

1 **Ending the Middle Skills Gap: Math Family Literacy Initiative**
2 **Using Adult Education and Literacy State Leadership Funds**
3 **Discussion Paper**

4 **Background**

5 On [June 30, 2021](#), the Texas Workforce Commission’s (TWC) three-member Commission
6 (Commission) held a work session on statewide initiatives and earmarked funding for a series of
7 comprehensive statewide strategies, including \$500,000 in statewide Adult Education and
8 Literacy (AEL) state leadership funds from Budget Year 2021 (BY’21)/AEL Program Year
9 2020–2021 for math tutoring services for AEL participants and their families, as allowable under
10 the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

11 Additionally, the General Appropriations Act (Senate Bill 1, Article VII, Texas Workforce
12 Commission, Rider 46, 87th Legislature, Regular Session (2021) (Rider 46)) requires TWC to
13 ensure that digital skill building is an explicitly permitted use of existing workforce development
14 grant programs and that federal funds are used to provide digital skill building, device access,
15 and digital support for workers in workforce development programs.

16 **Proposed Initiatives**

17 In response to the June 30 Commission work session, a proposed initiative to be funded with
18 AEL state leadership funds and the proposed method of distribution of the funds is as follows:

19 ***Math Family Literacy Initiative¹—\$500,000, Request for Application (RFA)***

20 AEFLA’s purpose explicitly allows and promotes both family literacy activities and math
21 supports for English language learners, including immigrants.

22 The AEFLA definition of “family literacy activities” is activities that “make sustainable
23 improvements in the economic prospects for a family and that better enable parents or family
24 members to support their children’s learning needs” and that integrate all of the following:
25 “(A) Parent or family adult education and literacy activities that lead to readiness for
26 postsecondary education or training, career advancement, and economic self-sufficiency.
27 (B) Interactive literacy activities between parents or family members and their children.
28 (C) Training for parents or family members regarding how to be the primary teacher for their
29 children and full partners in the education of their children.
30 (D) An age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.”
31

32 Staff proposes a family literacy initiative that enhances and develops math supports for families
33 in Texas by:

- 34 • supporting English language learners and their family members’ advancements in math;

¹ This is a permissible state leadership activity under WIOA §223(a)(2)(M), which allows funds for “other activities of statewide significance that promote the purpose of this title.”

- 1 • offering math services through interactive instruction conducted via telephone or online
- 2 application(s) for English language learners with their children;
- 3 • being accessible to AEL learners with their children throughout Texas, both online and to
- 4 those with limited broadband connection; and
- 5 • enhancing students’ digital skill building, as required by Rider 46.

6 Eligible applicants must describe how they will offer services to nonprofit organizations
7 statewide. These organizations will then refer families to and support the use of the selected math
8 family literacy services.

9 **Decision Point**

10 Staff seeks direction on implementing, through an RFA, the AEL state leadership initiative
11 outlined above and in the following table.

12 **Proposed Initiative Using AEL State Leadership Funds**

Initiative	BY’21 Budget
Math Family Literacy Initiative	\$500,000

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