



MINUTES EARLY CARE & EDUCATION COMMITTEE MEETING

Workforce Solutions Alamo
100 N. Santa Rosa St., Suite 120, Boardroom
San Antonio, TX 78207
January 24, 2025
10:00AM

BOARD OF DIRECTORS: Ana DeHoyos O’Connor, Leslie Cantu, Elizabeth Lutz, Dawn Dixon, Yousef Kassim, Eunice Grant, Tasha Schmidt, Chris Corso

COMMITTEE MEMBERS: Dr. Todd Landry, Dr. Henrietta Munoz, Dr. Sarah Baray, Jennifer Martinez

STAFF: Adrian Lopez, Teresa Chavez, Brandee Perez, Eric Vryn, Gabriela Navarro, Becky Espino-Balencia, Dr. Ricardo Ramirez, Trema Cote, Gregory Villines, Jesse Maldonado, Juan Palencia, Maria Martinez, Kimberly Villarreal, Jessica Villarreal, Victoria Rodriguez, Ruby Sanders, Janel Santos

PARTNER STAFF: None

LEGAL COUNSEL: None

GUESTS: Jessica Bracamonte, Liza Gomez, Jessica Vachon

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 the meeting. Questions relating to these rules may be directed to Janel Santos (210) 850-2160.

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 a 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

At 10:03AM, Chair Ana 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

None.

V. DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION ON MEETING MINUTES Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair

Meeting Minutes – October 4, 2024

Motion to approve the meeting minutes by Yousef Kassim, seconded by Dawn Dixon.

All in favor of approving the minutes of the meeting held on October 4, 2024.

VI. CHILDCARE UPDATES (DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION)

Presenter: Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care

a. Childcare Performance Briefing

Childcare Performance Briefing FY 2025 (as of 01/08/2025): WSA's unofficial YTD average for FY 2025 is 97.93%. Childcare performance is on target and showing strong progress towards enrollment goals. Mr. Lopez noted that targets have increased by about 16% from last year, reflecting significant achievement despite the need for quick adaptation by contractors and staff. Additional funding is now available to serve more children. We're meeting targets and compliance requirements, indicating substantial improvement over last year. Dr. Munoz explained that the increase is due to a growing population, regional performance, additional funding, and considerations for those on the waitlist.

b. Texas Workforce Commission's Child Care Connection (TX3C) System

The new Texas Child Care Connection (TX3C) System launched on January 13, 2025. Key changes include a shift to advanced payments for providers, a new parent share of the cost methodology paid weekly, and an online application for parents. Parents can also check in with their children via tablets or smartphones. Staff participate in daily 2-hour post-deployment meetings.

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Challenges include discrepancies between the production and testing environments, slow response times for support tickets, unresolved issues reported before the launch, and unclear post-deployment requirements. Mr. Lopez has asked staff to assess the impact of TX3C on our partnership with TWC. Chair O'Connor and Member Munoz have offered comments to aid the transition. The board and contractor staff will continue training and maintain communication with TWC to ensure service continuity.

c. Texas Rising Star Assessment Update

The Texas Rising Star (TRS) program, administered by the Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) Child Care Services (CCS) program, recognizes high-quality early education programs. TRS certification is available for licensed childcare centers and homes that meet specific criteria, with three certification levels: Two-Star, Three-Star, and Four-Star, promoting continuous quality improvement. The Alamo region has 17 mentors aiding participating centers and, as of January 9, 2025, features 303 TRS-certified Early Learning Programs, including 180 Four-Star, 102 Three-Star, and 22 Two-Star programs. TRS-certified programs account for 49.8% of all CCS programs in the Alamo region, compared to 52.8% in Bexar County and 38.9% in rural areas.

d. Child Care Quality Areas of Focus

This is a briefing for the Child Care Committee regarding the Child Care Quality Areas of focus plans for Fiscal Year 2025, which will span from October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2025. Each fiscal year's board is required to submit an annual plan to the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC), outlining how the board intends to utilize the current fiscal year's Child Care Quality (CCQ) funds. Funding is allocated by the Workforce Solutions Alamo (WSA) based on TWC guidelines, as well as input and discussions from stakeholders. WSA will continue to monitor and make necessary adjustments as required.

e. Business Services Update

The Texas Rising Star Business Coach Update highlights ongoing support for Early Learning programs, focusing on resource connection, business model analysis, and staffing shortages. TRS mentors assist centers with the certification process, helping many programs stay in the CCS and TRS systems. The coach is also working to expand resources through partnerships and training, ensuring continued support and enhanced expertise for Early Learning Centers.

f. Co-Ops for Childcare

Rural co-ops for childcare development are in the early stages. The team is researching successful cooperative models and focuses on the needs of rural communities and providers. We'll provide updates as our understanding evolves. Additionally, the organization is certified as a hub and aims to partner with high schools in rural areas, especially those with teaching profession pathways. We're exploring ways to support early childcare workers and increase their wages to sustainable levels.

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g. Targeted Occupation - Early Child Care Workers

This update formally notifies the Early Care and Education Committee of a request from Chair Ms. Ana DeHoyos O'Connor during the November 15, 2024, Executive Committee Meeting. She requested the inclusion of Early Childhood Care workers as a targeted population due to a significant shortage and the critical need for support in this field. The childcare department is gathering data to support this inclusion. Additional comments were made by Liza Gomez and Dr. Todd Landry.

VII. PARTNER UPDATES

a. United Way

Jennifer Martinez, Director of Early Childhood Education at United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County provided updates: Efforts are being made to align the work of coaches and mentors to better quantify the time and effort required for assistance.

b. Early Matters

Dr. Todd Landry, Senior Director, Operations and System Alignment at Early Matters San Antonio provided updates: Work groups met in January on specific projects that are moving forward. The next all-partners meeting will be on March 3rd, with updates on the impact plan and measures of progress. Mark Larson, Executive Director of Early Matters, is in Austin, Texas conducting legislative work towards policy improvement. Comment from Board Member on thanking Early Matters for the funding of a charter bus to help the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children chapter that is open to all programs with the goal to get educators to the State Capitol to have one voice to improve quality.

c. Texas A&M University San Antonio

Dr. Henri Munoz, Executive Director of the Texas A&M University - San Antonio Institute for School and Community Partnerships (ISCP) provided updates on the Educare Groundbreaking.

d. Pre-K for SA

Dr. Sarah Baray, CEO of Pre-K 4 SA, provided an update that she along with TAMUSA Professor of Early Childhood Dr. Melissa Jozwiak will present findings of a study on the landscape of childcare in San Antonio to the City Council Economic and Workforce Development Committee. Comment from Board Member on how the Pre-K 4 SA East Education Center construction is going with the anticipated opening to be in August 2025 and how important it is to have a high-quality early education center especially with all the many childcare centers that have closed down in that area.



VIII. CEO REPORT

Presenter: Adrian Lopez, CEO

Childcare Rural Community Meetings for January 2025

- **Mr. Adrian Lopez, CEO of Workforce Solutions Alamo provided an update on the Childcare Rural Community Meetings that included the engagement staff has conducted in December 2024 and January 2025 in person childcare services community support and events. Mr. Lopez also mentioned Workforce Solutions Legislative Breakfast will be held in February in Austin, Texas, regarding the importance of workforce and childcare.**

IX. CHAIR REPORT

Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair

- **Ana DeHoyos O'Connor expressed her honor and privilege in being reappointed to the Workforce Solutions Alamo Board of Directors. As Committee Chair, DeHoyos also mentioned her participation in the San Antonio Community Health Committee, where she will engage in discussions regarding a crisis nursery facility for the community. She encourages everyone to continue sharing and collaborating on the important work that Workforce Solutions Alamo and its partners are doing.**

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 the Advice of its Attorney as Privileged Communications Under the Texas Disciplinary Rules of Professional Conduct of the State Bar of Texas; Pending or Contemplated Litigation;
 - c. Government Code §551.074 – Personnel Matters Involving Senior Executive Staff and Employees of Workforce Solutions Alamo; and
 - d. Government Code §551.089 – Discussions Regarding Security Devices or Audits.
- None.**

XI. ADJOURNMENT

Presenter: Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, Committee Chair

Meeting adjourned at 11:12 AM by Dr. Henri Munoz and Jennifer Martinez.

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