition Advisory Committee meeting to view and listen to for approximately two years from the date the meeting is posted in accordance with the HHSC records retention schedule.

<https://texashhsc.v3.swagit.com/videos/377818>