



EARLY CARE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Workforce Solutions Alamo
100 N. Santa Rosa St., Suite 120, Boardroom
San Antonio, TX 78207

July 14, 2023

10:00 AM

AGENDA

Agenda items may not be considered in the order they appear.

Citizens may appear before the Committee to speak for or against any item on the Agenda in accordance with procedural rules governing meetings. Speakers are limited to three (3) minutes on each topic (6 minutes if translation is needed) if they register at the beginning of meeting. Questions relating to these rules may be directed to Linda Martinez at (210) 272-3250.

The Chair of the Committee will be at the Host Location. The Host location is specified above. Meetings will be visible and audible to the public at the Host location, and there will be a visual or audio recording of the meeting. There will be two-way audio and video of the meeting between each Board member sufficient that Board members and public can hear and see them. WSA will comply with all Videoconferencing Guidelines.

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During the Public Comments portion of the meeting (Agenda Item 4), the Public may type their name into the chat box or unmute themselves and state their name. The meeting host will call each member of the public for comments, in the order their names were submitted.

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- I. CALL TO ORDER
Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair
- II. ROLL CALL AND QUORUM DETERMINATION
Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair
- III. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST
Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair
- IV. PUBLIC COMMENT
Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair
- V. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MINUTES FROM MAY 5, 2023
EARLY CARE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING
Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair
- VI. EARLY MATTERS UPDATE
Presenter: Mark Larson, Executive Director, Early Matters San Antonio
- VII. CHILDCARE UPDATES (DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION)
Presenter: Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care
 - a. Childcare Performance Briefing
 - b. Texas Rising Star Assessment Update
 - c. TRS Contracted Slots Pilot Briefing
 - d. Entry Level Designation & Efforts Towards Increasing and Accessing Quality
 - Pre-K for SA – Dr. Sarah Baray
 - United Way – Liza Gomez
 - Region 20 – Jennifer Martinez
- VIII. CEO REPORT
Presenter: Adrian Lopez, CEO
 - a. Success Stories
- IX. CHAIR REPORT
Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair
- X. Executive Session:
Pursuant to Chapter 551 of the Texas Open Meetings Act, the Committee may move into Executive Session for discussion on any issue for which there is an exception to the Act as set out in section 551.071 et. seq. including, but not limited to, the following:
 - a. Government Code §551.072 – Discussions Regarding Purchase, Exchange, Lease, or Value of Real Property if Deliberation in an Open Meeting Would Have a Detrimental Effect on the Position of Workforce Solutions Alamo in Negotiations with a Third Party;
 - b. Government Code §551.071 – All Matters Where Workforce Solutions Alamo Seeks

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- the Advice of its Attorney as Privileged Communications Under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas;
- c. Pending or Contemplated Litigation;
 - d. Government Code §551.074 – Personnel Matters Involving Senior Executive Staff and Employees of Workforce Solutions Alamo; and
 - e. Government Code §551.089 – Discussions Regarding Security Devices or Audits.

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair

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EARLY CARE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING - MINUTES

Workforce Solutions Alamo
100 N. Santa Rosa St., Suite 120, Boardroom
San Antonio, TX 78207

May 5, 2023

10:00 AM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor (Chair), Betty Munoz, Leslie Cantu, Yousef Kassim, Elizabeth Lutz (10:21am), Dawn Dixon

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Dr. Sarah Baray, Dr. Henrietta Munoz, Mark Larson, Liza Gomez, Jennifer Martinez, Kristy Kothe (10:07am)

WSA STAFF: Adrian Lopez, Katherine Pipoly, Jessica Villarreal, Linda Martinez, Vanessa McHaney, Carlos Garcia, Kimberly Villarreal, Helane Aghayere, Chuck Agwuegbo, Annie Montana, Jessica Bracamonte, Patricia Alejandro

LEGAL COUNSEL: None.

GUEST: Aubri Simpson with Manifest Academy, Marshal Hoak with Bexar County, Tylane Barnes, M.Ed. with Converse Christian School & Early Learning Center

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I. CALL TO ORDER

Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair

At 10:01 am, Chair DeHoyos O'Connor called the meeting to order.

II. ROLL CALL AND QUORUM DETERMINATION

Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair

The roll was called, and a quorum was declared present.

III. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair

None.

IV. PUBLIC COMMENT

Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair

Ms. Tylane Barnes, M.Ed., Converse Christian School & Early Learning Center

— Ms. Barnes would like to thank Workforce Solutions Alamo for the staff incentives her center has been able to receive. This has made a positive impact in the staff's lives and they are happier when they go to work.

Ms. Rita Medellin, Owner/Director, Leap Ahead Learning

— Ms. Medellin was not present at the time of the public comments session.

V. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MINUTES FROM MARCH 3, 2023
CHILD CARE COMMITTEE MEETING

Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair

Upon motion by Dr. Sarah Baray and second by Mark Larson, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes from March 3, 2023 Child Care Committee meeting.

VI. EARLY MATTERS UPDATE AND HB1979 DISCUSSION

Presenter: Mark Larson, Executive Director, Early Matters San Antonio

— The 88th Legislative Session is being held for 140 days from January through May,

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2023.

- WSA’s early childhood work is unusually strong across the sector, but that is not true for other areas. This bill added additional Board members with expertise in childcare. The bill included that 10% of the 51% would have childcare expertise. Right now, the minimum is to have one Board member with childcare expertise.
- HB1979 and SB1844 was heard on the House floor on May 2, voted out, and referred to NRED. It is now heading to the Senate and they have stated that when the time is appropriate, they will hear it. It is possible that the bill will die out.
- Dr. Sarah Baray asked if there can be rural representation on this committee. Chair DeHoyos O’Connor stated that they currently have one, but are looking for more. She also stated that in the rural areas the Directors at the centers are extremely busy and do not wish to participate in additional meetings, so they are looking at other ways to be able to incorporate them.
- HB1614 Increase PreK partnerships was voted out of the House on April 18.
- HB3621 and SB1145 Property tax relief for providers in TWC scholarship program was voted out of the House on April 24 and out of the Senate on May 2.
- HB1834 and SB353 Reimbursement rates for quality childcare was heard in IRED on April 25 and referred to NRED on February 15.
- The Rider bill on Bedrock funding was heard in committee on March 14 and is now in Article XI.
- HB3771 now has 70 bipartisan coauthors and the bill states that if an employer wants to help support childcare for the employees, then the state will match it. This bill will be voted on the floor the next day after this meeting.
- SB2315 suggests establishing a task force to streamline and bring together Health and Human Services and Texas Workforce Commission. Mark Larson suggested WSA look into this bill because it seems to be moving and would impact the work.
- Dr. Sarah Baray asked if the person who is in charge of tracking bills at WSA could report on the latest information and updates to the committee.
- Dr. Henrietta Munoz suggested having a work session after legislation is over to review what happened, to understand how to better communicate, and to better share the legislative agendas from the partners. She also wanted to go on the record to state that she has a concern with WSA taking a break from Early Matters while legislation is happening.
- Mark Larson stated that he will keep in contact with COO Katherine Pipoly and notify her whenever he hears anything on these bills. He also wanted to go on the record to state that Early Matters had no impact or roll on the sunset bill that is being proposed to review workforce Boards.

VII. CHILD CARE UPDATES (DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION)

Presenter: Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care

a. Child Care Performance Briefing

- WSA’s unofficial YTD average for FY23 is 102.86%. Right now the budget is being expended.
- As of April 17, 2023, 7,944 families are in care, 13,543 children are in care, 2,901 families on waitlist, and 4,731 children on waitlist.

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- b. Texas Rising Star Assessment Update
 - 143 centers are currently certified, 56 centers have completed annual monitoring, 39 centers increased their star level, 2 centers are awaiting their initial assessment, 87 centers are awaiting their annual monitoring assessment, and 4 centers have submitted their application for initial assessment since the last committee meeting. 18 centers have completed their initial assessment since August 2022.
 - The total number of childcare programs in the region, both urban and rural, is 1,049, the number of CCS programs is 579, the number of TRS programs is 144. The number of TRS/CCS centers is 25%.
 - In BCY23 for CCS providers, there was 1 agreement that ended in December, 2 in February, and 2 in March. The new agreements were 7 in October, 6 in November, 2 in December, 6 in January, 4 in February, and 3 in March.
- c. TRS Contracted Slots Pilot Briefing
 - 8 children have been enrolled in Converse Christian School, 4 in La Mision Child Care and Kid Kamp, and 7 in DePaul Children’s Center.
 - This pilot program was scheduled to end in March, however, TWC has extended it through the end of December.
 - Ms. Barnes stated that this program has encouraged parents to take a weekly parenting course on Wednesdays at Converse Christian School. This also has steered parents to choose quality care education.
- d. Entry Level Designation & Efforts Towards Increasing and Accessing Quality
 - The deadline to become TRS certified is September 30, 2024.
 - Out of the 413 centers that WSA had at the time that TWC did an eligibility review, 3 centers had to have their CCS agreement end and the children transferred to another location. One center was eligible to reapply in two weeks and TWC granted an extension for the children at this location as long as they completed their application by May 1. The center was successful in accomplishing this and the children did not have to move. The other two centers had to have the children transferred and will reapply for CCS within the month.
 - 425 providers have been identified by TWC as meeting Entry Level Designation, 312 in Bexar and 113 in rural areas.
 - Mark Larson stated that he has received a statewide survey of almost 2,000 childcare providers and they found that 43% are either planning on closing or will close. He noticed that 200 participants were in San Antonio. He wanted to bring this to the attention of the Committee and to start thinking about how this will impact the families and children. Chair DeHoyos O’Connor stated that she will discuss the childcare crisis further with Mark Larson and has plans to discuss this with the San Antonio Chamber of Commerce. Liza Gomez added that PreK4SA, Region 20, and United Way are partnering to see which centers are not involved in a cohort and are devising a plan of outreach.
 - Currently 77 out of 425 eligible Providers are enrolled in the WSA Quality Cohort, 62 in Bexar County and 15 in rural areas. A total of 81 Providers have completed a WSA Quality Cohort since October 2022. WSA has touched 158 centers so far that were considered Entry Level Designation.

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- Professional development opportunities for Early Learning Programs: 2 completed in March, 10 completed in April, 8 in progress for May, 7 scheduled in June, 7 scheduled in July, and 7 scheduled in August.
- WSA Quality Cohorts: 11 completed in Spring 2022, 71 completed in Fall 2022, and 77 in process for Spring 2023.
- Liza Gomez presented the Alamo Quality Pathway. United Way and Region 20 both are able to work with ELD ineligible, ineligible, and ELD centers. WSA only works with ELD centers. All three come together to provide quality coaching and TRS mentoring.
- Investments in Quality: Over \$2.1M to 60 Providers in staff bonuses, \$403,325 TRS incentives for 1,427 staff, \$404,773 quality materials for centers enrolled in the cohort, \$41,051 additional materials to TRS centers, \$218,550 monetary incentives to purchase quality materials for centers, \$12,000 in college tuition, \$69,708 in professional development, and \$138,500 in special incentives.

VIII. CEO REPORT

Presenter: Adrian Lopez, CEO

- a. Success Stories

IX. CHAIR REPORT

Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair

X. **Executive Session:**

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- d. Government Code §551.074 – Personnel Matters Involving Senior Executive Staff and Employees of Workforce Solutions Alamo; and**
- e. Government Code §551.089 – Discussions Regarding Security Devices or Audits. None.**

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair

Upon motion by Mark Larson and second by Dr. Henrietta Munoz, Chair DeHoyos O'Connor adjourned the meeting at 11:42am.

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MEMORANDUM

To: Early Care & Education Committee

From: Adrian Lopez, CEO

Presented by Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care

Date: July 14, 2023

Subject: Childcare Performance Briefing

Summary:

This is a briefing to the Early Care & Education Committee on childcare performance for FY 2023.

WSA continues to work with our childcare contractor as they monitor and process enrollments. WSA maintains ongoing communication with the childcare contractor on TWC's performance goal range of meeting performance: 95 – 105% and to remain within the allocated budget.

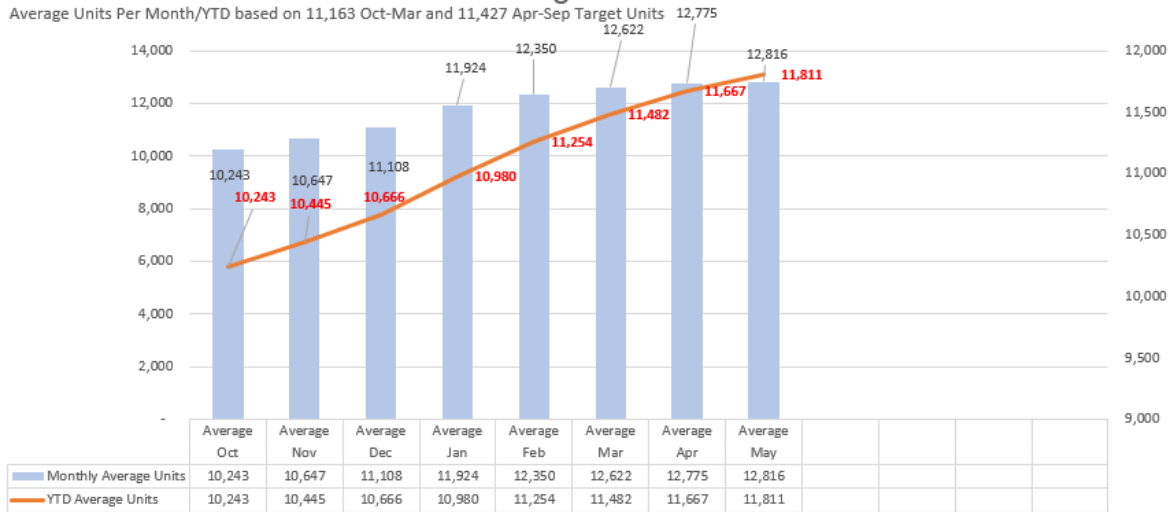
TWC has set Alamo's FY 2023 Target at 11,427.

As of 6/26/2023, Alamo reflects performance at 105.14%.

Analysis:

- WSA's unofficial YTD average for May shows average enrollments of 11,427 or 105.14%, which reflects that we are trending positively, and are currently in the meet performance range.
- Childcare contractor continues actively enrolling and processing documentation for families to begin care.
- Challenges that childcare contractor face are non-responsive clients, clients who fail to submit complete application, clients who delay in selection of a childcare program, and clients who delay or fail to submit necessary documentation to complete registration/enrollment.

Information collected: 6.26.2023



	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average
Monthly Average Units	10,243	10,647	11,108	11,924	12,350	12,622	12,775	12,816
YTD Average Units	10,243	10,445	10,666	10,980	11,254	11,482	11,667	11,811

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March	Apr	May
	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average
Monthly Average %	91.76%	95.38%	99.50%	106.82%	110.64%	113.07%	111.79%	112.16%
YTD Average Units %	91.76%	93.57%	95.55%	98.36%	100.82%	102.86%	104.14%	105.14%

	Oct	Nov	December	Jan	Feb	March	Apr	May
	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average
Choices	237	229	209	203	201	198	196	186
TANF						4		
Low Income	9,554	9,938	10,419	11,210	11,618	11,868	11,983	11,991
Former DFPS	382	401	392	419	428	439	476	511
Homeless	70	79	88	92	103	114	120	128
Monthly Average Units	10,243	10,647	11,108	11,924	12,350	12,622	12,775	12,816
Monthly % Average	91.76%	95.38%	99.50%	106.82%	110.64%	113.07%	111.79%	112.16%
YTD Average Units	10,243	10,445	10,666	10,980	11,254	11,482	11,667	11,811
YTD % Average	91.76%	93.57%	95.55%	98.36%	100.82%	102.86%	104.14%	105.14%
TWC Target	11,163	11,163	11,163	11,163	11,163	11,163	11,427	11,427

As of 6/27/2023

County	Families in Care	Children in Care	Families on Waitlist	Children on Waitlist
Atascosa	252	440	63	124
Bandera	27	47	8	16
Bexar	6269	11132	3683	6160
Comal	370	571	73	118
Frio	79	141	21	39
Gillespie	54	73	10	18
Guadalupe	410	657	109	197
Karnes	13	21	13	21
Kendall	63	100	17	28
Kerr	161	250	56	83
McMullen	0	0	0	0
Medina	160	280	48	74
Wilson	94	157	22	40
Grand Totals	7952	13869	4123	6918

FY 2023

Fiscal Impact:

- Each fiscal year beginning in October, TWC distributes funding and places an annual performance target for each Board.
- Supplemental distribution provided to Alamo May 1st: \$4,803,249
 - Available for direct care and variable admin/ops
- Supplemental Target: 1,558
- TWC provides Boards with a performance status methodology that is based on the annual target and budget, outlining percentage ranges for 3 performance measures:
 - Meets Performance (MP), Exceeds Performance (+P), and Below Performance (-P)

CCDF Performance Status Methodology

Year-to-Date numbers to calculate performance

MP = 95%-105%

+P = 105% or above

-P = <94.99

- Boards who exceed the budgeted amount for enrollments may cause negative impact on future funding.
- As a result, WSA closely monitors and carefully balances both the enrollment target as well as the budget allocated to placing children in care, in an effort to provide childcare to as many families as possible while remaining in good standing with TWC.

Recommendation:

N/A

Next Steps:

As WSA and the childcare contractor continue to monitor performance and work to ensure that enrollment remains at a level that does not negatively impact performance, WSA has asked the contractor to begin slowing enrollment, in order to focus on return to care children that will begin enrolling in the summer, due to the higher cost of summer care, in an effort to remain within Alamo's allocated budget for childcare services.

MEMORANDUM

To: Early Care & Education Committee

From: Adrian Lopez, CEO

Presented by: Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care

Date: July 14, 2023

Subject: Texas Rising Star Assessment Update

Summary:

The Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) three-member Commission (Commission) approved final rules for revisions to the Texas Rising Star program on January 5, 2021. Along with the rule changes, the Commission approved statewide protocols for implementation of the revised Texas Rising Star standards. The Commission-approved implementation protocols include a deferment of assessments and in-person visits during the time that Texas Rising Star staff members are learning about and transitioning to the revised standards.

On August 3, 2021, the Commission approved modifications to the implementation protocols, which include establishing an implementation date of September 1, 2021.

Analysis:

On September 1, 2021, implementation of the revised Texas Rising Star standards began. [WD 06-21, Change 2](#) provided guidance on implementation of the revised certification guidelines specific to Assessment Training & Certification Program (ATCP) course completion requirements for conducting assessments, prioritization plan for determining assessment visits, and continued quarterly screenings. This letter remains active and within the attachment Boards may continue to extend certification and visit due dates due to COVID-19 impacts, as well as professional development requirements per the guidance provided.

Alamo currently has 7 Texas Rising Star Assessors who have successfully completed the TWC coursework for being Texas Rising Star Assessor certified and are actively in the field conducting Texas Rising Star Assessments.

Currently Alamo Board has a total of 153 Early Learning Programs certified as Texas Rising Star. TRS Assessors are conducting Annual Monitoring Assessment visits and initial certifications as they receive applications. Since our last Early Care & Education Committee meeting, 15 centers have submitted an application for an initial assessment (submission dates): 05/05/23, 05/09/23, 05/17/23, 05/19/23, 05/22/23, 05/22/23, 05/26/23, 05/26/23, 05/26/23, 06/02/23, 06/06/23, 06/09/23, 06/13/23, 06/21/23, 06/23/23, and 48 centers are preparing for an annual monitoring visit, 105 monitoring visits have been completed.

Data as of 06/26/2023

Total Number of Centers Scheduled	Annual Monitoring vary/8 initial center(s) scheduled
Centers awaiting NEW certification	
Number of 4* to date	120
Number of 3* to date	29
Number of 2* to date	4
# Of Accredited Centers	57
# Of Non-Accredited Centers	96
# Of Military Centers	8
# Of Initial Centers (as of Sept 2022)	32
# Of Centers Closed/withdrew/CCR deficiencies	9
# Of Centers who have increased star level since Sept.2022	39
2 STAR → 3 STAR	4
2 STAR → 4 STAR	10
3 STAR → 4 STAR	25

Initial Assessment information:

Grace noah's Learning Center	1214326	5/5/2023	June 12-23	initial- 3	Bandera
All Kids 1st Learning Academy	1277606	5/9/2023	May 22- June 2-B/O 5/31 6/1 6/2	initial- 3	Bexar
Kids R Kids Camino	911770	5/17/2023	June 12-23- B/O JUNE 12& 13	initial- 4	Bexar
International Academy	1634190	5/19/2023	May 29-June 9-B/O June 9th	Initial- 4	Bexar
Pilgrim Head Start	1185606	5/22/2023	June 5-16	Initial- 4	Bexar
Brighter Futures	910572	5/22/2023	June 26-July 7	initial-	GUADALUPE
Bo Peep	541926	5/26/2023	June 12-23- B/O 21,22,& 23	initial- 3	Bexar
Bustos Daycare	874987	5/26/2023	June 19-30-B/O 22nd	initial- 4	Bexar
Play 2 Learn CDC	1693319	6/2/2023	June 26-July 7-B/O June 27&28	initial -	Bexar
Mi Casa- Bandera	1703959	6/9/2023	July 3-14- B/O 10th & 11th	initial-	Bexar
Lil Pookies Child Care	1687145	6/13/2023	July 10-21	initial -	Bexar
Bustos Youth Center	1547926	6/21/2023	July 10-21	initial-	Bexar
Kids Academy	1516307	6/23/2023	July 10-21-B/O 19-21	initial-	Guadalupe
Heaven Little Angels	1686958	6/6/2023	July 10-21	initial-	Bexar
Y School Age- Keriwald	538444	5/26/2023	Sept 11-22	initial-	Bexar

Location	Programs	CCS Programs	TRS Programs	Percentage TRS of CCS Programs
Bexar Early Learning Programs	788	436	128	29.36%
Rural Early Learning Programs	254	132	23	17.42%
Total	1042	568	151	26.58%

Alternatives:

N/A

Fiscal Impact:

N/A

Recommendation:

N/A.

Next Steps:

WSA will continue monitoring assessment scheduling and progress. Assessments will continue as outlined, following TWC guidance and processes.

Attachment:

None.

MEMORANDUM

To: Early Care & Education Committee

From: Adrian Lopez, CEO

Presented by: Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care

Date: July 14, 2023

Subject: TRS Contracted Slots Pilot Briefing

Summary:

On June 10, 2022, WSA received Board approval to proceed with awarding three centers contracted slots. WSA has received signed contracts from the selected centers and is actively working to provide the resources necessary to begin implementation of contracted slots pilot. Prior to rollout, WSA must adhere to TWC's guidelines on policy implementation for Contracted Slots.

Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) Rules, Section 809.13, requires Boards to develop policies for the design and management of the delivery of childcare services in a public process. Rules require Boards to have a policy related to contracted slots agreements as described in 809.96 if the Board opts to enter into such agreements.

As WSA Board is one of only two Workforce Boards who have elected to enter the TRS Contracted Slots pilot, WSA must develop and adopt policy for implementation.

Analysis:

Contracted slots officially began with the first child enrolled on October 3, 2022. New centers continue to be called in order to confirm interest in Child Care Services Scholarship and are being emailed the Child Care Enrollment opportunity to confirm interest in Contracted Slots programs.

- Converse Christian, awarded 15 slots, has enrolled 13 children: 5 infants and 8 toddlers, leaving 2 contracted seats available.
- De Paul, awarded 20 contracted slots, has enrolled 11 children: 3 infants and 8 toddlers, leaving 6 contracted seats available.
- La Mision, awarded 15 slots, has enrolled 7 children: 3 infants and 4 toddlers, leaving 8 contracted seats available.

Center	Filled Slots	Open Slots	Total
Converse Christian	5 infant / 8 toddler	0 infant / 2 toddler	15 slots
De Paul	3 infant / 8 toddler	3 infant / 3 toddler	20 slots
La Mision	3 infant / 4 toddler	2 infant / 6 toddler	15 slots

Alternatives:

N/A

Fiscal Impact:

TWC awarded WSA \$746,230.00 for the implementation and management of the TRS Contracted Slots pilot.

Recommendation:

N/A

Next Steps:

- WSA will remain in communication with the childcare contractor and providers awarded contracted slots to field questions and serve as a liaison for information on Contracted Slots.
- WSA will continue to support and guide the Early Learning Programs with implementation.
- WSA will work with childcare contractors to ensure tracking/monitoring per TWC requirements.
- WSA will continue to track progress of the pilot, logging questions, challenges, and TWC responses, to help other Boards who may be interested in future opportunities for Contracted Slots, and to serve as a guide for future staff who implement Contracted Slots programs.
- WSA submitted a Contract Action Request (CAR) to TWC to request allowance to extend the contract from March 2023 to December 2023, to allow time for families enrolled to receive the full year of care under the contracted seat grant opportunity.
 - TWC approved the extension.

Attachments:

N/A

MEMORANDUM

To: Early Care & Education Committee

From: Adrian Lopez, CEO

Presented by: Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care

Date: July 14, 2023

Subject: Entry Level Designation & Efforts Towards Increasing and Accessing Quality

Summary:

House Bill (HB) 2607, 87th Texas Legislature, Regular Session (2021), amended Texas Government Code §2308.3155 to require that all regulated providers of TWC-funded CCS participate in the Texas Rising Star program. HB 2607 also required the creation of a new Entry Level Designation and a maximum length of time that a childcare program may participate at the Entry Level Designation.

Additionally, HB 2607 required TWC to develop a process that allows a childcare program to request a waiver to extend the length of time, which may not exceed 36 months, that the childcare program may participate at the Entry Level Designation.

Prior to the enactment of HB 2607, the TWC's three-member Commission (Commission) approved the amendment of TWC Chapter 809 Child Care Services rules in January 2021 to adopt a Pre-Star Designation and a requirement that all regulated CCS childcare providers achieve that designation. This provision has been superseded by the new Entry Level Designation.

On September 13, 2022, the Commission approved amendments to Chapter 809 to implement the §2308.3155 requirement, removing the Pre-Star Designation and replacing it with the legislatively mandated Entry Level Designation. The amended rules regarding the Entry Level Designation became effective October 3, 2022.

With this new requirement, WSA continues to be in attendance during community meetings, participate in discussions, and provide opportunities to learn about the needs of the early childcare community. WSA continues to invite Early Learning Programs to the WSA Quality Cohorts that provide guidance and assistance to programs interested in obtaining TRS certification and additionally provide opportunities for programs to learn about other agencies and organizations that are available to assist in enhancing and elevating their program. WSA continues to oversee

and manage the quality budget and the CRRSA funding to ensure that Early Learning Programs have the tools and resources needed to build and maintain quality. WSA continues to reach out to rural communities to better understand childcare needs and to provide services and link communities with resources available. WSA has been working closely with United Way of San Antonio and ESC Region 20 to create a more efficient and seamless process for mentoring and coaching centers towards quality and continues to collaborate and share information on centers designated as Entry Level to aid mentors and coaches in our Board areas and be able to view the landscape on the number of centers that exist that are eligible and in need of outreach to begin the path towards quality.

Analysis:

- Entry Level Eligibility and Timelines
 - Boards must be aware that TWC Chapter 809 Child Care Services rule §809.131(d) establishes a maximum time of 24 months that a CCS provider may remain at the Entry Level Designation. The CCS provider must achieve Texas Rising Star certification of at least the two-star level within the 24-month period.

Entry Level Designation Timeline—New CCS Providers

Deadline	Action
CCS Agreement Start Date	The provider meets Entry Level designation.
12 Months	Boards must screen providers for initial Texas Rising Star certification.
18 Months	If the provider is not meeting Texas Rising Star certification, no new family referrals may be made.
23 Months	If the provider has not met Texas Rising Star certification requirements, notify enrolled families of potential loss of the provider’s CCS eligibility.
24 Months	The provider must achieve Texas Rising Star certification to continue to serve as a CCS provider.

As of 6/26/2023, Alamo Board had 403 centers meeting Entry Level Designation and requiring outreach to become TRS.

- 341 LCCC
- 62 Homes
 - 106 Rural
 - 92 LCCC
 - 14 Homes
 - 297 Bexar
 - 249 LCCC
 - 48 Homes

- 77 Providers submitted an interest form to join WSA's Spring Cohort 2023
 - 62- Bexar
 - 52 LCCC
 - 10 Homes
 - 15- Rural
 - 11 LCCC
 - 4 Homes
 - 70 Providers are actively engaged in the Spring 2023 Cohort
 - 59 LCCC
 - 49 Bexar
 - 10 Rural
 - 11 Homes
 - 8 Bexar
 - 3 Rural
- 70/425 Providers recently completed the WSA Quality Cohort for Fall 2022
 - 55 Bexar
 - 15 Rural
- Initial WSA pilot cohort 11 Providers completed.
 - 11 LCCC (Bexar)
 - 8 TRS Certified
 - 3 received a TRS 4 Star certification.
 - 4 received a TRS 3 Star certification.
 - 1 received a TRS 2 Star certification.
 - 2 Not Eligible to submit application
 - 1- Director not ready to submit application

WSA continues to collaborate with community partners to create an efficient and robust pathway for centers and homes to attain TRS certification and begin the pathway towards quality. WSA's Fall & Spring 2022 Cohort successfully reached 81 centers.

The cohort, in addition to providing guidance and overviews of the requirements of TRS, has been designed to connect these participants to resources and programs that are available to aid centers on their quest to expand and elevate quality. Examples of the organizations and programs who have been invited to share information with the cohort are: TWC who has presented on their Pre K Partnerships program, Texas Association for the Education of Young Children (TXAEYC) who has presented on the Teach program, Child Care Regulations (CCR) who has presented on common licensing deficiencies noted by representatives during observations of centers, Children's Learning Institute (CLI), Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS), Civitas/Curant/Avance on business coaching opportunities and Texas School Ready (TSR). WSA understands that by inviting presenters that offer resources that can assist in elevating the quality of care a child receives, we are helping to create more opportunities for Early

Learning Centers who are already on the pathway to TRS certification, see beyond the stars, and recognize that there are many opportunities available to continue to enhance and build quality.

In an effort to better understand the needs for childcare that rural communities have, and to provide support and resources on childcare, WSA has been hosting Rural Townhall/Community conversations with our 12 surrounding communities. WSA has created a partnership with Child Care Regulations, who is also attending and participating in these discussions and providing the community with additional resources and guidance upon request. WSA has completed the first cycle and has begun the second cycle of community conversations in Kerr, Frio, Wilson, Comal, Gillespie, Atascosa, Karnes, Guadalupe, Bandera, Medina, and Kendall counties. Although McMullen was initially scheduled, the conversation was cancelled due to the proposed venue not being available.

In August 2022, WSA partnered with United Way of San Antonio to re-launch & re-brand WSA's Provider Council. An application was sent out and 32 responses were received from interested Directors/Owners. Based on a variety of characteristics, such as location of center, National accreditation/TRS certification status, previous membership, and Center type, WSA and United Way selected 16 Directors/Owners to join the Provider Council. Members meet quarterly to address system level challenges within the early childcare community and members discuss and tackle issues, pose questions, share thoughts, and provide feedback on a variety of childcare topics. The first council members recently completed their full year of serving and WSA/UWSA are currently underway selecting new council members.

WSA continues to align the mentoring/coaching process towards quality TRS, by working with United Way of San Antonio and ESC 20 to create a more cohesive approach to mentoring and is coordinating warm handoffs for coaches/mentors between organizations, to support the provider with a seamless experience towards TRS certification. This newly implemented Alamo Pathway to Quality process is receiving positive feedback from the providers in the community who have expressed feeling a more cohesive and less confusing process as they work towards quality. TRS mentors work with Early Learning Programs to create Quality Improvement Plans (QIPs) that are designed to allow centers to create goals/expectations that they will work towards in order to achieve and maintain TRS certification. TRS mentors and WSA staff also participate in the Building Quality Meetings hosted by United Way of San Antonio that includes United Way Coaches.

WSA continues to collaborate and share information on Entry Level Designation centers to United Way, ESC 20, and Pre-K 4-SA to assist each organization with a list of centers who have and have not been outreached to or placed on the quality pathway so that each is better equipped to manage the landscape of centers still in need of support towards quality. Currently there are 403 Entry Level Designated Centers who are eligible to begin working with a mentor towards TRS certification.

Alternatives:

N/A

Fiscal Impact:

- An Entry-Level childcare program is not eligible for enhanced reimbursement rates that are available to two-, three-, and four-star certified childcare programs.
- Providers that fail to comply with the basic requirements or points threshold by March 31, 2023, will no longer be eligible to serve CCS families, thus ending their provider agreement and transferring any children in care within two weeks.
- For current CCS providers that do not initially comply with Entry Level requirements, the end date is March 2023.
- For current CCS providers that do comply with Entry Level requirements, the end date is September 2024.
- For new CCS providers, the end date is 24 months from the start date (when the CCS Provider Agreement was signed).

As we continue to work with our Early Learning Programs towards elevating and maintaining quality, the following are the investments that have been made into both ELD enrolled in a cohort and/or TRS certified programs.

Staff Bonuses (Jan22-Mar23)

Overview: Quarterly bonuses for TRS certified providers that sustain higher levels of quality by decreasing staff turnover and increasing staff retention.

Goal: To strengthen continuity of care for children attending Texas Rising Star (TRS) providers, Workforce Solutions Alamo (WSA) awarded eligible providers a grant that aimed to address the childcare shortage issue, by increasing staff wages through quarterly bonuses.

As of March 2023, WSA has invested \$2,604,050 in staff bonuses to 61 providers (41 Urban/20 rural), which impacted 1,496 Early Learning Professionals.

Staff Incentives (Oct21-Mar23)

Overview: Incentives for staff at Texas Rising Star (TRS) certified providers and newly certified providers that achieve and sustain higher levels of quality through an assessment and childcare staff paid after assessment results determined.

Goal: To strengthen continuity of care for children attending TRS Providers and encourage further participation in quality.

As of March 2023, WSA has invested \$466,450 in staff incentives which impacted 129 Early Learning Programs and 1,757 Early Learning Professionals.

The table below shows the individual incentive amount awarded to each member of staff based on the TRS certification.

TRS	Amount
2 Star	\$75.00
3 Star	\$150.00
4 Star	\$300.00

WSA Quality Cohort (Apr22-Mar23)

Overview: Recruitment and participation in the WSA Quality Cohort where providers learn the fundamentals of Texas Rising Star in a group setting. Providers earned materials and supplies for successful participation in the six-month cohort.

Goal: Increase the number of providers that apply for TRS certification and begin working with a mentor.

As of March 2023, WSA has invested \$645,300.01 in material which impacted 84 Early Learning Programs and approximately 8,027 children. Material awarded included indoor/outdoor kits, parent kits, and children’s assessments. 11 of the 81 have successfully achieved TRS certification.

Professional Development (Mar23)

Overview: Provide professional development opportunities to programs to maintain and meet licensing and TRS requirements.

Goal: To provide professional development opportunities for over 500 CCS providers through a virtual or in-person setting that aligns with Core Competencies for Practitioners and Administrators. WSA solicited \$250,000 for professional development through an RFP process and awarded 18 vendors to deliver training to the Alamo area with an active CCS agreement.

As of March 2023, WSA has scheduled 43 training courses from March to August, calendar for remainder of year is to come in July. Scheduled training will occur on a weekly basis, to be conducted during the week and Saturdays, and will also be offered during lunch and after hours.

Recommendation:

WSA continues to follow TWC guidance and is providing TRS mentoring and cohort opportunities to Early Learning Programs designated as Entry Level. In addition, WSA continues to explore opportunities to reach this community goal and are collaborating with other partners/organizations to expand our efforts.

Next Steps:

- WSA continues to monitor that all CCS providers located within the Board’s local workforce development area (workforce area) meet the minimum qualifications and basic requirements for Entry Level Designation described in §809.131(b), specifically, that the provider:
 - is not on a corrective or adverse action plan with Child Care Regulation (CCR); and
 - does not exceed the minimum points threshold for high- and medium-high weighted CCR deficiencies, per the Texas Rising Star Guidelines.

- WSA continues to ensure that all CCS providers located within the Board's workforce area designated as Entry Level are screened for initial Texas Rising Star certification.
- CCR compliance, per the Texas Rising Star Guidelines, by the end of the first 12 months in order to determine eligibility to begin the initial Texas Rising Star certification assessment process.
- WSA will ensure that any CCS provider designated as Entry Level that did not meet the initial certification screening requirements for Texas Rising Star, per the Texas Rising Star Guidelines, by the 18th month of the 24-month designation time frame does **not** continue to receive new CCS family referrals during this period, unless the provider is located in a childcare desert or serves an underserved population and is approved by TWC to accept new family referrals.
- WSA will note: Referrals may be made for siblings of children who are currently enrolled in the program during this period.
- WSA is providing all Entry Level Designated CCS providers located within the Board's workforce area with mentoring services, per the Texas Rising Star Guidelines.
- WSA continues to ensure TWC compliance with the following deadlines and timeline for new CCS providers designated as Entry Level.
- WSA has been aware that current CCS providers, providers with an active agreement as of October 3, 2022, would be administratively designated as Entry Level, effective October 3, 2022, and would be eligible to continue to serve as a CCS provider.

WSA will continue to partner and collaborate with agencies and organizations to provide support and resources to Early Learning Programs and families throughout the Alamo Board and will continue to explore additional ways, that through partnerships, we can support Early Learning Programs on the path towards quality and reduce duplication of services.

WSA continues to work on aligning the quality budget with both the quality cohort and certification process to ensure that centers receive the necessary support, resources, and materials that will help to elevate and maintain the quality of their centers.



Early Care & Education Committee

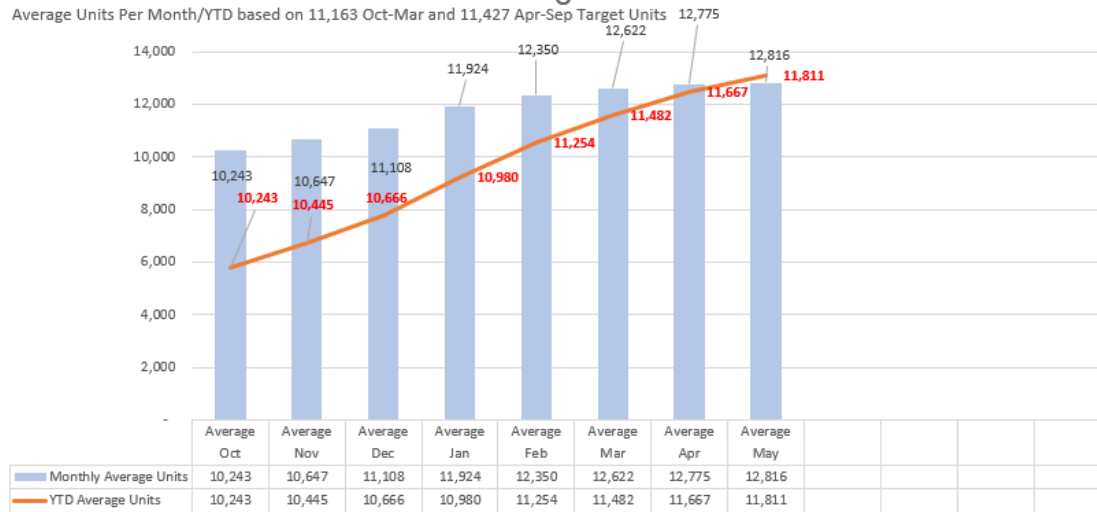
July 14, 2023





Child Care Performance Briefing

Child Care Performance Briefing FY 2023



	Oct Average	Nov Average	December Average	Jan Average	Feb Average	March Average	Apr Average	May Average
Choices	237	229	209	203	201	198	196	186
TANF						4		
Low Income	9,554	9,938	10,419	11,210	11,618	11,868	11,983	11,991
Former DFPS	382	401	392	419	428	439	476	511
Homeless	70	79	88	92	103	114	120	128
Monthly Average Units	10,243	10,647	11,108	11,924	12,350	12,622	12,775	12,816
Monthly % Average	91.76%	95.38%	99.50%	106.82%	110.64%	113.07%	111.79%	112.16%
YTD Average Units	10,243	10,445	10,666	10,980	11,254	11,482	11,667	11,811
YTD % Average	91.76%	93.57%	95.55%	98.36%	100.82%	102.86%	104.14%	105.14%
TWC Target	11,163	11,163	11,163	11,163	11,163	11,163	11,427	11,427

	Oct Average	Nov Average	Dec Average	Jan Average	Feb Average	March Average	Apr Average	May Average
Monthly Average %	91.76%	95.38%	99.50%	106.82%	110.64%	113.07%	111.79%	112.16%
YTD Average Units %	91.76%	93.57%	95.55%	98.36%	100.82%	102.86%	104.14%	105.14%

WSA's unofficial YTD avg for FY 2023 is 105.14%

CCDF Performance Status Methodology
 Year-to-Date numbers to calculate performance
 MP = 95%-105%
 +P = 105% or above
 -P = <94.99

SIR Performance Methodology
 Actual enrollments



Monthly Avg Enrollment % *



County	Families in Care	Children in Care	Families on Waitlist	Children on Waitlist
Atascosa	252	440	63	124
Bandera	27	47	8	16
Bexar	6269	11132	3683	6160
Comal	370	571	73	118
Frio	79	141	21	39
Gillespie	54	73	10	18
Guadalupe	410	657	109	197
Karnes	13	21	13	21
Kendall	63	100	17	28
Kerr	161	250	56	83
McMullen	0	0	0	0
Medina	160	280	48	74
Wilson	94	157	22	40
Grand Totals	7952	13869	4123	6918

* As of 6/27/2023



Texas Rising Star Assessment Update

TRS Assessment Results *

Information updated
06/26/2023

Total # of Currently Certified Centers	153
# of Annual Monitoring completed	105
# of Centers increased Star Level	39
• 2- Star to 3-Star	4
• 2- Star to 4-Star	10
• 3- Star to 4-Star	25
# of Centers awaiting assessment	15: initial 48: Annual Monitoring
# of centers submitting application for initial assessment since last Child Care Committee meeting	15

Percentage of TRS/CCS

Location	Programs	CCS Programs*	TRS Programs	Percentage TRS of CCS Programs
Bexar Early Learning Programs	788	436	128	29.36%
Rural Early Learning Programs	254	132	23	17.42%
Total	1042	568	151	26.58%

Results of Assessments

2 Star	4
3 Star	31
4 Star	120



	CCS Providers – BCY 23		
	Total CCS Providers	New Agreement	Agreement Ended
Oct	586	7	0
Nov	594	6	0
Dec	593	2	1
Jan	594	6	0
Feb	596	4	2
Mar	598	3	2
Apr	593	2	3
May	592	4	1
June	597		

Assessments completed



*Since August 2022



Texas Rising Star Contracted Slots Pilot

Texas Rising Star Contracted Slots: Update

- 50 Slots awarded for Infant and/or Toddler expansion
- 1-year contract

Provider Name	STAR	Current CCR Capacity	Current Number of CCS families served	Total Amount awarded	Amount of Infant/Toddler Slots filled	Number of Infant/Toddler Slots awarded to program
Converse Christian School 9146 FM78 Converse, TX 78109	4	94	43	\$184,080.50	Infants – 5 Toddler -8	15
La Mision Child Care and Kid Kamp 2211 S. Hackberry San Antonio, TX 78210	4	90	28	\$137,641.70	Infants – 3 Toddler -4	15
DePaul Children's Center 7607 Somerset Rd. San Antonio TX 78211	4	200	37	\$167,051.20	Infants – 3 Toddler - 8	20
Grand Total for all 3 Providers		384	108	\$488,773.40	Infants– 11 Toddler- 20 Total: 31	Total Slots – 50 Awarded





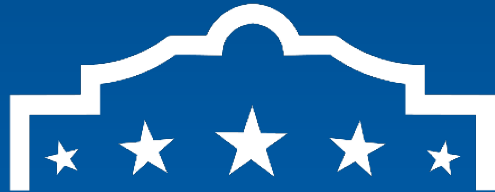
Entry Level Designation & Efforts Towards Increasing and Accessing Quality

Texas Rising Star Entry Level Designation

[Texas Government Code, §2308.3155](#) requires all CCS child care and early learning programs be included in the Texas Rising Star program at an Entry Level designation and requires TWC to establish a maximum length of time (24-months) that a child care and early learning program can participate at Entry Level designation.

To qualify for Entry Level designation, a child care and early learning program must meet the minimum quality standards outlined below and will receive technical assistance and support under the Texas Rising Star program.

- licensed or registered with CCR (may have an initial permit) or regulated by the United States Military;
- not on Corrective or Adverse Action with CCR; and
- meets the points threshold of 75 for high- and medium-high-weighted CCR deficiencies (based on a review of CCR licensing history within the most recent 12 months)



Texas
Rising Star

Entry Level Designation Timeline
for Child Care Programs

Child care programs that provide Child Care Services (CCS) will be required to participate in the Texas Workforce Commission Texas Rising Star certification program via an Entry Level Designation. This timeline is for providers that have a current CCS agreement with their Workforce Solutions Board (Board) as of 10.03.22. Timeframes for new CCS providers are the same but deadlines will shift accordingly. CCS programs can be screened as needed or warranted for Texas Rising Star initial certification eligibility at any time between 10.03.22 – 09.30.24.

By October 3, 2022 Determine Entry Level Designation Eligibility

- Your Board will evaluate your program to determine eligibility for Entry Level Designation and assign a mentor to support your program.
- Eligible > Begin working toward your Texas Rising Star certification. Certification Deadline: 09.30.24.
- Not eligible > You will receive an allowance to provide CCS for an interim timeframe. Re-evaluation Deadline: 03.31.23.

By March 31, 2023 Re-Evaluate Entry Level Designation Eligibility (as applicable)

- Your Board will re-evaluate your program for Entry Level Designation eligibility.
- Eligible > Begin working toward your Texas Rising Star certification. Certification Deadline: 09.30.24.
- Not Eligible > Your CCS provider agreement will be terminated. Children in care will be transferred to an eligible provider.

By September 30, 2023 Evaluate Texas Rising Star Certification Eligibility

- Your Board will evaluate your program for Texas Rising Star certification eligibility.
- Eligible > The Board will acknowledge certification eligibility and schedule an assessment prior to 09.30.24.
- Not Eligible > Your program will have six months to meet eligibility. Re-evaluation Deadline: 03.31.24.

By March 31, 2024 Re-Evaluate Texas Rising Star Certification Eligibility

- Your Board will re-evaluate your program for Texas Rising Star certification eligibility.
- Eligible > The Board will conduct a Texas Rising Star assessment to award certification prior to 09.30.24.
- Not Eligible > Your program will have six months to meet eligibility. You may NOT receive new family referrals during this time. Re-evaluation Deadline: 09.30.24.

By September 30, 2024 Establish Texas Rising Star Certification

- Your Board will re-evaluate your program for Texas Rising Star certification eligibility.
- Eligible > The Board will conduct a Texas Rising Star assessment to award certification. Certification Deadline: within three months, by 12.30.24.
- Not Eligible > Your CCS provider agreement will be terminated. Children in care will be transferred to an eligible provider.

Entry Level Designation & Texas Rising Star Quality Pathway Cohort



403 providers have been identified by TWC as meeting Entry Level Designation

- 312 Bexar & 113 Rural
- 341 Centers (249 Bexar/92 Rural)
 - 62 Homes (48 Bexar/14 Rural)



Texas Rising Star Quality Pathway Cohort



Currently 70 out of 403 eligible Providers are enrolled in the WSA Quality Cohort

- 59 LCCC
 - 49 Bexar
 - 10 Rural
- 11 Homes
 - 8 Bexar
 - 3 Rural

A total of 81 Providers have completed a WSA Quality Cohort since 10/2022

8 TRS Certified

- 3 - Received a TRS 4 Star certification.
- 4 - Received a TRS 3 Star certification.
- 1 - Received a TRS 2 Star certification.
- 2 - Not Eligible to Submit Application
- 1 - Pending Director decision to submit application.

WSA Efforts for Access to Quality

•Professional Development Opportunities for Early Learning Programs:

- WSA is currently scheduled to offer 43 Professional Development courses (March through August)

•WSA Quality Cohorts:

- 11: Spring 2022 Cohort (completed)
- 70: Fall 2023 Cohort (completed)
- 70: Spring 2023 Cohort (in process)

•WSA/UWSA: Provider Council

•Alamo Quality Pathway

The Alamo Quality Pathway was established as a collaborative between UWSA, Workforce Solutions Alamo and ESC-20 to share resources and align coaching and mentoring programs.

Is a Texas Rising Star aligned pathway for early learning programs as they pursue quality certification.



WSA Efforts for Access to Quality: Investments in Quality



Overview: Quarterly bonuses for TRS certified providers that sustain higher levels of quality by decreasing staff turnover and increasing staff retention.

Goal: To strengthen continuity of care for children attending Texas Rising Star (TRS) providers, Workforce Solutions Alamo (WSA) awarded eligible providers a grant that aimed to address the Child Care shortage issue, by increasing staff wages through quarterly bonuses. As of March 2023, **WSA has invested \$2,604,050 in staff bonuses to 61 providers (41 Urban/20 Rural), which impacted 1,496 Early Learning Professionals.**

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The table below shows the individual incentive amount awarded to each staff based on the TRS certification:

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Goal: Increase the number of providers that submit an application for TRS certification and begin working with a Mentor. As of March 2023, **WSA has invested \$645,300.01 in material which impacted 84 Early Learning Programs and approximately 8,027 children.** Material awarded included indoor/outdoor kits, parent kits, and children's assessments. 11 of the 81 have successfully achieved TRS certification

Overview: Provide professional development opportunities to programs to maintain and meet licensing and TRS requirements.

Goal: To provide professional development opportunities for over 500 CCS providers through a virtual or in-person setting that align with Core Competencies for Practitioners and Administrators. **WSA invested \$250,000 for professional development** through an RFP process and awarded 18 vendors to deliver trainings to the Alamo area with an active CCS agreement. As of March 2023, **WSA has scheduled 43 trainings from March to August**, calendar for remainder of year is to come in July.



Questions?



Child Care Success Stories



Child Care Success: Lakia G.'s Story

“Workforce Solutions Alamo has helped my family tremendously by providing affordable childcare services at safe, dependable childcare centers.

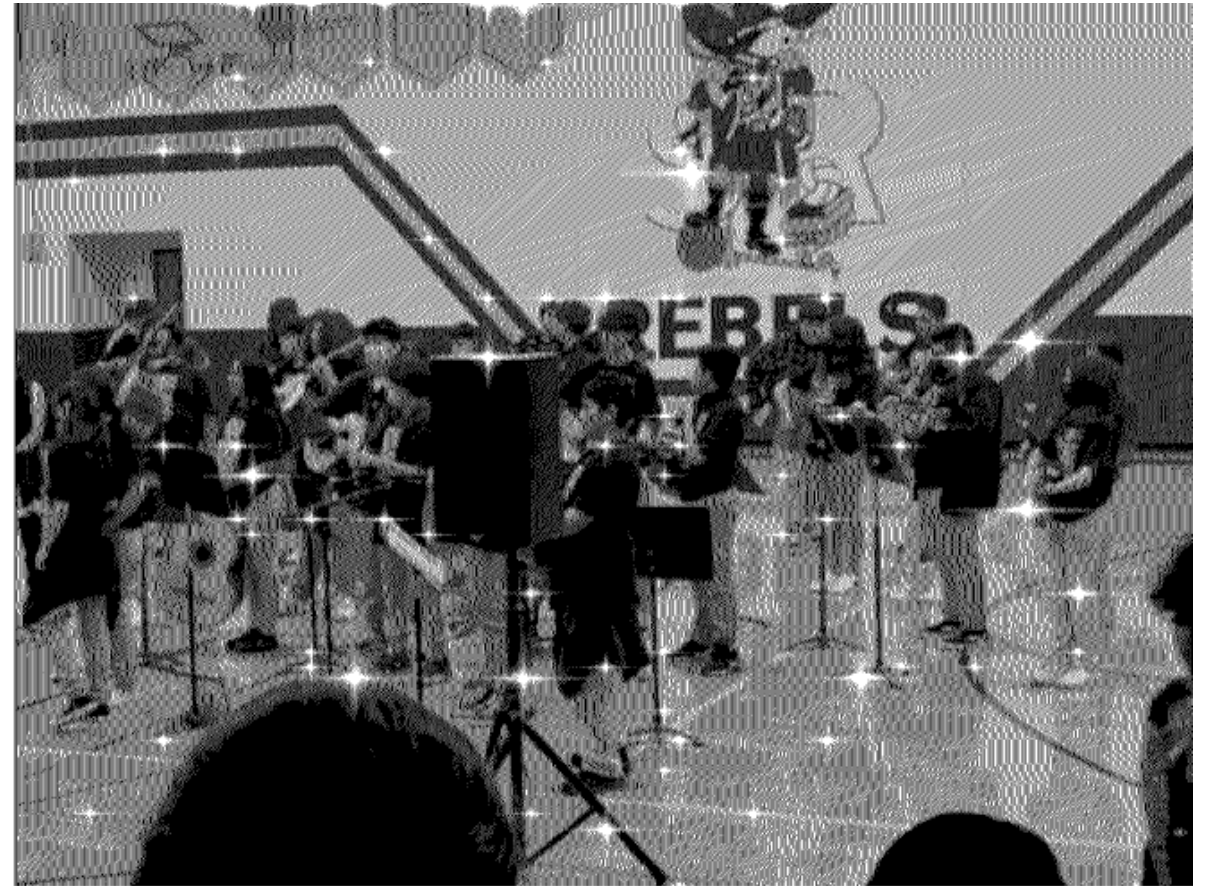
Without them it would be difficult for me to work as a single mother and afford daycare.” – Lakia G.



Child Care Success: Cynthia V.'s Story

“I’m a single mother trying my hardest to raise my kids to become better people.

With this program I can work and have the confidence that my kids have a proper ride to and from school while I’m at work working to put food on our table and a roof over their heads.” – Cynthia V.



Child Care Success: Laura F.'s Story

“Child Care Services has helped me as a single parent keep my 3 girls enrolled in childcare while I obtain a job as a teacher. Their program has helped me out financially and emotionally due to the fact I am a single parent and desperately need the assistance so I may provide for my little family during the day.

I have very little to no assistance when it comes to family helping me care for my children, especially my baby, so the daycare facility has become like a family to me helping me assist in watching my children grow. So, thank you so much for all that y'all do!!!!” – Laura F.



Child Care Success: Kimberly C.'s Story

“Child Care Services made it possible for me to work and pursue my Bachelor’s of Science in Nursing!

They have provided me tons of assistance and made the process so easy! Thank you for everything you do!” – Kimberly C.

