Texas Rising Star Assessors and Assessments
Discussion Paper

1 **Background**

2 On January 25, 2021, amendments to the child care services rules, approved by the Texas
3 Workforce Commission's three-member Commission (Commission), went into effect. This
4 included an amendment to §809.134(g) to require that Texas Rising Star Assessors must
5 complete the Texas Rising Star Assessor Training and Certification Program (ATCP), "as
6 described in the Texas Rising Star guidelines." The ATCP is intended to demonstrate Texas
7 Rising Star Assessor inter-rater reliability.

8 In the preamble to the final rules, the Commission responded to a comment about the new ATCP
9 requirement, noting that statewide training for the program revisions will begin in January 2021,
10 and that Assessors are expected to pass all required modules and attain certification prior to the
11 roll-out date for the new standards. The preamble also notes that assistance will be provided to
12 Assessor staff throughout the ATCP, including online training content, self-instructional
13 modules, individual-facilitated sessions and peer learning communities (PLCs). Attachment 1
14 outlines the ATCP courses, and modules within each course. The University of Texas Health
15 Science Center's Children's Learning Institute (CLI) is administering the ATCP for the Texas
16 Workforce Commission (TWC).

17 In addition, the 87th Texas Legislature also passed HB 1792 , which directs TWC to
18 competitively procure an entity to employ all Texas Rising Star Assessors. TWC will procure for
19 this entity in Board Contract Year 2022, with the goal to implement centralized Texas Rising
20 Star Assessors in Board Contract Year 2023 (October 1, 2022).

21 **Issue**

22 The final rules noted that the Texas Rising Star guidelines will contain the date by which
23 Assessor certification must be attained. The roll-out date for the new Texas Rising Star standards
24 has been postponed, as all Assessors are still in the midst of completing the ATCP. WD 06-21,
25 Change 1 notifies Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) of this delay, and that TWC
26 will notify Boards when the implementation date is set. TWC will notify Boards when the new
27 date is set.

28 While all Assessors have received training on the revisions to the Texas Rising Star standards,
29 they have not yet been able to complete the ATCP. This delay was implemented to ensure that
30 Assessors have sufficient time to participate in the ATCP courses and achieve certification.

31 As we have rolled out the ATCP, we have encountered several challenges. The linear roll-out of
32 the courses, allowing each course to build on the ones before it, has resulted in a longer
33 timeframe for completion. The timeframe for completing the course, the scoring of the course,
34 and Assessors being assigned to and completing their appropriate PLC has taken more time than
35 expected and resulted in a longer "idle period" in which Assessors cannot advance through the

material. In addition, the Boards have reported that several modules contain information that can be misinterpreted and have requested the opportunity to provide input to ensure that course materials are clear to all Assessors. Child Care & Early Learning (CC&EL) will establish a Board ATCP Workgroup, and in partnership with CLI, this Workgroup will provide feedback regarding challenges to the courses and modules. This Workgroup is intended to assist CLI in making improvements to the ATCP and to ensure that CLI receives timely feedback as new courses and revisions are rolled out.

Additionally, as we move towards the centralizing of all Texas Rising Star Assessors, CC&EL would like to consider how to incent Assessors to remain with the Texas Rising Star program, in the face of this significant program change. TWC has seen that significant changes in the workforce system structure can have an impact on the number of staff members employed in the impacted programs. Historically, as TWC was creating the locally administered workforce system, during the months prior to the transition, many staff members sought other employment. This resulted in a decrease of staff available to provide services prior to the pending transition. CC&EL is concerned that we may see this same effect as we approach the time that all Texas Rising Star Assessors will have to reapply for a job with a new employer (which will be competitively selected).

Decision Points

Staff seeks the Commission's direction on:

- Aligning the date for Texas Rising Star Assessors to attain certification with the projected date for the centralization of Texas Rising Star Assessors. Effective June 1, 2022, only certified Assessors may conduct Texas Rising Star assessments.

- Instructing the Boards to
  - resume Texas Rising Star program assessments no later than September 1, 2021, and
  - allow only Assessors who have completed through Course 6 of the ATCP to conduct assessments. This will ensure that Texas Rising Star Assessor staff have received training on assessing against the new standards.

- Directing the new Centralized Entity, who will employ all Texas Rising Star Assessors, to make an offer of employment to any currently "qualified" Texas Rising Star Assessors and employing those Assessors for at least six months, assuming that the staff are performing appropriately. Following the six-month period, the Centralized Entity will make all employment determinations their standard human resources policies and procedures. Assessors are considered to be "qualified" if they meet the minimum qualifications outlined in §809.34 and have attained their ATCP certification no later than May 31, 2022.

1   •   Directing the new Centralized Entity employing all Texas Rising Star Assessors to
2   implement a <u>$5,000 incentive payment</u> for Texas Rising Star Assessors who meet the
3   following criteria:
4   o   attain ATCP certification no later than December 31, 2021;
5   o   remain as an Assessor until a centralized Texas Rising Star Assessor entity is
6   selected and accept employment with the new Centralized Entity; and,
7   o   remain employed with the new centralized Texas Rising Star Assessor for three
8   months

9   The maximum cost, assuming 100 Assessors achieve these milestones, is $500,000.

3   **Texas Rising Star Assessment Training and Certification Program (ATCP)**

4

5   **Course 1: Texas Rising Star Overview**

6   *All Texas Rising Star Staff*

7   1.1 - Texas Rising Star Assessor and Mentor Certification Overview

8

9   **Course 2: Texas Rising Star Protocols**

10   *All Texas Rising Star Staff*

11   2.1 - Certification for the TRS Assessor and Mentor
12   2.2 - TRS Assessor Protocol
13   2.3 - Program Assessments
14   2.4 - Assessment Record Forms
15   2.5 - Certification for the TRS Assessor and Mentor Role Quiz

16

17   **Course 3: Facility Level Categories (1 and 3)**

18   *All Texas Rising Star Staff*

19   3.1 - Category 1 Director and Staff Qualifications and Training

20   3.2A - Category 1: Director and Staff Qualifications and Training Coding LCCA
21   3.2B - Director and Staff Qualifications and Training Coding LCCH

22   3.3 - Category 3 Program Administration

23   3.4A Program Administration LCAA
24   3.4B Program Administration LCCH
25   **3.5 Quiz (*) Categories 1 and 3 [Facilities]**
26   3.6 Facility Coding Practice LCAA
27   3.7 Facility Coding Practice LCCH

28

29   **Course 5: Category 2 – Teacher-Child Interactions**

30   *All Texas Rising Star Staff*

31   5.1 - Group Size and Ratios
32   5.2 - Focusing Your Observation
33   5.3 - Key Ideas
34   5.4 - Rating Protocol for Multiple Caregivers

35   5.5 - Warm and Responsive Style

36   5.6 - Warm and Responsive Style Infant Coding Practice
37   5.7 - Warm and Responsive Style Toddler Coding Practice
38   5.8 - Warm and Responsive Style Preschool Coding Practice
39   5.9 - Warm and Responsive Style School-Age Coding Practice
40   5.10 - Warm and Responsive Style All Ages Coding Practice

1   5.11 - Language Facilitation and Support

2   5.12 - Language Facilitation and Support Infant Coding Practice

3   5.13 - Language Facilitation and Support Toddler Coding Practice

4   5.14 - Language Facilitation and Support Preschool Coding Practice

5   5.15 - Language Facilitation and Support School-Age Coding Practice

6   5.16 - Language Facilitation and Support All Ages Coding Practice

7   5.17 - Play-Based Interactions and Guidance

8   5.18 - Play-Based Interactions and Guidance Infant Coding Practice

9   5.19 - Play-Based Interactions and Guidance Toddler Coding Practice

10   5.20 - Play-Based Interactions and Guidance Preschool Coding Practice

11   5.21 - Play-Based Interactions and Guidance School-Age Coding Practice

12   5.22 - Play-Based Interactions and Guidance All Ages Coding Practice

13   5.23 - Support for Children's Regulation

14   5.24 - Support for Children's Regulation Toddler Coding Practice

15   5.25 - Support for Children's Regulation Preschool Coding Practice

16   5.26 - Support for Children's Regulation School-Age Coding Practice

17   5.27 - Support for Children's Regulation All Ages Coding Practice

18   5.28 - Instructional Formats and Approaches to Learning

19   5.29 - Instructional Formats and Approaches to Learning Infant Coding Practice

20   5.30 - Instructional Formats and Approaches to Learning Toddler Coding Practice

21   5.31 - Instructional Formats and Approaches to Learning Preschool Coding Practice

22   5.32 - Instructional Formats and Approaches to Learning School-Age Coding Practice

23   5.33 - Instructional Formats and Approaches to Learning All Ages Coding Practice

24   **5.34 – Quiz(*) Category 2**

25   5.35 - Infant Coding Practice (60 Min)

26   5.36 - Toddler Coding Practice (60 Min)

27   5.37 - Preschool Coding Practice (60 Min)

28   5.38 - School-Age Coding Practice (60 Min)

29   5.39 - All Ages Coding Practice (60 Min)

30

31   **Course 6: Learning Environments**

32   *All Texas Rising Star Staff*

33   6.1 – Indoor Learning Environment

34   6.2 - Indoor learning environment Infant coding practice

35   6.3 - Indoor learning environment Toddler coding practice

36   6.4 - Indoor learning environment Preschool coding practice

37   6.5 - Indoor learning environment School-age coding practice

38   6.6 - Indoor learning environment All Ages coding practice

39   6.7 – Outdoor Learning Environment

40   6.8 - Outdoor learning environment Infant coding practice

41   6.9 - Outdoor learning environment Toddler coding practice

42   6.10 - Outdoor learning environment Preschool coding practice

43   6.11- Outdoor learning environment School-age coding practice

44   6.12 - Outdoor learning environment All Ages coding practice

45   **6.13 – Quiz(*) Category 4**

46   6.14 - Infant coding practice images

47   6.15 - Toddler coding practice images

6.16 - Preschool coding practice images
6.17 - School-age coding practice images
6.18 - All-Ages coding practice images

Course 7: All Categories Practice

Texas Rising Star Assessors

7.1 - Infant Coding Practice
7.2 - Toddler Coding Practice
7.3 - Preschool Coding Practice
7.4 - School-age Coding Practice
7.5 - LCAA Facility Coding Practice
7.6 - All-Ages coding Practice
7.7 - LCCH Facility Coding Practice

Course 8: Certification Exam

Texas Rising Star Assessors

8.1- Texas Rising Star Assessor Written Exam
8.2 - Infant Coding
8.3 - Toddler Coding
8.4 - Preschool Coding
8.5 - School-age Coding
8.6 - LCAA Facility Coding
8.7 - All-Ages Coding
8.8 - LCCH Facility Coding

Course 9: Mentoring and Continuous Quality Improvement Plans

Texas Rising Star Mentors

9.1 - The Role of the Mentor
9.2 – Quiz

Course 10: CLI Engage Technology/Data Entry

All Texas Rising Star Staff

10.1 - Technology and Data Entry
10.2 – Quiz

Certification Booster (TBD)

All Texas Rising Star Staff

Includes new Category 3 measures