



EARLY CARE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING

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

May 5, 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.

For those members of the public that would like to participate and cannot attend in person at the host location, please call toll-free 1-877-858-6860, which will provide two-way communications through a speaker phone. For additional information, please call Linda G. Martinez, (210) 272- 3250.

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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
Ms. Tylane Barnes, M.Ed., Converse Christian School & Early Learning Center
Ms. Rita Medellin, Owner/Director, Leap Ahead Learning
- V. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MINUTES FROM MARCH 3, 2023
CHILD CARE COMMITTEE MEETING
Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair
- VI. EARLY MATTERS UPDATE AND HB1979 DISCUSSION
Presenter: Mark Larson, Executive Director, Early Matters San Antonio
- VII. CHILD CARE UPDATES (DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION)
Presenter: Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care
 - a. Child Care Performance Briefing
 - b. Texas Rising Star Assessment Update
 - c. TRS Contracted Slots Pilot Briefing
 - d. Entry Level Designation & Efforts Towards Increasing and Accessing Quality
- 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**

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- Seeks 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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CHILD CARE COMMITTEE MEETING - MINUTES

Workforce Solutions Alamo
100 N. Santa Rosa, Suite 120, Board Room
San Antonio, TX 78207

March 3, 2023

10AM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor (Chair), Leslie Cantu, Yousef Kassim (10:01 am), Betty Munoz (10:03 am)

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Dawn Dixon (10:10 am), Dr. Sara Baray (10:01 am), Mark Larson (10:04 am), Liza Gomez (10:01 am), Kristy Kothe (10:12 am)

WSA STAFF: Adrian Lopez, Katherine Pipoly, Giovanna Escalante-Vela, Jessica Villarreal, Chuck Agwuegbo, Dr. Ricardo Ramirez, Linda Martinez, Vanessa McHaney, Jessica Lockhart, Helane Aghayere, Carlos Garcia, Kim Villarreal, Jessica Bracamonte, Terry Trevino

LEGAL COUNSEL: None.

GUEST: None.

AGENDA

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United States (Toll Free): 1-415-655-0002**

Meeting Number & Access Code: 2483 221 7990

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- I. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM DETERMINATION
Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair
At 10:00 am, Chair DeHoyos O'Connor called the meeting to order.
- II. ROLL CALL
Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair
The roll was called, and a quorum was declared present.
- III. PUBLIC COMMENT
Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair
None.
- IV. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST
Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair
None.
- V. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MINUTES FROM NOVEMBER 7, 2022 CHILD CARE COMMITTEE MEETING AND INFORMATIVE MEETING ON JANUARY 20, 2023
Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair
Upon motion by Leslie Cantu and second by Dr. Sarah Baray, the Committee unanimously approved the minutes from November 7, 2022 Child Care Committee Meeting and Informative Meeting on January 20, 2023.
- VI. CHILD CARE UPDATES (DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION)
Presenter: Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care
 - a. Child Care Performance Briefing

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- WSA’s unofficial YTD average for FY23 is 96.09% which is in the meets performance range.
- Jessica Villarreal visited onsite to observe the processes of enrollment. The challenges that the staff is having in the enrollment process is to gather all the required documentation. Parents are struggling to care for their children, working multiple jobs, and attending school or training, which makes it difficult for them to turn in paperwork, return phone calls, or choose a childcare center.
- b. Texas Rising Star Assessment Update
 - Percentage of TRS/CCS is 24%, with 120 in urban and 22 in rural.
 - Mark Larson would like a detailed report on how many centers joined and opted out of CCS and the reason for it. In addition, he would also like to see how many centers joined or dropped out of TRS and the reason for it.
 - Liza Gomez was asked to present the Salesforce database/platform of all the providers in the Bexar County area at the next meeting.
 - Currently two centers are awaiting an initial assessment and 87 centers are awaiting their annual monitoring for TRS.
- c. TRS Contracted Slots Pilot Briefing
 - 50 slots have been awarded for infant and/or toddler expansion with a one-year contract. So far ten have been placed at Converse Christian School, seven at La Mision Child Care and Kid Kamp, and four at DePaul Children’s Center.
- d. Entry Level Designation & Efforts Towards Increasing Quality for CCS Centers (TWC timeline of 24 months)
 - The deadline to become TRS certified is September 30, 2024.
 - 411 providers have been identified by TWC as meeting Entry Level Designation. Of the 302 in Bexar County and 109 in rural communities, 348 are centers and 63 are homes. WSA is reaching out to all of these providers to let them know they have access to mentoring services to assist them in reaching TRS status. Mentors are also sending out notifications to these providers and are receiving responses.
 - Currently 71 out of 411 eligible providers are enrolled in the WSA Quality Cohort with 56 being in Bexar County and 15 in rural communities.
 - In the previous cohort, 11 providers completed. Of the 11, four have received a TRS 4 Star certification, three have submitted applications for assessment, two are actively working with a mentor before submitting an application, and two are not currently eligible for an assessment due to deficiencies.
- e. WSA Efforts for Access to Quality

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- Collaborating with United Way and Pre-K 4 SA to share information on centers who are in cohorts and those on the Entry Level Designation list in an effort to avoid duplication of services and to reach as many centers as possible through mentoring and coaching.
- Mentors are creating QIPs with Early Learning Programs working towards TRS certification and after receiving certification to maintain quality.
- Continuing to explore opportunities to continue to expand reach in mentoring and coaching centers with other prospective partners.
- Connecting with TWC, TECPDS, CLI, Child Care Regulations, TXAEYC/TEACH and Texas School Ready who have presented information to cohort.
- Completed Procurement Process for Professional Development/Trainers to support Early Learning Center staff. (Awaiting returned signed contracts to begin projected scheduling of PD/trainings with vendors.)
- Received extension to continue Texas Rising Star Contracted Slots Pilot through December 2023.
- Hosting Provider Council meetings with United Way to discuss childcare topics, policies, and gaining insight into the areas of importance/concern from Early Learning Centers prospectives.

VII. CEO REPORT

Presenter: Adrian Lopez, CEO

- a. Success Stories

VIII. CHAIR REPORT

Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair

- Based on discussions at the Board of Directors Retreat, Ana DeHoyos O'Connor proposed changing the Child Care Committee name to Early Care & Education Committee. All committee members agreed on this change.
- Ana DeHoyos O'Connor is going to extend an invitation to Jennifer Martinez from Region 20 to join the Early Care & Education Committee.
- Ana DeHoyos O'Connor is receiving the Champion of Advocacy Award from the Texas Association of Education of Young Children.

- IX. Executive Session: Pursuant to Chapter 551 of the Texas Open Meetings Act, the Committee may recess 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:

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- c. Pending or Contemplated Litigation; and
- d. Government Code §551.074- Personnel Matters involving Senior Executive Staff and Employees of Workforce Solutions Alamo.

None.

X. ADJOURNMENT

Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair

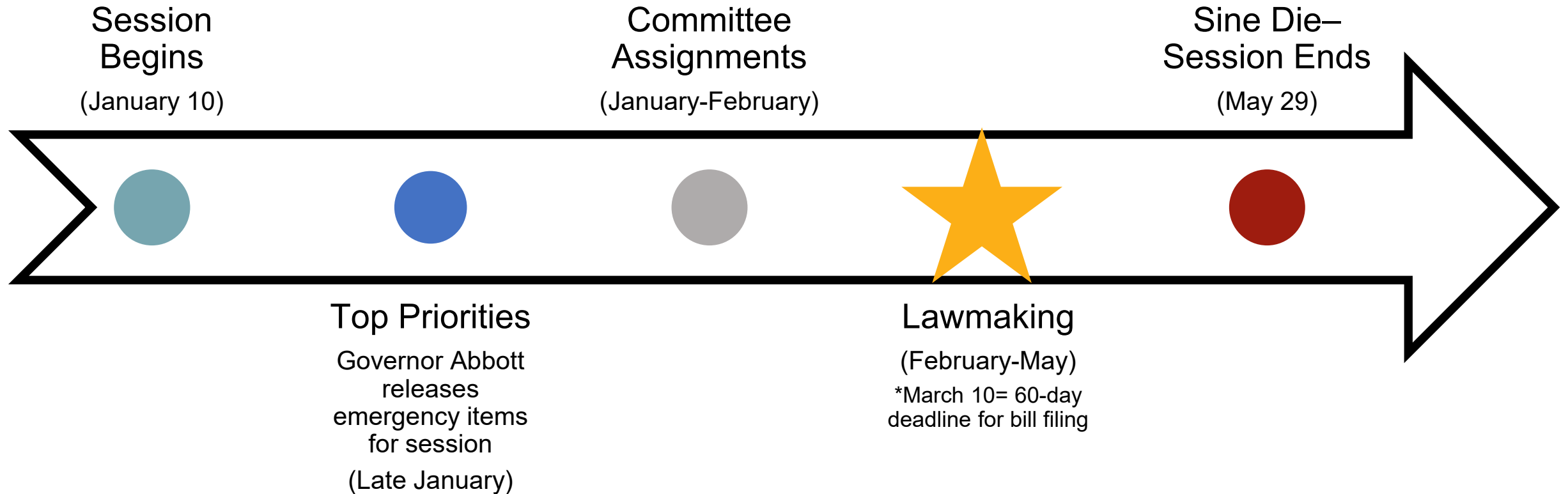
At 11:01 am, Chair DeHoyos O'Connor adjourned the meeting.

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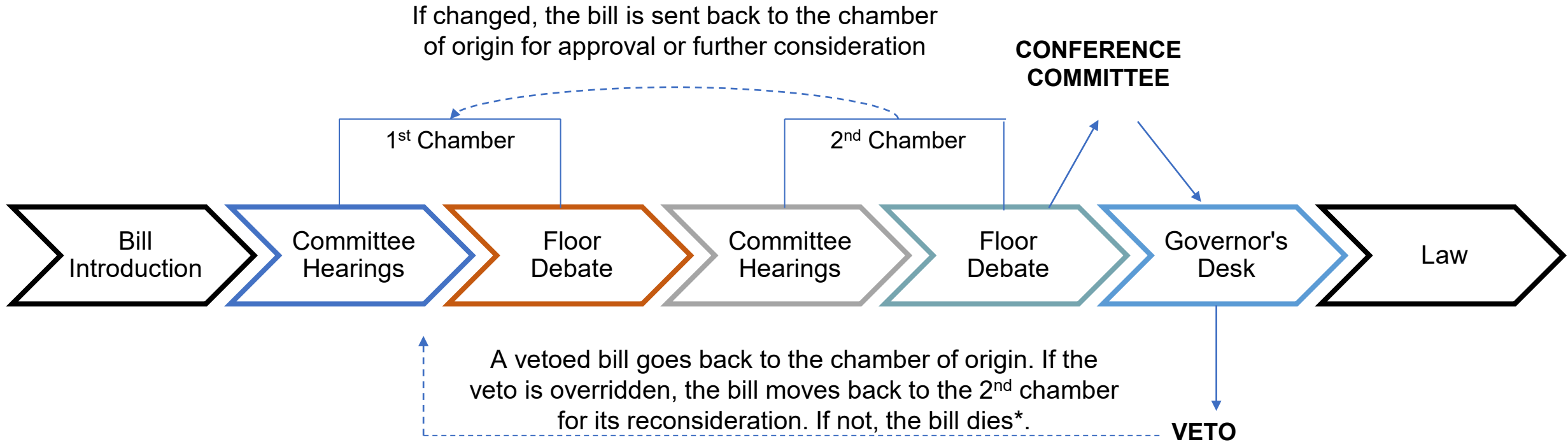
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88th Legislative Session Timeline

The TX Legislature meets in Regular Session for 140 days (January - May) of odd-numbered years.



How a Bill Becomes A Law



**Though it is technically "dead," the bill language can reappear via an amendment in other bills.*

88th Session by the Numbers

TX Legislature continues to break records as we enter the final third of the session!

7,961

Bills were filed with 68% in the House and 32% in the Senate

\$32B+

Budget surplus for the 24-25 biennium with an overall \$300B+ budget (note: there are constitutional spending caps)

75+

Bills filed about PreK or child care with themes related to access, standards and requirements, and the role of government/private sector.

13

House and Senate committees that have heard relevant ECE bills

Update on 88th Shared Legislative Agenda



Topic	Bill	Sponsor	Latest Actions	Current Status
Increase PreK partnerships	HB 1614	Rep Dutton	4/18 Voted out of House Pub Ed (9-3)	In calendars
Property tax relief for providers in TWC scholarship program	HB 3621	Rep Talarico	4/24 Voted out of House Ways & Means (9-2)	Passed committee
	SB 1145	Sen West and Eckhardt	5/2 Voted out of Senate	Referred to Ways and Means in the House
Strengthen LWDBs	HB 1979	Reps Raney, Plesa, & Bumgarner	5/2 Heard on the House floor and voted out	Heading to Senate
	SB 1844	Sen Blanco	3/20 Referred to NRED	Waiting for House bill
Reimbursement rates for quality child care	HB 1834	Rep Thompson	4/25 Heard in IRED	Pending in committee
	SB 353	Sen Zaffirini, Blanco, Miles, & West	2/15 Referred to NRED	Waiting for hearing
Bedrock funding	Rider	Rep Walle	3/14 Heard in committee	In Article XI

What's Next?

As Session wraps up the ECE community has a critically important role to play in supporting bills to cross the finish line, weighing in on implementation, and reflecting on how we can collectively continue to move the needle for improving early learning for our youngest Texans.

Vox

Fixing the child care crisis starts with understanding it

Not everything is talking about the same thing — and that matters.

By Rachel M. Cohen on April 17, 2023 6:30 am



"The bottom line is you'd be hard-pressed to find anyone who says they don't want to support children, families, and child care workers — and if "tackling the child care crisis" simply means that, then yes, everyone agrees. **But figuring out exactly how to do that is where things get tricky, and where the political rubber meets the road.** It also helps explain why so little has gotten done, despite seeming consensus on the crisis rhetoric."

MEMORANDUM

To: Early Care & Education Committee

From: Adrian Lopez, CEO

Presented by Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care

Date: May 5, 2023

Subject: Child Care Performance Briefing

Summary:

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

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

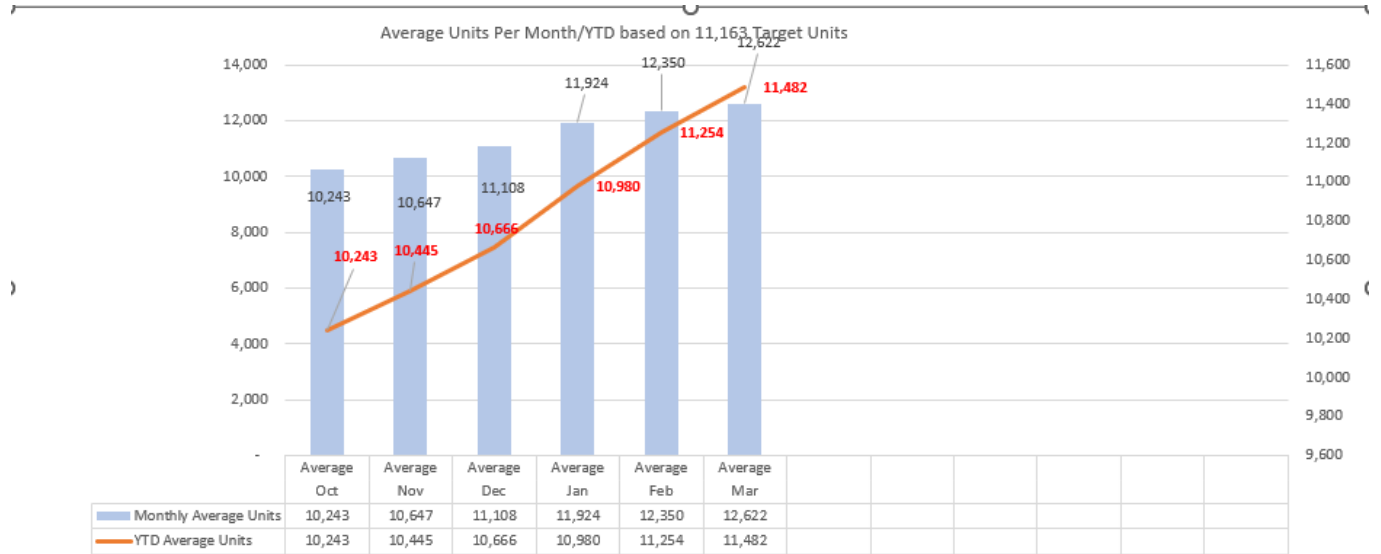
TWC has set Alamo's FY 2023 Target at 11,427.

Alamo is currently performing at 102.86%.

Analysis:

- WSA's unofficial YTD average for March shows that average enrollments of 11,482 or 102.86%, which reflects that we are trending positively, and are currently in the Meet Performance range.
- Child Care contractor continues actively enrolling and processing documentation for families to begin care.
- Challenges that Child Care contractor face are non-responsive clients, clients who fail to submit complete application, clients who delay in selecting a Child Care program, clients who delay submitting additional documentation to complete packet.

Information collected: 4.18.2023



	Oct Average	Nov Average	Dec Average	Jan Average	Feb Average	March Average
Monthly Average %	91.76%	95.38%	99.50%	106.82%	110.64%	113.07%
YTD Average Units %	91.76%	93.57%	95.55%	98.36%	100.82%	102.86%

	Oct Average	Nov Average	December Average	Jan Average	Feb Average	March Average
Choices	237	229	209	203	201	198
TANF						4
Low Income	9,554	9,938	10,419	11,210	11,618	11,868
Former DFPS	382	401	392	419	428	439
Homeless	70	79	88	92	103	114
Monthly Average Units	10,243	10,647	11,108	11,924	12,350	12,622
Monthly % Average	91.76%	95.38%	99.50%	106.82%	110.64%	113.07%
YTD Average Units	10,243	10,445	10,666	10,980	11,254	11,482
YTD % Average	91.76%	93.57%	95.55%	98.36%	100.82%	102.86%
TWC Target	11,163	11,163	11,163	11,163	11,163	11,163

As of 4/18/2023

County	Families in Care	Children in Care	Families on Waitlist	Children on Waitlist
Atascosa	242	393	2	3
Bandera	28	46	0	0
Bexar	6289	10885	2863	4658
Comal	367	553	8	10
Frio	85	153	1	1
Gillespie	48	63	1	4
Guadalupe	402	665	10	30
Karnes	15	25	0	0
Kendall	56	94	0	0
Kerr	171	255	13	18
McMullen	0	0	0	0
Medina	147	253	3	7
Wilson	94	158	0	0
Grand Totals	7944	13543	2901	4731

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 effort to provide child care to as many families as possible while remaining in good standing with TWC.

Recommendation:

N/A

Next Steps:

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

MEMORANDUM

To: Early Care & Education Committee

From: Adrian Lopez, CEO

Presented by: Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care

Date: May 5, 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 144 Early Learning Programs certified as Texas Rising Star. Having completed Recertification Assessments, TRS Assessors are conducting Annual Monitoring Assessment visits and initial certifications as they receive applications. Since our last Early Care & Education Committee meeting, 5 centers have submitted an application for an initial assessment (submission date(s): 01/23/2023, 4/7/2023, 4/18/2023) and 87 centers are preparing for an annual monitoring visit, 56 monitoring visits have been completed.

Data as of 04/17/2023

Total Number of Centers Scheduled	Annual Monitoring vary /3 initial center(s) scheduled
Centers awaiting NEW certification	4
Number of 4* to date	118
Number of 3* to date	23
Number of 2* to date	3
# Of Accredited Centers	57
# Of Non-Accredited Centers	87
# Of Military Centers	08
# Of Initial Centers	16
# Of Centers Closed/withdrew/CCR deficiencies	8
# 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:

center name	License #	Application Date	2 week window	Star Level
Initial Applicants				
I'm Just a Kid	1703790	2/15/2022	Aug 22- Sept 2	4
Green Acres Child Care Center-	239062	3/25/2022	Aug 15- Aug 26	3
Central Christian	25681	5/3/2022	Aug 22- Sept 2	4
Lil Peas and Sprouts Learning Center	1531431	7/14/2022	oct 17-28	3
Little Wonderland	530628	8/2/2022	Sept 5-16	4
Michaels Child Care	851749	8/5/2022	Oct 3-14	3
Pinnacle Kids Academy	1264586	8/26/2022	Sept 26- Oct 7	4
Good Samaritan Center	31441	9/19/2022	Oct 24- Nov 4	4
Pinnacle Kids Academy-Braun	1676993	9/19/2022	Oct 24- Nov 4	4
Pinnacle Kids Academy- Classen	1507336	10/17/2022	Nov28-Dec9	4
World of Knowledge ELC	1553682	11/9/2022	Nov28-Dec 9	3
Stepping Stones	1657974	12/22/2022	Jan 16-27	3
JPR International Inc. DBA Kidus	1648794	1/2/2023	Jan 16-27	3
kids r kids westpoint	1699557	1/6/2023	Jan23-Feb 3	4
Little Treehouse # 2	1704588	1/20/2023	Feb 20- Mar 3	2
Little Treehouse #4	1704598	1/20/2023	Feb 20- Mar 3	Initial- Assessment stopped due to LicensingDeficiencies
Little Treehouse # 6	1704600	1/23/2023	Feb 20- Mar 3	3
A 2 Z Learning #3	1629166	4/7/2023	April 24- May 5- B/O april 28 & May 4&5	initial-
Little Treehouse #3	1704594	4/7/2023	April 24- May 5	Initial-
Mi Casa- Timber Path	855671	4/18/2023	May 15-26	Initial-
Suburban School	1679705	4/18/2023	May 15-26	Initial-

	Date withdrew	Reason
No Longer TRS		
	12/21	CCR Deficiencies
	2/28/22	CCR Deficiencies
	5/31/22	Closed- withdrew
	7/22	must reapply
	7 22	CCR Deficiencies
	7/22	withdrew
	8/12/22	Closed- withdrew
	1/23	CCS Agreement ended

Location	Programs	CCS Programs	TRS Programs	Percentage TRS of CCS Programs
Bexar Early Learning Programs	795	442	122	28%
Rural Early Learning Programs	254	137	22	16%
Total	1049	579	144	25%

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.

Attachments:

None.

MEMORANDUM

To: Early Care & Education Committee

From: Adrian Lopez, CEO

Presented by: Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care

Date: May 5, 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 Child Care 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 parents have been called to confirm interest in Child Care Services scholarship and have been emailed the Child Care Enrollment opportunity to confirm interest in Contracted Slots programs.

- De Paul was awarded 20 contracted slots: to date a total of 7 children: 1 infant and 6 toddlers have been enrolled, leaving 13 contracted seats available.
- La Mision was awarded 15 slots, has enrolled 4 children: 0 infants and 4 toddlers, leaving 11 contracted seats available.
- Converse Christian, awarded 15 slots, has enrolled 8 children: 3 infants and 5 toddlers, leaving 7 contracted seats available.

Center	Filled Slots	Open Slots	Total
Converse Christian	3 infant / 5 toddler	2 infant / 5 toddler	15 slots
De Paul	1 infant / 6 toddler	5 infant / 8 toddler	20 slots
La Mision	0 infant / 4 toddler	5 infant / 6 toddler	15 slots

Alternatives:

N/A

Fiscal Impact:

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

Recommendation:

N/A

Next Steps:

- WSA will remain in communication with Child Care contractors 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 Child Care 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: May 5, 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 Child Care community.

WSA continues to invite Early Learning Programs to the WSA Quality Cohorts that provides guidance and assistance to programs interested in obtaining TRS certification and additionally provides opportunities for programs to learn about other agencies/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 is reaching out to rural communities to better understand childcare needs and to provide and link them with resources available. WSA is working closely with United Way of San Antonio and ESC 20 to create a more efficient and seamless process for mentoring/coaching centers towards quality and continues to collaborate and share information on Centers designated as Entry Level to aid mentors/coaches in our Board areas, 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.

- Alamo board currently has 425 centers meeting entry level designation and requiring outreach to become TRS.
 - 361 LCCC
 - 64 Homes
 - 113 Rural
 - 98 LCCC
 - 15 Homes

- 312 Bexar
 - 262 LCCC
 - 49 Homes
- 77 Providers have submitted an interest form to join WSA's Spring Cohort 2023
 - 62- Bexar
 - 52 LCCC
 - 10 Homes
 - 15- Rural
 - 11 LCCC
 - 04 Homes
- 70/425 Providers recently completed the WSA Quality Cohort
 - 55 Bexar
 - 15 Rural
- Initial WSA pilot cohort 11 Providers completed.
 - 7 have received a TRS Assessment
 - 4 received a TRS 4 Star certification.
 - 2 received a TRS 3 Star certification.
 - 1 received a TRS 2 Star certification.
 - 4 are either in process of submitting application, have submitted or (1) is ineligible until December due to CCR deficiencies.

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 has successfully reached 82 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/Curantis/Avance on business coaching opportunities, we are currently reaching out to National Association for Family Child Care (NAFCC), National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), as well as 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 November 2022, WSA invited several partners to the table to discuss the distribution of the Coronavirus Recovery Relief Supplemental Funding, in order to determine the investment that

would have the most impact in the Early Child Care community. After careful consideration, WSA moved forward with the decision to distribute 1.8 million to Early Child Care staff in the way of providing wage bonuses to those working within the Child Care center, as well as provide incentives for staff who provided support in reaching and maintaining TRS certification and invested \$404,773.01 towards Recruiting/Outreach for new centers to begin the path towards Texas Rising Star. The original goal being to reach 30 centers, and as previously mentioned above, WSA has already exceeded that goal, and has successfully outreached & enrolled 82 centers into the cohort and has 77 who will have/should have begun the WSA Spring 2023 cohort that just launched on April 27, 2023. 70 programs recently completed the WSA Fall 2023 Cohort and will be working towards applying for certification, and 8 out of 11 centers who participated in WSA's Fall Cohort have successfully completed TRS certification.

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 Townhalls/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 almost completed our first cycle, having completed town halls in Kerr, Frio, Wilson, Comal, Gillespie, Atascosa, Karnes, Guadalupe, Bandera, and Medina counties.

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.

WSA has continued 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 between coaches/mentors between organizations, to support the Provider with a seamless experience towards TRS certification. This newly implemented process is receiving positive feedback by 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/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 425 Entry Level Designated Centers who are eligible to begin working with a mentor towards TRS certification.

As mentioned at our March Early Learning Meeting, WSA completed the procurement process for Professional Development/Trainers to support our Early Child Care centers and has created a tentative schedule of professional development opportunities for our Early Learning Programs. Currently a schedule for professional development has been developed and will run through August 2023, after which WSA will evaluate the professional development and discuss next FY opportunities. In March, WSA hosted 2 professional development opportunities, in April WSA hosted 10, and we are scheduled to offer 8 in May, 7 in June, and 7 in both July and August.

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.

- \$2,166,150 to 60 Providers staff bonuses: 1493 staff have been awarded. The additional Q5 bonus was awarded to 58 centers. *2 centers were excluded due to CCS withdrawal and/or ineligibility.
- \$403,325 Texas Rising Star Incentives directly paid to 1,427 staff for helping to meet/maintain or raise the quality of their program.
- \$404,773 quality materials to include indoor/outdoor kits, parent kits, and ASQs for centers enrolled in the WSA cohort.

- \$41,051 additional materials/supplies to TRS centers
- \$218,550 monetary incentives
- \$12,000 college tuition/incentives
- \$69,708 professional development
- \$138,500 Special Incentive: Awarded to the 8 centers who originally had applied for the wage bonus initiative, but who did not meet the matrix criteria required to be selected for awarding of the staff wage bonuses. WSA was able to award these 8 centers wage bonuses for 2 quarters & will also be awarding them an additional 3rd quarter bonus.

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 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.

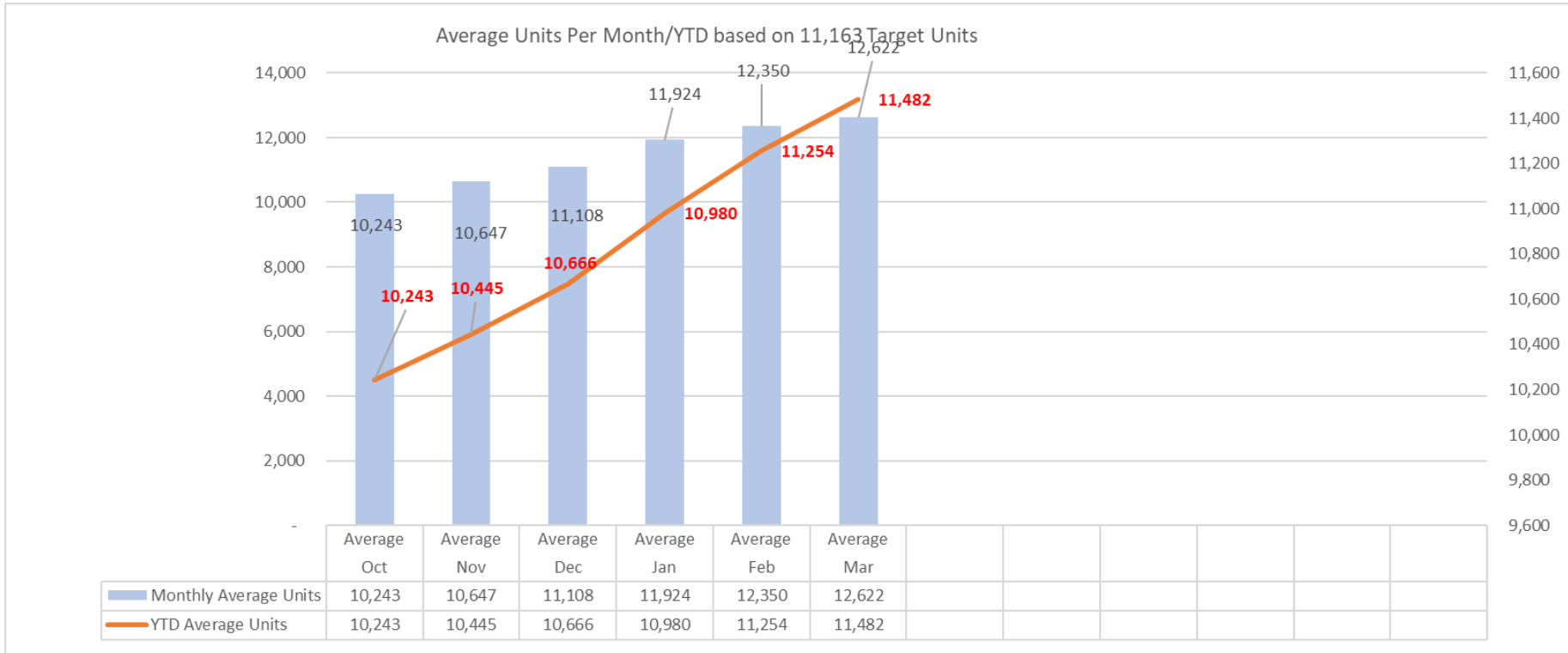
WSA will continue to partner and collaborate with Agencies and Organizations to provide support and resources to Early Learning Programs and families throughout the Alamo Board and will continue to explore additional ways, that through partnerships, we can support Early Learning Programs on the path 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.



Child Care Performance Briefing

Child Care Performance Briefing FY 2023



WSA unofficial YTD avg for FY 2023: **102.86%**

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



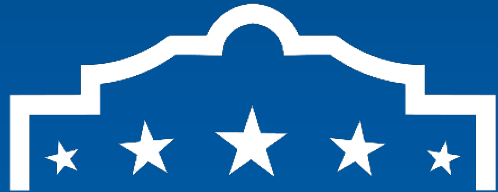
Child Care Performance Briefing FY 2023

	Oct	Nov	December	Jan	Feb	March
	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average
Choices	237	229	209	203	201	198
TANF						4
Low Income	9,554	9,938	10,419	11,210	11,618	11,868
Former DFPS	382	401	392	419	428	439
Homeless	70	79	88	92	103	114
Monthly Average Units	10,243	10,647	11,108	11,924	12,350	12,622
Monthly % Average	91.76%	95.38%	99.50%	106.82%	110.64%	113.07%
YTD Average Units	10,243	10,445	10,666	10,980	11,254	11,482
YTD % Average	91.76%	93.57%	95.55%	98.36%	100.82%	102.86%
TWC Target	11,163	11,163	11,163	11,163	11,163	11,163

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	March
	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average	Average
Monthly Average %	91.76%	95.38%	99.50%	106.82%	110.64%	113.07%
YTD Average Units %	91.76%	93.57%	95.55%	98.36%	100.82%	102.86%



Monthly Avg Enrollment % *



County	Families in Care	Children in Care	Families on Waitlist	Children on Waitlist
Atascosa	242	393	2	3
Bandera	28	46	0	0
Bexar	6289	10885	2863	4658
Comal	367	553	8	10
Frio	85	153	1	1
Gillespie	48	63	1	4
Guadalupe	402	665	10	30
Karnes	15	25	0	0
Kendall	56	94	0	0
Kerr	171	255	13	18
McMullen	0	0	0	0
Medina	147	253	3	7
Wilson	94	158	0	0
Grand Totals	7944	13543	2901	4731

* As of 4/17/2023



Texas Rising Star Assessment Update

TRS Assessment Results *

Information updated 4/17/2023



Total # of Currently Certified Centers	143
# of Annual Monitoring completed	56
# 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	2: initial 87: Annual Monitoring
# of centers submitting application for initial assessment since last Child Care Committee meeting	4

Assessment Results:

2 Star	3
3 Star	23
4 Star	118

TRS Assessment Results *

Information updated 4/17/2023



Percentage of TRS/CCS

Location	Programs	CCS Programs	TRS Programs	Percentage TRS of CCS Programs
Bexar Early Learning Programs	795	442	122	28%
Rural Early Learning Programs	254	137	22	16%
Total	1049	579	144	25%

Completed Assessments

Monitoring



Initials



*Since August 2022

	CCS Providers – BCY 23	
	New Agreement	Agreement Ended
Oct	7	0
Nov	6	0
Dec	2	1
Jan	6	0
Feb	4	2
Mar	3	2



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	46	\$184,080.50	Infants – 3 Toddler -5	15
La Mision Child Care and Kid Kamp 2211 S. Hackberry San Antonio, TX 78210	4	90	31	\$137,641.70	Infants – 0 Toddler -4	15
DePaul Children's Center 7607 Somerset Rd. San Antonio TX 78211	4	200	29	\$167,051.20	Infants – 1 Toddler - 6	20
Grand Total for all 3 Providers		384	106	\$488,773.40	Infants– 4 Toddler- 15	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 & WSA Texas Rising Star Quality Pathway Cohort



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

312 Bexar & 113 Rural

- 361 Centers (262 Bexar/98 Rural)
- 64 Homes (49 Bexar/15 Rural)



WSA Texas Rising Star Quality Pathway Cohort



Currently 77 out of 425 eligible Providers are enrolled in the WSA Quality Cohort

- **62 Bexar**
 - 52 LCCC
 - 10 Homes
- **15 Rural**
 - 11 LCCC
 - 4 Homes

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

- 7 have received a TRS Assessment
 - 4 received a TRS 4 Star certification.
 - 2 received a TRS 3 Star certification.
 - 1 received a TRS 2 Star certification.
 - 4 are either in process of submitting application, have submitted or (1) is ineligible until December due to CCR deficiencies.

WSA Efforts for Access to Quality

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR EARLY LEARNING PROGRAMS:

- March: 2 completed
- April: 10 completed
- May: 8 in progress
- June: 7 scheduled
- July: 7 scheduled
- August: 7 scheduled

WSA Quality Cohorts:

- 11: Spring 2022 Cohort (completed)
- 71: Fall 2023 Cohort (completed)
- 77: Spring 2023 Cohort (In process)

WSA/UWSA: Provider Council

Alamo Pathway to Quality (Coaches/Mentors alignment across organizations)



WSA Efforts for Access to Quality: Investments in Quality



- **\$2,166,150** to **60 Providers** staff bonuses: **1493 staff** have been awarded Quarters 1-4. (*Q5 bonus awarded* to 58 centers. *2 centers have been excluded due to CCS withdrawal and ineligibility.
- **\$403,325** Texas Rising Star Incentives for **1,427 Staff**
- **\$404,773** Quality materials to include indoor/outdoor kits, parent kits, and ASQs for Centers enrolled in the WSA cohort.
- **\$41,051** Additional materials/supplies to TRS centers
- **\$218,550** Monetary incentives to purchase Quality materials for center
- **\$12,000** College tuition/incentives
- **\$69,708** Professional development (i.e. TXAEYC conference, NAFCC conference, CDA renewals, etc)
- **\$138,500** Special Incentive: Awarded to the 8 centers who originally applied but did not meet the matrix criteria, were awarded & will receive 2 quarters & *an additional 3rd Quarter bonus.*

Alamo Quality Efforts



Texas Rising Star - 144

- 2 Star- 4
- 3 Star- 28
- 4 Star- 112
- Bexar 122/Rural 22

Entry Level Designation (ELD) - 425

- Bexar 312/Rural 113

Spring 2022 Cohort - 11

- Bexar 11/Rural 0

Fall 2022 Cohort - 70

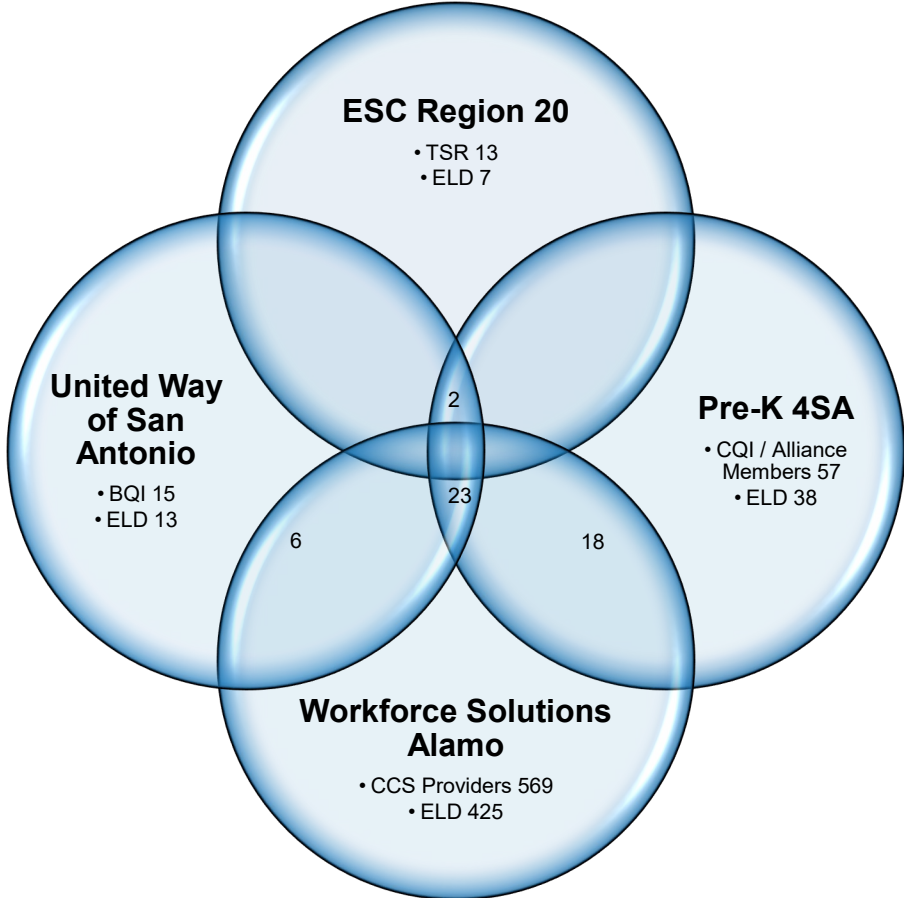
- Bexar 55/Rural 15

Spring 2023 Cohort - 77

- Bexar 62/Rural 15

Dual Efforts (ELD)

- ESC Region 20/WSA- 3
- Pre-K 4SA/WSA- 18
- Pre-K 4SA/UWSA- 2
- WSA/UWSA- 6
- Pre-K 4SA/WSA/UWSA- 23



*Relative Care excluded from the total amount of CCS providers

*CCS & TRS numbers varies



Questions?



CHILD CARE SUCCESS STORIES



CHILD CARE SUCCESS STORY: SAMANTHA JIMENEZ



As a mother raising a family, Samantha was able to receive childcare assistance through Workforce Solutions Alamo.

“With my children attending after school care and daycare, I am able to keep attending my current job and am now eligible to receive a promotion with no worry of my child’s care or safety while I am at work.”



CHILD CARE SUCCESS STORY: TOSHA PENNINGTON



A few years ago, Tosha was financially struggling and constantly wondered how she would manage to provide for her children's necessities. Tosha received childcare assistance through Workforce Solutions Alamo.

"I live in a state with no family to help watch my children as I worked full time to provide for my two young children. Living as a single mother is already challenging in multiple ways, but having only one income was beyond rough."

