



# Early Care & Education Committee

January 16, 2026



# Meeting Minutes – October 17, 2025

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# Consent Agenda

# Texas Rising Star Update

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# Texas Rising Star Update

Texas Rising Star	Entry Level	Suspension	Total
475	95	19	589
81%	16%	3%	100%

2 STAR	3 STAR	4 STAR	Total
48	153	274	475
10%	32%	58%	100%



**Texas**   
**Rising Star**





# Introduction



**Workforce Solutions**  
**ALAMO**

BUILDING BUSINESS • BUILDING CAREERS

# Timothy Schindler

## Director of Child Care Services

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# At the Heart of Teaching, Learning, & Leadership

*Melissa Williamson, EdD, CTP, Founder and CEO*





A photograph of a beach with waves crashing onto the shore. The sand is light-colored and the water is a deep blue. The text 'What am I grateful for today?' is written in the sand in a cursive, handwritten style.

What am I grateful  
for today?


















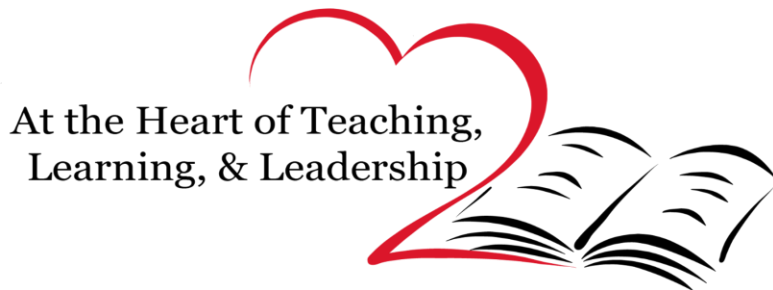
At the Heart of Teaching,  
Learning, & Leadership

## Fall Giveback Webinar Series

- Impact of Trauma in Young Children
- Creating a Safe Environment
- Supporting Challenging Behaviors
- Using Literature for Tough Conversations

# Fall Giveback Webinar Series

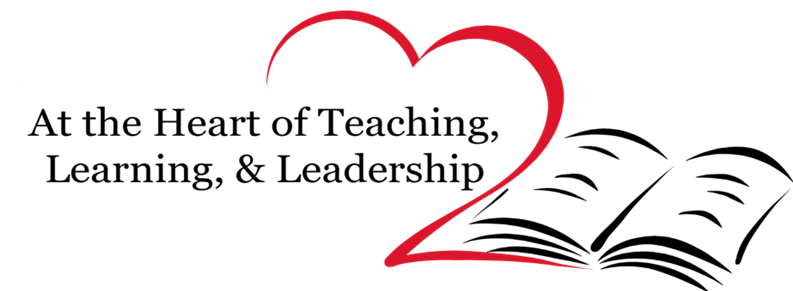
- Grounding & Centering the Nervous System
- Fostering Social & Emotional Development
- Destressing: Supports for Adults
- Using Literature for Tough Conversations





# Response

- Over 600 participants
- Two Child Development Associate scholarships awarded

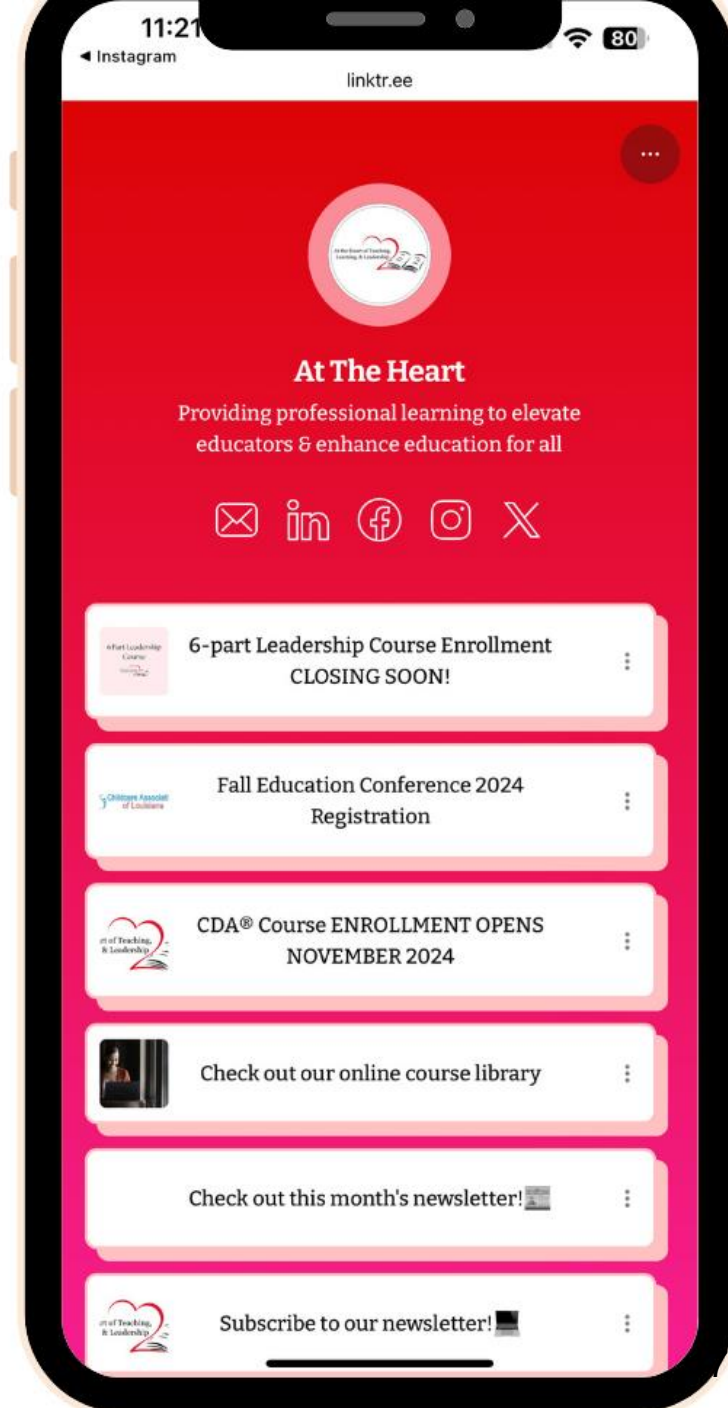


# Participant Feedback

- “The webinar was very informative about how to calm our body’s down in a state of crisis or anxiousness or nervousness. I enjoyed getting to do some breathing exercises to help put our body’s in the mood for the space I was in for this webinar.”
- “I appreciate everything you have taught me, and I will remember what I've learned. I've never learned so much out of a program, and I think you all did an amazing job.”



All our links  
in one place!





# Child Care Updates

Teresa Chavez, Chief Operating Officer





# Community Feedback Survey: Planning for Quality Update

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# Recap

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- August 5th, 2025 Needs Assessment sent out to Early Learning Programs
- October 17th, 2025 Community Feedback survey sent out to the Early Care & Education Committee





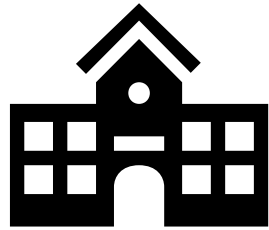
# Submission Data

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- 418 submissions, 346 used to capture data
- 12 counties represented
- 306 centers, 40 homes
- Entry Level- 74, 2 Star- 30, 3 Star- 85, and 4 Star- 157

# Results from the Early Learning Program Needs Assessment

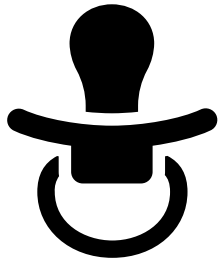
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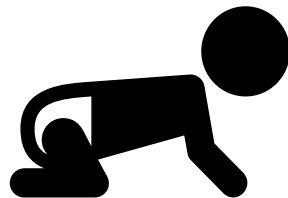
346



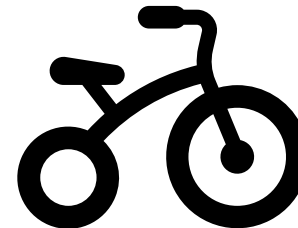
3,875



615



705



685



465





# Priority

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WSA will prioritize the Early Learning Program results for BCY 26 quality initiatives

- Initiatives
- Incentives
- Professional Development
- Specific area
- Learning material and furniture per age



# Next Steps

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- WSA will connect with Early Care & Education Committee to support quality priorities
- Present the approved TWC quality spending plan in the April Early Care & Education Committee meeting.



# Texas Education Freedom Accounts for Pre-K (TEFA)

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# Overview



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- In 2025, the Texas Legislature passed Senate Bill 2, creating the Texas Education Freedom Accounts (TEFA) program. TEFA is an educational savings account (ESA) program that provides public funding to eligible PK-12 students to pay for private education-related expenses.
- Texas is the first state to include students aged 3 and 4 who are eligible for public pre-k.
- Students in pre-k *and* kindergarten can enroll in high-quality child care and early learning programs to pay for tuition and other expenses up to the maximum \$10,000 amount.



# Program Oversight

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- **Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts**
-  Odyssey – <https://withodyssey.com/en> - Provider Support & Navigation
-  Outschool – <https://outschool.org/> - Family Support & Navigation







# Early Learning Program Eligibility

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**Child care programs serving preschoolers and/or kindergarteners are eligible to participate in TEFA they meet one of the following criteria:**

- Texas Rising Star 3-star or 4-star certified
- Texas School Ready!
- Existing Pre-K Partnership with school district, or
- Accreditation from: NAEYC, NAC, NECPA, NAFCC, COA, Cognia, Association of Christian Schools International, or an organization recognized by the Texas Private School Accreditation Commission.



# Application

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- Families can apply for TEFA beginning February 4th, 2026, to be considered for funding in the 2026-2027 school year.
- Pre-k families can attest their eligibility on the TEFA application and will receive further guidance regarding verification later in the Spring.
- Students will be prioritized based on disability status and income level.





# Timeline

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- **Center Involvement**

- December 9th, 2025 - Texas Rising Star 3- and 4-Star centers open to apply for Texas Education Freedom Accounts (TEFA) program.
- December 16th, 2025 – Webinar Texas Education Freedom Accounts – Communication sent to 3- and 4-star centers.
- December 14th, 2026 – Webinar Texas Education Freedom Accounts: What ECE Providers Need to Know – Communication sent to 3- and 4-star centers.

- **Parents**

- The application window opens on February 4th, 2026, and closes on March 17th, 2026, for the 2026 – 2027 school year.
- April 2026 - Funding notifications will be sent to parents beginning



# Next Steps

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- Continue communication with childcare programs on TEFA updates.
- Develop communication plan between contractor and TEFA parents.
- Monitor TEFA impact on workforce participation and early childhood outcomes.





# Questions



# Parent Café- Be Strong Families Parent Café Training Institute

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# Strengthening Families from the Inside Out

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Peer to Peer process that:

- Promotes individual deep self- reflection
- Introductory/Educates about the "Five Strengthening Families Protective Factors"
- Enhances community and fosters relationships
- Strengthens partnerships between parents and programs
- Practice positive communication skills
- Provides a foundation for healing trauma and increased well-being

# Quality Alignment

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- Parent Café supports Texas Rising Star Certification, Category 3 Program Administration



Parent Education and Parent Involvement



# Planning and Implementation

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- **July 28th 2025-** Preschool Development Grant Webinar shared Professional Development Opportunities
- **July 29th 2025-** Schedule of Parent Café shared with WSA staff
- **July 30th 2025-** Request sent to quality contractor for mentors interested in attending the training and conducting the Parent Café in the Alamo area
- **August 4th 2025-** Received list of mentors interested in opportunity
- **September 2025-** Six mentors attended a two-day in person Parent Café training in San Antonio hosted by Family Support Services. Training prepared participants to convene and conduct in-person Parent Cafes and to serve as Table Hosts during them.
- **January 7th, 2026-** First planning meeting with mentors, next planning meeting will be February 11th, 2026.
  - Parent Café scheduled 1st session April 30th 2026 (time TBD) & June 25th 2026
  - Session theme: 1st session- Taking Care of Yourself and 2nd session- Finding Hope in our Everyday Struggles





# Next Steps

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- Collaborate with WSA marketing department to draft a flyer
- Identify zip codes with clusters of programs for outreach
- Outreach to parents in the zip codes
- Coordinate Workforce One Bus availability
- Identify a location to host
- Establish a parent participation goal
- Next internal meeting scheduled for February 11th, 2026



# Questions



# TWC Performance Targets

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# BCY'26 Targets

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The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) has determined that the way that the Average Number of Children Served per Day is calculated needs to be corrected.



TWC will update BCY'26 Targets based on the corrected Average Cost calculation. Based on the corrected calculation, TWC is serving fewer CCS children.



# TWC Will:

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- Develop DRAFT revised BCY'26 Targets, based upon preliminary data. The preliminary data will use data that was available through November 2025. TWC will provide this preliminary information to the Boards in early January 2026.
- Develop FINAL revised BCY'26 Targets, based on data available through December 2025. TWC will develop recommendations for the Commission to take action on, at their March 3, 2026, Commission Meeting.

	Current Methodology		New Methodology		
BCY 26 Contracted Performance Target	October 2025 Performance	Percent of Target	October 2025 Performance	Percent of Target	Difference
12,994	13,023	100.22%	12,559	96.65%	-465



# Impact & Next Steps

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- TWC will also examine the BCY'25 End of Year Reconciliation data, to determine if Boards who were provided sufficient funding (which required them to use BCY'26 funds to pay for BCY'25 care) should have their Targets further adjusted to address this issue.
- TWC has advised Boards that are meeting performance to not enroll into the program until the revised targets have been completed as targets are expected to decrease.
- TWC will update BCY'26 Average Children Served per Day Targets, based on the corrected Average Cost calculation. The updates will be made through the BCY'26 CCS Mid-Year Review process.



# Questions







# Partner Updates



# United Way

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# Alamo Quality Pathway Updates

**Liza Gomez**

Vice President, Ready Children  
United Way of San Antonio and Bexar County



# Alamo Quality Pathway

## Professional Development

- System Alignment
- Standards Driven Focus
- Data and Feedback

## Coaching Capacity Expansion

- Strategic Investment
- Expanded Qualifying Criteria
- Deeper Service Delivery
- System Responsiveness

## Directors of Excellence

- Peer Leadership and Practice
- First meeting and caseload disbursement in January 2026
- Ongoing collaboration with mentors and coaches being established.





# Questions



# Pre-K for SA

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# Quality Initiatives

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## Pre-K 4 SA South Education Center



Grand Opening

- October 14<sup>th</sup>: Welcomed Infants and Toddlers!
- Expanding access to high-quality infant and toddler care
- 40 seats



# Quality Initiatives

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- New! Professional Learning Specialist position filled
- Operation Extended Watch
  - Expand access to extended-hours, high-quality childcare for military families



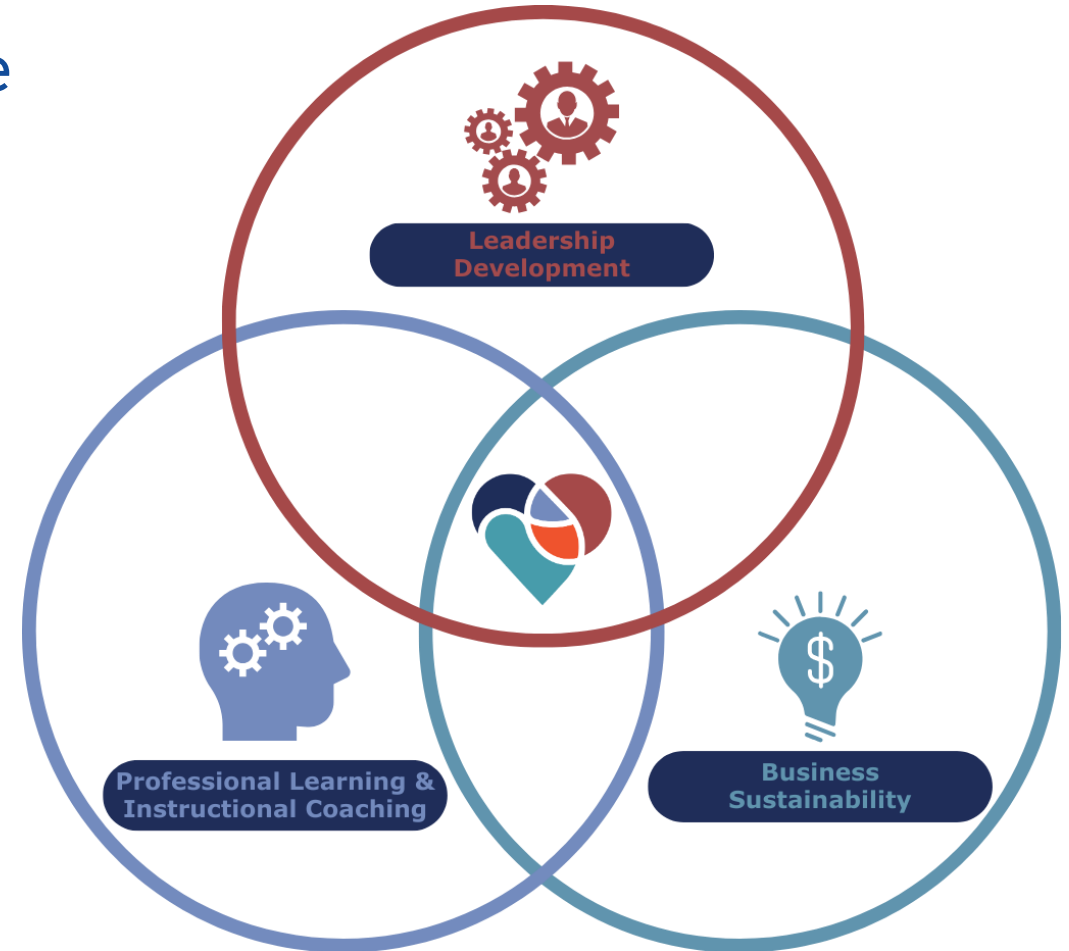


# Quality Initiatives

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## San Antonio Shared Services Alliance

- 90 Members
  - 69 Child Development Centers (CDC)
  - 21 Family Childcare Providers (FCC)





# Questions



# Early Matters

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# Early Matters: 2025 Wrap up: By the Numbers

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Number of Impact Plan Actions In Process

26

Number of Workgroup Members

151

Number of Workgroup Meetings

34

**Total Funding Raised in 2025 for the Impact Plan**

9.2M

Number of Partner Organizations

78





# Early Matters: Key Updates on the Work

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- Access to Quality is advancing CLASS coaching, school voucher supports for families, and expanded business coaching for providers—building on the strong work of United Way San Antonio, Workforce Solutions, Pre-K 4 SA, and other partners.
- A new contract is underway to fund 7 centers and 3 home providers to accept military scholarships and extend operating hours in partnership with the Operation Child Care Project.
- The Inclusion Project will host three conferences this year and launch a mentoring/cohort model, led by Brighton Center in collaboration with Texas A&M.
- The Professional Pathways Workgroup has launched an ECE Professionals Networking Series with quarterly events to celebrate early educators and strengthen community.



# Early Matters: Welcome to the Team

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**Kshinté Brathwaite**  
Director, Talent  
Ecosystem Strategy

**Focus Areas:** Early Education Pipeline,  
Professional Development, Articulation, and  
the Professional Pathways Workgroup/actions



# Questions







# CEO Report

## Adrian Lopez



# TWC Sunset Review

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# Governor Task Force vs. Quad Meeting





# Questions





# Chair Report

Ana De Hoyos O'Connor





# Questions



# Thank you!

