



CHILD CARE COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

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

April 26, 2021

8:00AM

WSA BOARD MEMBERS: DOUG WATSON, CHAIR; BETTY MUNOZ, (9:02AM); ERIC COOPER, DR. SARAH BARAY, DR. HENRIETTA MUNOZ, (8:06AM); KATHERINE FILUT, ANA DE HOYOS-O'CONNOR; KRISTI KOTHE, DAWN DIXON, YOUSEF KASSIM, FRANK CROWDER

WSA STAFF: ADRIAN LOPEZ, MARK MILTON, JESSICA VILLARREAL, LINDA G. MARTINEZ, ELIZABETH EBERHARDT, JOSHUA VILLELA, MELISSA SADLER-NITU, LATIFAH JACKSON, AARON SMITH, CUCK AGWUEBDO, ANMGELA BUSH

LEGAL COUNSEL: FRANK BURNEY

PARTNERS: POOJA TRIPATHI

GUESTS: CHRSTINA RECK-SALAZAR

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 G. Martinez at (210) 581-1093.

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During the Public Comments portion of the meeting (Agenda Item 3), 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.

- I. CALL TO ORDER AND QUORUM DETERMINATION
Presenter: Doug Watson, Chair
Call to Order and Quorum Determination At 8:00 a.m., Chair Watson called the meeting to order.
- II. ROLL CALL
Presenter: Doug Watson, Chair
- III. PUBLIC COMMENT
Presenter: Doug Watson, Chair
None
- IV. DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST
Presenter: Doug Watson, Chair
None
- V. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MINUTES OF

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JANUARY 11, 2021 CHILD CARE COMMITTEE MEETING

Presenter: Doug Watson, Chair

- **Upon motion by Director Eric Cooper and second by Director Yousef Kassim the Board unanimously approved the January 11, 2021, meeting minutes.**

VI. AVANCE QUALITY CHILD CARE MATTERS PROGRAM PROPOSAL (DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION)

- Mrs. Jessica Villarreal, Director Child Care, provided the Child Care Committee with information regarding the AVANCE Proposal. AVANCE contacted WSA to discuss and share a proposal for implementation of Quality Child Care Program for the Alamo board.
- AVANCE's overview of the Quality Child Care Matters, (QCCM) program seeks to provide an opportunity to increase supply and quality of home-based childcare providers in the Alamo region.
- Specific goals include: Gaining a clear understanding of the quantity, quality and needs of home-based childcare providers in the Alamo region, Bridge the relationship between workforce solutions and home-based childcare providers in the Alamo region whereby home-based child care providers turn to workforce as a trusted partner in receiving ongoing mentoring and support to provide quality care, and to increase the supply and quality of home-based child care in the Alamo region. 3- year project proposed by AVANCE.
- The focus of the curriculum is on:
 - increasing quality for registered and licensed home-based child care providers, with a special emphasis on the requirements and process for Texas Rising Star certification, and addresses the following topics: Child care Licensing: Background Checks, Annual Training Requirements, Supervision, Emergency Preparedness, Health and Safety, Business Policies and Procedures: Nutrition, Parent Education, Parental Involvement, Early Childhood Development and Teacher-Child Interactions, Curriculum and Lesson Planning, Applying for Texas Rising Star certification.
- Delivered in a group setting, either in person or virtually, the program includes 72 hours of course work over a nine-month period. Session times vary between 4-7 hours depending on the session topics and provider participation in activities and discussion. The structure of the course is flexible to accommodate the scheduling needs of providers.
- Texas Child Care Licensing reports that there are currently zero TRS certified home-based childcare providers in the Alamo region.

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- Would require formal procurement to determine actual cost of a program. AVANCE's proposal totals for year 1: \$80,080, year 2, \$85,580, and year 3, \$139,150.
- Mrs. Villarreal also provided the outcomes from AVANCE's proposal.
 - o 67% increase in confidence in passing TRS certification from pretest to posttest.
 - o 20% received TRS certification within 6 months of graduation.
 - o Providers will experience a 70% increase in their confidence in passing the TRS certification.
 - o 57% increase in those who exceeded school readiness indicators.
 - o Among children in the care of these home-based providers 33% increase in those who met school readiness development indicators.
- An official Procurement process would be required for competitive bidding.
- Ana DeHoyos O'Conner commented Children's Learning Institute (CLI engage) was providing assessments. CLI is the program TRS assessors use to enter the scores of the assessments conducted on centers. It is also the program that the mentors/assessors are using to complete TWC certification courses.
- Board Member Ana DeHoyos O-Conner also asked if the technology equipment is for AVANCE or the day homes? Also, requested additional research be done on who is providing the technology.
- Board Member Katherine Filut added there are many tools available. Pre-K SA, and United Way have mentoring collaborations in place. There have been discussions about the need of in-home child development centers and if AVANCE would possibly be the lead in this area, that would be a huge benefit to the work we are doing.
- Dr. Sarah Baray added there is a gap within the in-home providers in terms of support. This proposal is worth putting out for bid and she would support this.
- Board Member Eric Cooper stated the SA Foodbank currently provides free nutrition education to schools and childcare centers. Nutrition education can be provided by a third party, Foodbank, for free. This may include access to meals, access to fruits and vegetables. If this were to be put out for bid, it would be best to take inventory of what tools and resources are out in the community and include that in the RFP.
- Board Member Dawn Dixon added to Eric's point, looking at how this would affect children with special needs. This would make it a stronger proposal.
- Dr. Henrietta Munoz asked if this was an unsolicited proposal.

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- Chair Doug Watson said AVANCE presented at one of the last Child Care Committee meetings and the committee requested additional information and research. It is an unsolicited proposal.
- Dr. Munoz also recommended researching and getting a clear understanding of what services are out in the community, what resources can be leveraged with procurement. She would be in favor.
- Mr. Adrian Lopez, CEO clarified the AVANCE proposal was brought to the Child Care Committee as a policy discussion.
- Ana DeHoyos O-Conner suggested that Jessica Villareal, Child Care Director reach out to KLRN. They provided training for day homes many years ago and collaborated with the COSA.
- Chair Watson asked Mr. Lopez to send a letter to AVANCE thanking them for this proposal.

VII. CHILD CARE QUALITY CONTRACT (CCQ & CCS) RFP (DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION)

Presenter: Jessica Villarreal, Child Care Services Director

a. CCS Contract

- Mrs. Jessica Villarreal, Director Child Care, provided the Committee with an overview and background on the status of the Child Care Services contract, (CCS).
- In October of 2020, the Child Committee had a discussion related to the procurement of the Child Care Quality contract. The Child Care Committee expressed a desire to combine the Child Care Services, Mentors and Assessors, and Child Care Quality into one contract awarded to a single entity. The two contracts are currently on separate procurement cycles.
- The board is procuring a procurement of the Child Care Services and must decide whether to bid both Child Care Quality and Child Care Services or only Child Care Services.
- Mrs. Villarreal also provided the Committee with three options.
 - o **Option 1:**
 - Stay with CoSA for the CCQ, which we are still routing the contract for. They have been a good partner and have started the work on a letter of intent. Issue the CCS as planned and award to the most qualified vendor.
 - Then in 2022 or 2023 we can begin the process of procuring these two services together.
 - Cons – The board wants one contract.

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- Pros – help keep the integrity of the last procurement, doubling the procurement requirements on a large proposal with under 30 days would be unreasonable for vendors, gives staff time to properly plan and execute a large contract.
 - **Option 2:**
 - Opt out of the renewals for CCQ and combine both services.
 - Cons – need to finalize scope and get committee approval, canceling a large
 - contract within a year of service, timing for transition of all services (is 30 days enough)
 - Pros – one vendor for all services
 - **Option 3:**
 - Keep the CCQ and CCS contracts separate as they currently are.
 - WSA staff recommendation was to combine the two Scopes of Work, (SOWs) and bid out Dec 2023 to award a combined contract with the start date of 10/2024.
 - Based on this guidance the Child Care Quality RFP was released and ultimately award to the City of San Antonio.
 - Chair Watson asked Legal Counsel, Frank Burney if there is a binding legality to the Committee voting?
 - Mr. Frank Burney stated there is none and Committee would provide a recommendation to the Board.
 - **Upon motion by Dr. Sarah Baray and second by Director Eric Cooper the Board unanimously approved the taking Option 3, to keep the CCQ & CCS contracts separate as they currently are.**
- b. CCQ Contract
- Mrs. Jessica Villarreal, Director Child Care, provided the Committee with an overview on the Child Care Quality, (CCQ) contract.
 - WSA issued the contract to City of San Antonio on Feb. 4, 2021. The CCQ contract began on April 1, 2021, and it was officially signed on April 14, 2021.
 - After completion of background checks and fingerprint clearances, offers were made to all Mentor staff who applied and interviewed. Ten staff were onboarded between March 31 thru April 1, 2021.
 - Mentoring and outreach continued seamlessly.
 - Jessica recommended to COSA, to make the Mentors and Assessors staff equal. Mentors will also be completing the TRS certification for Assessors so they will

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have that knowledge. This is to provide the Mentors an understanding of what the Assessors are seeing and what they are looking at.

- Chair Watson added the Mentors and Assessors have been added and that was one of the main criteria we wanted on the last contract. Chair Watson gave kudos to WSA and the COSA for a seamless transition.
- Dr. Sarah Baray asked if the number of Mentors and Assessors set in the contract? Is COSA able to increase the number of Mentors and/or Assessors as needed.
- Jessica Villarreal, Director Child Care replied she did not recall there was a cap on the number and WSA would be monitoring. She was going to verify and get back to the Child Care Committee.
- Board Member Ana DeHoyos O'Conner also asked if Mrs. Villarreal would be working side-by-side with the Mentors?
- Mrs. Villarreal indicated by nodding her head, yes.
- Board Member Ana DeHoyos O'Conner also asked if Mrs. Villarreal felt now that the contracts were together if this would be beneficial for parents.
- Mrs. Villarreal replied yes and trying to align the coaching and mentoring better for those that are going thru the quality piece for Texas Rising Star.
- Board Member Ana DeHoyos O'Conner asked how long is this contract?
- Chair Watson replied, Child Care Committee would discuss during the meeting.
- Chair Watson summarized, the CCQ contract has been approved by the Board of Directors and is being rolled out.

VIII. BRIEFING (DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION)

Presenter: Jessica Villarreal, Child Care Services Director

a. Child Care Performance Briefing

- Mrs. Villarreal provided the Child Care Committee an update on the Child Care Performance that was shared during the last Child Care Committee meeting held on Jan. 11, 2021. At that time, the concern was that Alamo Board was not meeting the Child Care performance goal outlined by Texas Workforce Committee (TWC).
- Concern was failure to meet would potentially cause Alamo to be placed at risk of de-obligation of funds. WSA, Child Care Contractor and TWC met to discuss concerns. TWC explained that many other boards across state were expressing the same issues and concerns for not-meeting enrollment performance. TWC allowed Alamo board an extension to meet performance. Extension was given until March 2021.

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- WSA worked with Child Care Contractor who outlined a strategic plan to increase enrollments. Child Care Contractor was confident that they would be successful in meeting the target goal.
- As a result of the efforts and ongoing communication between WSA and Child Care Contractor, Alamo successfully met the performance goal at 95.35%.
- WSA and Child Care Contractor will continue to monitor performance to ensure enrollment remains at a level that will not negatively impact performance.
- Out of 28 Boards, five Boards successfully met performance and WSA was one of those five.
- Chair Watson and the Child Committee commends the Child Care Contractor for doing a great job in bringing WSA's performance up to where it needs to be.
- Chair Watson asked if WSA is keeping the 80/20 ratio and Mrs. Villarreal said yes.

b. TRS Certification Training Briefing

- Mrs. Villarreal provided a briefing on the TRS certification course status/timeline.
- Due to technology challenges, the TWC TRS certification course has caused issues in the original timeline outlined for completion. On February 1, 2021, TWC placed a temporary deferment on TRS assessments across Texas.
- This temporary deferment was given to provide time for Texas Rising Star staff (mentors and assessors) ample time to concentrate and complete certification course and training that would occur February 1 – March 31, 2021.
- TWC originally stated that if staff devoted 100% of efforts on completing course work, it would take approximately 4-6 weeks to complete the courses. TWC's original implementation time frame for resuming assessments was slated for April 1, 2021.
- This timeline was extended and due to continuing technology issues, as of April 15, 2021, TWC does not yet have a proposed date for the implementation of the revised TRS standards.
- Upon completion of certification courses, and TWC approval, TRS assessments will resume assessments based on an Implementation

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Prioritization Plan which will prioritize assessments in the following manner:

- Priority 1: Recertification Assessments
 - Priority 2: Facility Change Assessments
 - Priority 3: Unannounced Annual Monitoring Visits
 - Priority 4: Voluntary Assessments
- Board Member Ana DeHoyos O’Conner asked if these concerns have been brought up to the state and explained how the assessors are feeling because they are not able to pass the certification and how can the Board assist.
 - Mrs. Villarreal stated she has sent a letter to the State informing them of the continuing issues the assessors and mentors are frustrated.
 - Chair Watson asked CEO Lopez and Mrs. Villarreal if a letter from the Child Care Committee would be helpful in getting TWC to make the appropriate changes.
 - Mr. Lopez said he would discuss with other Workforce Board CEOs and provide one letter to TWC that included all Workforce Boards concerns.
- c. Texas Mutual Grant Briefing
- Mrs. Villarreal provided a briefing on the \$75k Texas Mutual Grant.
 - WSA is using these grant funds to enhance outdoor learning environments for childcare providers. Outdoor learning environments are an ideal way to promote social distancing and keep learning interesting during the pandemic. Additionally, improving the outdoor learning environment is a Texas Rising Star (TRS) measure and promotes quality and inclusion.
 - With the assistance of 3-volunteer judges, 20 Child Care Centers have been selected to receive awards to enhance the outdoor environment.
 - Child Care centers were selected for participation based on a matrix that included TRS Desert/Rural, TRS Star level and WSA subsidy enrollments. Evaluators/Judges were then asked to use a matrix to score proposals based on:
 - Clearly identified objectives with obtainable goals = 25 points max
 - Intentional, well planned, and comprehensive = 25 points max
 - Firm budget with matching objectives and goals = 25 points max
 - Innovative strategy or approach to outdoor learning environment =25 points max
 - Evaluators scores were added to the matrix and a combined score was attained. A tiered system was developed to distribute the awarded funds.
 - The final award amounts will be allocated based on combined scores, amount requested by providers with highest scores, and the remaining budget will be distributed amongst the rest of the tiers.

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- WSA will supplement Grant awarded amount of \$75,000 by \$5,635.57, to account for out-of-stock items & free vendor shipping being offered.
- Dollar amounts under \$2500 were adjusted to meet the \$2500 minimum dollar amount outlined in Grant proposal.

d. CC 11, C4 Policy

- Mrs. Villarreal provide an update and is requesting the Child Care Committee's approval on updating the order of local priority group and policy.
- TWC has requested that boards establish policies and procedures to support direct referrals from recognized childcare partnerships outlined in WD 07-21.

Upon motion by Dr. Sarah Baray and second by Board Member Ana DeHoyos O'Conner the Board unanimously approved adding children dually enrolled in a recognized partnership site when funding is limited, or the number of direct referrals exceeds the number of available subsidized slots at a recognized partnership site.

e. Layoff Aversion Grant – Briefing

- During the Executive Committee meeting held on March 19th, during a briefing on Financials showing financial reports through January 31, 2021, a line item for an active grant reflected that 0% had been expended for Childcare Centers from a Lay Off Aversion Grant. Child Care staff was asked to provide additional information on this line item.
- The Rapid Relief: Lay Off Aversion Grant, is a \$190,000 Covid grant that is available to assist provide Covid Relief towards dislocated workers. WSA is targeting current Child Care Providers that are currently receiving the additional 25% of Enhanced Reimbursement Rate (ERR), Texas Rising Stars Providers, to provide additional support to remain open and provide childcare services, preventing additional layoffs and additional economic hardships to these providers. Each provider is required to apply to be considered for additional support in the form of PPE Kits, equipment and or technology needs.
- Child Care Centers need its employees to work on-site but cannot afford PPE Equipment,

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- frequent deep cleaning to help prevent potential exposure to COVID-19. Layoff aversion funds may be used to pay for PPE Kits, a cleaning and/or sanitization service, equipment, or technology to avert layoffs. The targets are: 126 Kits, services, technology, or equipment at approximately \$1,500 grant to each Childcare Center (employer).
- This grant is not specifically linked to Child Care, but instead the funds are to be used to assist small businesses who have been impacted by Covid.
- This funding is not funding that is managed or passed through the Child Care Quality funds and is not funding that the WSA Child Care Team is responsible for managing or distributing.

f. Early Matters director & Hiring Staff Briefing

- Early Matters-Alamo hired an operations director, Liza Gomez, whose goals will be to:
 - Strengthen the ecosystem by leading the Early Matters Quality Improvement Partnership team that will include PreK4SA, Workforce Solutions Alamo, United Way San Antonio and Bexar County, Support Bexar County early childhood education partners.
 - Establish and strengthen partnerships with full range of educational providers.
 - Foster parent engagement, feedback, and connection to resources, and quantify the impact by building a scorecard and measuring success.
 - Chair Watson requested permission from the Child Care Committee to invite Liza or someone from Early Matters to be on the Committee.

IX. CEO REPORT

Presenter: Adrian Lopez, CEO

a. Success Stories

- Mr. Lopez commended Mrs. Jessica Villarreal and her Team for great job they have done.
- Mr. Lopez shared a childcare success story from Melissa Drake. She has been able to work and go to school with the help of Project Quest and CCS. "I have also been able to obtain a job at a local Baptist Hospital and this

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is ONLY because I am blessed with Project Quest helping me pay for school and CCS helping me with childcare. Without them I would be unable to afford \$\$\$ for college, rent and 600-800\$ of day care a week. I am BEYOND THANKFUL and cannot wait to give back to my great community as a Registered Respiratory Therapist in summer of 2021. Thank you, CCS.”

X. CHAIR REPORT

Presenter: Doug Watson, Chair

- Chair Watson commended Mr. Lopez, Mrs. Villarreal, Mark Milton, COO, and the Board Staff

XI. 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:

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

XII. ADJOURNMENT

Presenter: Doug Watson, Chair

Upon motion by Ana DeHoyos O’Conner and second by Dr. Sarah Baray Child Care Committee unanimously approved adjourning the meeting at 9:30am.

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