



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Early Care & Education Committee

**From:** Adrian Lopez, CEO

**Presented By:** Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care

**Date:** January 24, 2025

**Subject:** **Childcare Performance Briefing**

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**Summary:** This memo provides the Early Care & Education Committee with a performance update on childcare services for Fiscal Year (FY) 2025. Workforce Solutions Alamo (WSA), in collaboration with its childcare contractor, diligently monitors enrollment processing and maintains consistent communication to ensure adherence to the Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) performance goal range of 95–105% of the target, while remaining within the allocated budget.

**Background:** For FY2025, TWC established Alamo's target units of care at 14,335, a significant increase of 1,957 slots compared to the FY2024 target of 12,378.

**Current Performance:** Initial performance data indicates strong progress. At the close of the first month of FY2025, the average enrollment reached 13,943, representing 97.26% of the target. As of November, the unofficial year-to-date (YTD) average is 14,132 enrollments, or 98.59% of the target.

**Analysis:**

WSA's unofficial YTD average for November, with 14,132 enrollments (98.59%), positions Alamo within the "Meets Performance (MP)" range at the outset of FY2025.

- The Child Care Services team continues proactive enrollment efforts to maintain this performance level while adhering to the allocated childcare budget.
- Intake remains open, and childcare staff are actively engaged with families and providers to ensure the effective delivery of services.

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	Oct Average	Nov Average
Choices	182	164
Low Income	12,806	13,004
Former DFPS	736	734
Homeless	219	231
Monthly Average	13,943	14,132
Monthly % Average	97.26%	98.59%
YTD Average Unit	13,943	14,038
YTD % Average	97.26%	97.93%
TWC Target	14,335	14,335

**Fiscal Impact:**

- Each October, TWC allocates funding and establishes annual performance targets for each workforce board.
- TWC employs a performance status methodology, based on the annual target and budget, defining percentage ranges for three performance measures: Meets Performance (MP), Exceeds Performance (+P), and Below Performance (-P).
- Exceeding the budgeted amount for enrollments may negatively impact future funding allocations.
- Therefore, WSA meticulously monitors and balances both the enrollment target and the allocated budget to maximize childcare access for families while maintaining compliance with TWC requirements.

**Recommendation:** N/A

**Next Steps:** WSA will continue to actively enroll eligible families and rigorously monitor performance against established goals and budget allocations throughout FY2025. This ongoing monitoring will ensure optimization of enrollments while remaining within the approved program budget.



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Early Care & Education Committee  
**From:** Adrian Lopez, CEO  
**Presented By:** Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care  
**Date:** January 24, 2025  
**Subject:** Texas Workforce Commission's Child Care Connection (TX3C) System

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**Summary:** This is a briefing to provide an update on the new Child Care platform, Texas Child Care Connection (TX3C).

**Analysis:** The Texas Workforce Commission's new case management system for Child Care Services – the Texas Child Care Connection (TX3C), went live January 13, 2025. Initially Texas Workforce Commission planned to launch this platform October 1, 2023, however due to various issues that continued to arise, the launch was scheduled to launch and postponed, three additional times.

- July 1, 2024, was postponed until September 1, 2024
- September 1, 2024, was postponed until December 9, 2024.
- December 9, 2024, was postponed until January 13, 2025.

With the launch of the new system:

- Provider payments moved from a reimbursement model to an advance payment approach.
- A new statewide parent share of cost methodology
- Parent Share of Cost is paid on a weekly basis
- Parents can check in their children via a tablet at the provider location or on their smart phones
- One statewide online application for all parents
- Staff are participating in daily 2-hour post-deployment meetings for TX3C.

Challenges Include:

- Production environment is different from UAT (testing) environment
- Service Now tickets are slow to get answered
- Many items brought to TWC's attention prior to launch are still not addressed
- It was reported via the Child Care Network that other boards are experiencing many issues. Post-Deployment requirements are unclear

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The new system is hindering productivity and impacting the efficiency of staff. These issues may subsequently affect Child Care staff in meeting performance due to the delays in processing key eligibility determinations. Specifically, the following eligibility-related deadlines are being affected:

- Meeting initial job search eligibility end date (EED)
- Meeting end of job search eligibility end date (EED)
- Intake 20-day eligibility requirements and
- Recertification eligibility end date (EED)

**Fiscal Impact: N/A**

**Recommendation: N/A**

**Next Steps:** To ensure a seamless transition to the new platform, Board and Contractor staff will continue participating in the training sessions and meetings provided. Board staff will maintain active oversight and facilitate communication between Contractors and TWC, addressing inquiries and providing ongoing support to mitigate any potential service disruptions or impact on daily operations.



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Early Care & Education Committee  
**From:** Adrian Lopez, CEO  
**Presented By:** Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care  
**Date:** January 24, 2024  
**Subject:** Texas Rising Star Assessment Update

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### Summary:

The Texas Rising Star (TRS) program, a Quality Rating and Improvement System (QRIS) administered in conjunction with the Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) Child Care Services (CCS) program, recognizes and supports high-quality early childhood education programs. TRS certification is available to licensed childcare centers, licensed childcare homes, and registered childcare home facilities that meet established criteria. The program offers three distinct levels of quality certification—Two-Star, Three-Star, and Four-Star—designed to incentivize continuous quality improvement. These tiered certifications correlate with enhanced reimbursement rates for providers serving children receiving childcare scholarships. Extensive research demonstrates a strong correlation between attendance in high-quality early learning programs and enhanced school readiness. TRS-certified programs, which demonstrably exceed the minimum standards set forth by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission (HHSC) Child Care Regulation (CCR), are positioned to significantly contribute to the positive physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development of children. As programs progress through the TRS levels, their positive impact on children's development is amplified.

**Analysis:** The Alamo region currently benefits from the expertise of 17 mentors who actively support participating centers. As of January 9, 2025, the Alamo region boasts 303 TRS-certified Early Learning Programs. This cohort comprises 180 Four-Star, 102 Three-Star, and 22 Two-Star programs. TRS-certified programs represent 49.8% of all CCS programs within the Alamo region, compared to 52.8% in Bexar County and 38.9% in rural areas. TRS mentors and boards maintain consistent engagement with the Centralizing Assessment Entity to ensure a shared understanding of roles and responsibilities related to assessments. The number of providers with active scholarship agreements continues to fluctuate. As of January 8, 2025, 606 centers hold such agreements, encompassing Licensed Centers, Licensed Child Care Homes, Military facilities, Registered Child Care Homes, and Relative Care Listed Homes. Notably, Relative Care Listed Homes are excluded from TRS program counts and percentages.

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Key data points as of January 8, 2025 are presented below:

**Data as of 01/09/2025**

Centers awaiting NEW certification	162
Number of 4* to date	180
Number of 3* to date	102
Number of 2* to date	22
# Of Accredited Centers	65
# Of Non-Accredited Centers	239
# Of Military Centers: included in accredited total	7

**As of 01/22/2025:** Total Max Capacity of Texas Rising Star Centers based on Child Care regulations: Excludes Military Centers as they are not overseen by Child Care regulations.

County	TRS Capacity
Atascosa	371
Bandera	119
Bexar	29645
Comal	789
Frio	225
Gillespie	258
Guadalupe	2166
Kendall	135
Kerr	350
Medina	558
Wilson	255
Grand Total	34871

**Data below as of 01/08/2025**

NOTE: Program counts below include Licensed Centers, Licensed Homes, Registered Homes, Listed Homes, and Military facilities. Military facilities are not reflected on the HHSC CCL data list and have been added manually.



Location	Programs	CCS Programs	TRS Programs	Percentage TRS of CCS Programs
Bexar Early Learning Programs	839	475	251	52.8%
Rural Early Learning Programs	312	131	51	38.9%
Total	1151	606	302	49.8%

Note: does not include Military as they do not have a CCR capacity

Provider Type	Total Providers	Total Capacity	Rural Providers	Rural Capacity
Licensed Center	506	58396	111	12626
Licensed Child Care Home	40	478	12	143
Military	8	N/A	0	N/A
Registered Child Care Home	38	444	5	60
Relative Care Listed Home	14	N/A	3	N/A
Totals	606	59318	131	12829

**Alternatives:** N/A

**Fiscal Impact:** N/A

**Recommendation:** N/A

**Next Steps:**

The Workforce Solutions Alamo (WSA) will continue to monitor assessment preparation and program application submissions. The Centralizing Assessment Entity manages assessments and scheduling, adhering to TWC guidance and processes.





## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Child Care Committee

**From:** Adrian Lopez, C.E.O.

**Presented by** Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care

**Date:** January 24, 2025

**Subject:** Child Care Quality Areas of Focus

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**Summary:** This is a briefing to the Child Care Committee on the Child Care Quality Areas of focus plans for FY 25, which will cover October 1, 2024 – September 30, 2025. Each FY boards are required to submit an annual plan to TWC describing how the board intends to expend the current fiscal year’s CCQ funds. WSA allocates funding based on TWC guidelines and stakeholder feedback and discussions. WSA will continue to monitor and adjust as needed.

**Analysis:** Boards must designate all estimated expenditures using the following seven categories:

### Federally Allowable uses for Child Care Quality Funds

1. **Training and Professional Development**, which includes costs associated with any training (not including infant- and toddler-specific training), professional development, and/or postsecondary education opportunities provided to childcare provider staff
  - **CQF Activity: Training and Professional Development**, which includes any costs associated with activities that are specific to substitute pay/reimbursement to support childcare provider staff attending school or training during work hours

**Note:** Activities funded must be demonstrably responsive to childcare providers’ specific needs as Validated by data collection and/or consultation with the local childcare committee or other representative childcare stakeholders.

2. **Texas Rising Star**, which includes any costs associated with Texas Rising Star recognition, maintenance, and mentor staff
  - **CQF Activity: Texas Rising Star**, which includes any costs associated with activities specific

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to tiered monetary incentives for programs (Entry Level and certified programs) to purchase equipment, provide a wage or hiring bonus, or both.

- comprehensive curriculum support, which requires any curriculum purchased for a childcare provider to be accompanied by overarching training and support and be aligned with the local school district/charter if the provider is participating in a Prekindergarten partnership; and
  - materials and supplies based on the provider's specific needs as validated by data collection and/or consultation with the local childcare committee or other representative childcare stakeholders (excluding playground equipment, shade structures, cameras or other security equipment, and smart boards).
3. **Infant and Toddler Activities**, which includes any costs associated with specifically addressing infant and toddler program establishment or expansion, infant- and toddler-specific professional development, early intervention partnerships, and infant and toddler materials
    - **CQF Activity: Infant and Toddler Activities**, which includes any costs associated with activities that are specific to: providing infant/toddler mental health consultations; and supply building (opening new classrooms to serve infants and toddlers by offering materials or a monetary stipend per slot).
  4. **Health and Safety**, which includes any costs associated with assisting early learning programs in maintaining childcare licensing compliance or providing high-quality health and safety provisions that do not include activities specific to infants and toddlers.
  5. **Evaluation**, which includes any costs associated with purchasing assessment tools that measure effective practices for child development, training staff to implement the tools, and/or conducting formal evaluation studies of quality efforts, which requires the submission of an evaluation report to TWC.
  6. **National Accreditation Support**, which includes any costs associated with helping early learning programs obtain or maintain national accreditation (for example, fees and materials).
    - **CQF Activity: National Accreditation**, which includes any costs associated with activities specific to payment or reimbursement of initial application and renewal fees
  7. **Other Allowable Activities**, which are limited to costs for the following:
    - Shared Services
    - Prekindergarten partnerships



- Childcare and early learning mental health supports (such as infant and early childhood mental health consultation or childcare staff wellness resources)

**Note:** Training activities that focus on mental health should be reported under “Training and Professional Development.”

- Supply building activities, including:
  - capacity expansion grants, stipends, or resources for existing providers to increase capacity (either total or for a target population, such as infants, children with disabilities, or children enrolled in the Child Care Services program); and
  - wage support for childcare staff, such as recruitment and retention bonuses or wage supplements.

**Note:** Bonuses or stipends that are tied to new educational attainment must be reported under “Training and Professional Development.”

- **CQF Activity: Other Allowable Activities**, which includes any costs associated with activities specific to:
  - wage supplements or stipends for childcare workers; and
  - supply building incentives or materials for new or current providers who offer nontraditional hour childcare or serve children in underserved areas (such as childcare deserts), and/or vulnerable populations, such as infants and toddlers, children with disabilities, and English-language learners.

**Fiscal Impact:**

<b>Infant &amp; Toddler (including professional development) \$900,000</b>	
<b>Infant/Toddler Curriculum, Indoor &amp; Outdoor and Furniture</b>	<b>Q2 &amp; Q3</b>
<b>Infant/Toddler Specific Training</b>	<b>Q1</b>
<b>Professional Development \$550,000</b>	
<b>Training for Children with Differing Abilities</b>	<b>Q2</b>
<b>Local and State Conferences</b>	<b>Q1</b>
<b>Teacher &amp; Director Conference</b>	<b>Q3 &amp; Q4</b>
<b>Curriculum Training and Other Training</b>	<b>Q1 &amp; Q4</b>
<b>Texas Rising Star Quality Improvement (except PD) \$3,835,979</b>	
<b>TRS Maintenance Incentive</b>	<b>Q2</b>
<b>Curriculum</b>	<b>Q2</b>
<b>TRS Personnel</b>	<b>Q1-Q4</b>
<b>Indoor and Outdoor Material</b>	<b>Q3 &amp; Q4</b>
<b>TRS Conference Reimbursement</b>	<b>Q4</b>



<b>CLASS Training for Mentors</b>	<b>Q3</b>
<b>Supporting Health &amp; Safety Standards \$50,000</b>	
<b>First Aid/CPR Training Reimbursement</b>	<b>Q1</b>
<b>Evaluation &amp; Assessment \$70,000</b>	
<b>ASQ SE &amp; ASQ 3</b>	<b>Q1</b>
<b>ECERS &amp; ITERS</b>	<b>Q3</b>
<b>Supporting National Accreditation \$19,145</b>	
<b>Accreditation Fees</b>	<b>Q1</b>
<b>Other Activities \$3,000,000</b>	
<b>TRS Retention Bonus</b>	<b>Q1</b>
<b>CCS Wage Supplement</b>	<b>Q4</b>
<b>Newly Certified Wage Supplement</b>	<b>Q1</b>

**Recommendation:** The analysis of the TRS Needs Assessment Survey will continue to provide insight and guidance on the plans for investments being made to support the Child Care Quality (CCQ) programs for FY25. WSA will monitor the plan and adjust should priorities change.

**Next Steps:**

- WSA will continue to meet and collaborate with ECE organizations & stakeholders to maintain awareness of the needs of the ECE community.
- Quality funding and initiatives will continue to be allocated according to TWC guidelines.
- WSA is sharing the proposed FY25 CCQ expenditure plan with the Early Care Committee meeting & with the board.



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Early Care & Education Committee  
**From:** Adrian Lopez, CEO  
**Presented by:** Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care  
**Date:** January 24, 2025  
**Subject:** Business Services Update

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**Summary:** Texas Rising Star Business Coach Updates. Our TRS Business Coach continues to provide vital support to Early Learning programs, focusing on resource connection, business model analysis, and addressing staffing shortages. This support extends to TRS mentors assisting centers navigating the certification process. Notably, this coaching has influenced several programs to remain in the CCS and TRS programs. The coach has also been actively working on expanding resources and support through partnerships and training.

**Analysis:** Fiscal Impact Snapshot: (Data Collected Week of Jan. 13-17)

Increased Revenue:

### Rural County Area:

- Two centers in the Rural County Area demonstrated the potential for significant revenue increases through participation in a Food Program. Analysis suggests a potential monthly revenue boost of \$8,240.00 for the combined centers.
- A third center requires one additional staff member to accommodate the current waitlist of five children. This expansion has the potential to generate an additional \$18,000 in monthly revenue.

### Bexar County Expansion:

- One center in Bexar County is actively expanding by adding a new classroom to accommodate 30 additional children. This expansion is projected to generate an additional \$22,800 in monthly revenue, create two new jobs, and contribute to staff retention. Furthermore, the center is exploring the possibility of reinvesting profits to purchase land in a designated desert area, facilitating future expansion of services and potentially generating an additional \$456,000 in annual revenue and creating approximately six new jobs.

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## Cost Reduction Strategies:

- Another Bexar County Center is implementing cost-reduction strategies, including collaborative efforts with new church owners to negotiate reduced or eliminate rent. This proactive approach has the potential to continue generating over \$800,000 in annual earnings and contribute to the center's long-term sustainability. Measurable Outcomes: In working with the 5 childcare centers.
- Total potential earnings and estimated annual growth \$1,388,480.00.

## Key Highlights:

- **Program Reach:** 121 Early Learning programs have partnered with the business coach (51 Rural, 70 Bexar).
- **Resource Dissemination:** Weekly business training updates and resources are distributed to an average of 575 childcare center directors.
- **Funding Exploration:** Contact initiated with the Lift Fund Representative for potential 2025 funding opportunities.
- **Staff Expansion:** Recruitment and interviews are underway for a second Business Coach.
- **Professional Development:** The Business Coach completed Civitas Business Financial Coach Certification training (currently working on assessment).
- **Key Partnerships and Initiatives:**
  - Facilitating a partnership between UTSA-SBDC and childcare centers for business planning, marketing, and expansion resources.
  - Attending interagency meetings in rural areas to gather and distribute resources.
  - Collaborating with COSA Economic Development center on Bexar County grant opportunities.
  - Collaborating with Workforce Solutions Career Center's Child Care Business Liaison for staff recruitment.
  - Developing procedures and protocols for a Childcare Directors Collaborative (Advisor and Advisee).
  - Setting SMART goals with childcare centers to prioritize needs like enrollment, marketing, and expansion, utilizing template below.

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SMART GOAL – Action Plan WORKSHEET

Childcare Center Name:

Director Name:

Date Started:

Date of Completion:

Topic:				
Specific:				
Measurable:				
Attainable/Action Steps:				
Checkpoints (Dates)				
Initial CCD / BC				
Relevant:				
Time Bound- Desired Result:				
Actual Result:				
Estimated Fiscal Impact: Increased Revenue: Profitability Job Creation/ Retention: Other:				

Started Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Coach Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Completed Director Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Business Coach Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Alternatives: N/A

Fiscal Impact: N/A

Recommendation: N/A: This is an update only

Next Steps: The Texas Rising Star Business Coach will maintain support of Early Learning Centers and further develop expertise in relevant resources to enhance the assistance provided to these centers.



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Early Care & Education Committee

**From:** Adrian Lopez, CEO

**Presented by:** Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care

**Date:** January 24, 2025

**Subject:** Co-ops for Childcare

**Summary:**

This memo provides an update on the progress of developing co-op opportunities in rural areas. Work in this area has begun, though it is currently in the initial stages as we focus on understanding the specific needs of our rural communities and providers.

To this end, the following actions have been taken:

- The Childcare team has initiated research into the structural components of successful co-op models.
- The Business Coach has been tasked with developing a survey schedule to assess the needs of rural childcare providers. This schedule is currently being developed and will be shared when available.
- We are reviewing informational articles and materials to learn from existing successful co-op models and identify potential resources and support avenues.
- We are engaged in discussions with our Alamo Quality Pathway partners to ensure alignment of efforts and explore potential collaboration opportunities.
- We are actively researching existing community initiatives, meetings, and relevant activities to identify potential partnership opportunities for Workforce staff and determine how we can effectively contribute to ongoing efforts.
- The tentative timeline is outlined below.

Phase 1 Exploratory	2-6 months
<b>Idea Development &amp; Initial Group Formation:</b> Identifying the need for a co-op and gathering a core group of interested individuals	4- 8 weeks
<b>Research &amp; Study:</b> Assessing the sustainability of the co-op by analyzing	8 – 24 weeks



market demand, competition, and potential financial performance <b>Develop a Business Plan:</b> Creating a detailed roadmap for the co-op, including its mission, goals, structure, operations, and financial projections	
<b>Phase 2 Organizational Structure</b>	<b>6-12 months</b>
<b>Choose a Structure:</b> Determining the appropriate legal framework for the co-op (e.g., consumer co-op, worker co-op, producer co-op) and registering it with the relevant authorities if needed.	4- 8 weeks
<b>Develop Agreements:</b> Creating documents that outline the co-op's rules, rights and responsibilities, and decision-making processes <b>Secure Funding:</b> Exploring funding options, such as member investments, loans, grants, or other.	8 - 24 weeks
<b>Phase 3 Implementation &amp; Launch</b>	<b>12-18 months</b>
<b>Set up Operations:</b> Establishing the co-op's physical space, equipment, technology, and other necessary infrastructure	8 – 24 weeks
<b>Marketing and Outreach:</b> Promoting the co-op to potential members and customers.	ongoing

**Total Estimated Time: 18 months:**

**Factors that can affect the timeline:**

- Complexity of the co-op: A small, simple co-op will generally take less time to set up than a large, complex one.
- Staffing: staffing to support this request and any staff turnover.
- Availability of resources: Access to funding, expertise, and support can significantly impact the timeline.
- Level of member involvement: Active and engaged members may help to expedite the process.
- Legal and regulatory requirements: Navigating legal and regulatory hurdles may cause delays.

**Alternatives:** N/A

**Fiscal Impact:** N/A

**Recommendation:** N/A: This is an update only

**Next Steps:** This is an ongoing process, and we will continue to provide updates as our understanding of community needs deepens and our plans become more concrete.



## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Early Care & Education Committee

**From:** Adrian Lopez, CEO

**Presented By:** Jessica Villarreal, Director of Child Care

**Date:** January 24, 2025

**Subject:** Targeted Occupation - Early Child Care Workers

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**Summary:** This memo serves to formally notify the Early Care and Education Committee of a request made by Committee Chair, Ms. Ana DeHoyos O'Connor, during the Executive Committee Meeting held on November 15, 2024.

**Analysis:** During a discussion concerning targeted occupations within the local plan, Chairwoman O'Connor requested that Early Child Care workers be added as a targeted population. She cited a significant shortage of workers in this field and emphasized the critical need for support within this sector. Following the chairwoman's request, the Child Care department has been actively working to gather supporting data and build a compelling argument for the inclusion of Early Child Care workers as a targeted occupation.

This work has included:

- Collaboration with the Workforce Solutions Alamo (WSA) data team to analyze relevant workforce data.
- Outreach to other boards and organizations to gather information on best practices and successful strategies related to supporting Early Child Care workers

The goal of this research is to develop a full justification for prioritizing Early Child Care workers within the local plan.

**Fiscal Impact: N/A**

**Recommendation: N/A**

**Next Steps:** We will continue to keep the Early Care and Education Committee updated on our progress and will share additional information as it becomes available.

We also welcome any feedback or insights the committee may have on this important topic. Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions or comments.

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