



**MEETING OF THE  
TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION**

**DATE**

**OCTOBER 19, 2021**

1 TUESDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2021

2 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Good morning, everyone.

3 This meeting is called to order. Mr. Trobman, has anyone signed  
4 up for public comment?

5 MR. TROBMAN: Morning, Commissioners. Les  
6 Trobman, general counsel. We have one individual who would like  
7 to address the commission at this time, and then a few who will  
8 wanna speak with you when we get to item 16. First this morning,  
9 we have Cynthia Pearson. Ms. Pearson, if you can unmute yourself  
10 and go ahead.

11 CYNTHIA PEARSON: Good morning,  
12 Commissioners Alvarez, Demerson, and Chairman Daniel and Mr.  
13 Serna. Thank you for the opportunity to provide public comments  
14 today. As stated, my name is Cynthia Pearson, and I oversee the  
15 Day Nursery of Abilene, a nonprofit and the city's largest, most  
16 comprehensive childcare provider in Abilene, west central Texas.  
17 Although it's been some time since I've provided comments, I do  
18 follow these meetings and the progress happenings related to the  
19 subsidized childcare program. I am grateful, as well as  
20 thousands of providers in the field, for the effort made in the  
21 childcare industry at the TWC level. Thank you very much. We are  
22 also grateful to the hard work put in by Reagan Miller and  
23 Alison Wilson and their team. They are tremendous. I have  
24 comment related to unemployment as well as childcare. I can save  
25 the childcare until closer to item 16, if I need to do that.

1 That's up to you. So, I know that you've heard the cries from  
2 the field of childcare and other industries not being able to  
3 get needed applicants and workers into their respective  
4 workforces. It's baffling to me to understand where all the  
5 people have gone. We need them desperately in our field, too.  
6 It's discouraging to hear from childcare providers that  
7 applicants fail to show up for scheduled interviews, only to  
8 have that count as a required contact for receiving unemployment  
9 benefits. I've encouraged those providers to sign up for public  
10 comment and report that to you. Fraudulent use of the  
11 unemployment system in Texas must stop. I, too, was a victim of  
12 unemployment fraud. Last February, my company, the Day Nursery  
13 of Abilene, received information that I had filed an  
14 unemployment claim due to lack of work--laughable for sure--  
15 since August of 2020. I was horrified. It was immediately  
16 reported as fraud to TWC, since whoever filed the claim had used  
17 my full Social Security number. I was told that this was  
18 happening all over the country, and with many CEOs, because  
19 fraudsters were using their information to file false claims in  
20 hopes to receive money. I have a friend who works for her  
21 husband here in Abilene, and the same thing happened to her. It  
22 took me more than a full day to make sure that my identity truly  
23 had not been breached or stolen. I had to contact all the credit  
24 bureaus, the IRS, the Social Security Administration, to make  
25 sure that my--I was protected. And each time that I received a

1 notice from TWC and my company, and my company did as well,  
2 which was probably three to four times, we reported this again  
3 as fraud. Finally, in August of this year, I had had enough, as  
4 the claim remained pending for Day Nursery, although every  
5 quarter my wages were reported under my name and Social Security  
6 number to TWC. I finally went online to find who I could talk to  
7 to get some results at TWC, and I got in touch with Amelia  
8 Montoya, the lead investigator for TWC regulatory integrity  
9 division, office of investigations. She acted, and within a  
10 week, it was completely cleared up. I appreciated that very  
11 much. Now, I can continue on and talk about childcare, or I can  
12 save those comments for later. Just let me know if you'd like  
13 for me to do that.

14 MR. TROBMAN: Ms. Pearson, you can proceed.

15 CYNTHIA PEARSON: Okay. Thank you. Now,  
16 under childcare, the childcare enhancements have been extremely  
17 valuable in so many ways. We were able to retain all of our  
18 staff during COVID last year without having to lay anyone off,  
19 and we didn't know what was coming our way, so that was so  
20 beneficial, when we started getting those enhancements. Our  
21 community was so grateful that Day Nursery made the decision to  
22 remain open, and many were absolutely shocked that we did. Our  
23 mission is to help working families go to work every day,  
24 including a number of foster families that we have that are  
25 using our centers. Giving parents access to higher-quality

1 childcare options is a good thing. Studies show that turnover  
2 can occur as often as every 90 days when quality childcare  
3 options are not available to working parents. I'm in support of  
4 the recommendations on today's agenda to increase the  
5 investments in the childcare industry staff through higher wages  
6 to promote higher-quality childcare staff. We advocated for  
7 years at the local level to have an increase in our  
8 reimbursement rates as well as holidays for Texas Rising Star  
9 providers, so that our staff could have professional development  
10 days versus always giving up their nights and weekends. We  
11 finally got them, and they have been great. We have used two  
12 extra holidays, six months apart. One is Columbus Day, one is  
13 President's Day, for full-day professional development. Just  
14 last week on Columbus Day we brought in Minister Steven Fite  
15 [SP] who provided an energetic, hands-on, engaged training to  
16 actively demonstrate the importance of rhythm, music, and  
17 movement on brain development, and as a result, our 100  
18 childcare staff put together 20 piggyback songs that they can  
19 use for a variety of purposes in our program. Having childcare  
20 staff treated as professionals, even when it comes to  
21 professional development and training, is crucial. Options for  
22 increasing their pay and benefit structure is equally important  
23 for raising the bar for the field of early childcare  
24 professionals who teach our youngest citizens. And our directors  
25 have been so--have benefitted so much from the professional

1 development that has been authorized through the collaborative  
2 for children. The coaching and those trainings have been  
3 absolutely wonderful. As complex as the childcare system is,  
4 more childcare providers need a voice at the table for local  
5 decisions being make by workforce boards. More seats need to be  
6 required, for a minimum of two, and preferably three to five,  
7 depending on the board area. This costs nothing, and should  
8 again be considered. It's evident that the childcare industry is  
9 critical, especially over the last 18 months. It's unfortunate  
10 that because of last year's pandemic the Baby Boot tour had to  
11 be canceled, at which time Commissioner Alvarez was going to  
12 make a scheduled visit with childcare providers in our city. I'm  
13 hopeful that that can be on the table again sometime soon. And  
14 in closing, I would just like to again encourage your personal  
15 viewing, if you've not already seen the full production in the  
16 promotion of the No Small Matters project, which clearly defines  
17 the connection between early childhood and workforce. It's a  
18 powerful message that I suggested to Commissioner Demerson after  
19 the last in-person state conference in December of 2019 to be  
20 considered a general session versus just a small break-out, as  
21 well as the awards for Texas Rising Star providers to be at the  
22 beginning of the conference versus at the very end, when so many  
23 people leave. It was a moot point last year, with it being  
24 postponed and canceled. However, I'm hopeful it's not too late,  
25 as you're planning the December conference this year, that that

1 be considered. After all, childcare is indeed no small matter.  
2 Thank you again.

3 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, thank you. Are  
4 all of the rest of our public commenters gonna be during item  
5 16? Is that right?

6 MR. TROBMAN: Yes.

7 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, good morning.

8 MS. GONZALEZ: Good morning.

9 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: That brings us to the end  
10 of Agenda Item 3 through 7. Let's take a short break before we  
11 reconvene.

12 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, this is Agenda  
13 Item 8, approval of community rehabilitation programs to  
14 participate in the PPD.

15 JUAN GARCIA: Good morning, commissioners,  
16 Mr. Serna. Juan Garcia with the voc rehab division. Texas Human  
17 Resources Code section 122.013 requires the Texas Workforce  
18 Commission to establish rules for the certification of community  
19 rehab programs to participate in the purchasing from a People  
20 with Disabilities program. Concurrently, the PPD rules at  
21 chapter 806 section--806.41 establishes requirements for  
22 participation in the program and subsequent adherence to those  
23 requirements when a CRP has been certified. CRPs must reapply  
24 every three years before the expiration date of the certificate.  
25 PPD staff reviews each completed application and all the

1 required documentation, and once the materials are deemed  
2 acceptable presents the applicants to the three-member  
3 commission for approval. The PPD program has reviewed the  
4 applications for the following 12 CRPs seeking to continue  
5 participation in the program through recertification. All the  
6 CRPs are paid above minimum wage or higher, and they are as  
7 follows in the following cities: [Inaudible] Gate in Richmond  
8 Center and Brownwood, Goodwill Industries of Fort Worth in Fort  
9 Worth, Growing New Generations in Fort Worth, Junction 505 in  
10 Houston, Link Labor Construction in Houston, St. Dominic of  
11 [inaudible] Rehab Services in [inaudible], Wood Creek Outreach  
12 Rehab Development in Bastrop, Pride Industries El Paso, Medina  
13 County Shelter Workshop in Devine, Texas, Goodwill Industries of  
14 Dallas, Goodwill Industries of South Texas in Corpus Christi,  
15 and the South Texas Housing Community Development Corporation in  
16 San Antonio. Staff seeks direction on approving the 12 CRPs  
17 seeking recertification to continue in the PPD program. With  
18 that, I'll answer any questions you might have.

19 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Comments or questions?

20 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: None here, Chairman.

21 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Just one. In regards  
22 to the list that you presented here, on number two, Goodwill  
23 Industries of Fort Worth, and then Goodwill Industry of Dallas,  
24 number 10, I notice in their cumulative integrated employee  
25 placements for fiscal years prior to applications, those numbers



1 are pretty high. Anything they're doing special around that  
2 area?

3 JUAN GARCIA: Yes, these two CRPs provide  
4 temporary services, and so they place folks in office settings  
5 and in other jobs that we would consider competitive integrated  
6 employment.

7 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Okay.

8 JUAN GARCIA: So, we're tracking that.

9 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Good, good. It's  
10 good to see those numbers that high.

11 JUAN GARCIA: Yeah, they are.

12 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: That's all.

13 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, is there a  
14 motion?

15 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, I move that  
16 we approve the recertification of community rehabilitation  
17 program as recommended by staff.

18 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Second.

19 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and  
20 seconded. We're unanimous. Thank you.

21 JUAN GARCIA: Thank you.

22 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Yeah, let's move to Agenda  
23 Item 9, local workforce development area performance  
24 expectations for boards.

25

1 ADAM LEONARD: Good morning, commissioners,  
2 Mr. Serna. Adam Leonard for Information, Innovation, and  
3 Insight. I'm here today to present to you recommendations  
4 regarding setting board contract year '22, contracted--sorry,  
5 number of children served per day in the normal program, as well  
6 as targets associated with the Service Industry Recovery program  
7 that you all authorized earlier this summer. We developed the  
8 model consistent with past methodologies, but updating it, of  
9 course, for the rate changes that were made this summer and also  
10 for more recent data on admin ops and case mix. We presented the  
11 material in draft form to the boards for input to see if they  
12 had any questions in the development of the model; they did not,  
13 and I'm here today to recommend approval of the methodology in  
14 question. And I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

15 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Any comments or questions?

16 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: None here.

17 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None.

18 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion?

19 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Thanks, Adam. I move  
20 that we approve the childcare target setting methodology and  
21 assumptions to set the BCY '22 and service industry recovery  
22 childcare for local workforce development boards, as discussed.

23 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Second.

24 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and  
25 seconded. We're unanimous. Thank you.

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ADAM LEONARD: Thank you.

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: This is Agenda Item 10,  
policy concept for new chapter 808 youth driver ed funding  
program.

BEN HOLQUIST: Good morning, Chairman  
Daniel, Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Demerson, Mr. Serna.  
For the record, I'm Ben Holquist with the workforce development  
division. Commissioners, before you today for consideration for  
approval is a policy concept related to the creation of new  
chapter 808 youth driver's education funding program. This rule  
is based on senate bill 2054, which passed in the 87th regular  
session. This rule develops the process by which TWC will pay  
for required driver's education and driver's testing for youth  
currently or formerly in foster care and homeless youth, and a  
number of other populations. These costs will be paid for by  
funds transferred to TWC from the Department of Public Safety,  
which collects them through a donation process during driver's  
license applications and renewals. Our process would have two  
components--one to collect applications and determine  
participant eligibility based on the criteria laid out in the  
statute, and the other to submit payments on behalf of the  
eligible applicants to the relevant driver's education  
providers. Staff seeks direction on establishing new chapter 808  
specifically regarding the creation of a youth driver's  
education funding program, applicant approval process, and a

1 process for TWC to make payments to driver's education providers  
2 for providing driver's education to eligible youth. This  
3 concludes my presentation. I'm available to answer any questions  
4 you may have.

5 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Are there any comments or  
6 questions?

7 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, the only  
8 thing I'd like to add is this is a great program, so I'm glad to  
9 see this being moved forward. So, thanks for your work on this.

10 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: I also think it's a  
11 great program. Can you speak to the eligible youth? Who are the  
12 eligible youth for the program?

13 BEN HOLQUIST: The eligible youth for this  
14 program are younger than 18 of age who are currently in the  
15 Department of Family and Protective Services foster care, youth  
16 under the age of 26 who were in foster care on the day before  
17 their 18th birthday, and then youth up to the age of 26 who are  
18 homeless--

19 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Okay.

20 BEN HOLQUIST: --at the time. There is also  
21 a subsection related to victims of dating violence and family  
22 violence, and children of victims of dating violence and family  
23 violence.

24 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: I wanna encourage  
25 you guys to make sure that the Texas Truckers Association are

1 aware of this legislation. There's always the talk about an  
2 individual receiving a driver's license, and if they have a  
3 driver's license, then they may be more apt to go towards a  
4 commercial driver's license as well. And so, that's of interest  
5 to that organization, I know. Thank you.

6 BEN HOLQUIST: Thank you, Commissioner.

7 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: I have an additional-  
8 -well, I do have a question. Is there a program similar to this  
9 for people with a disability?

10 BEN HOLQUIST: I am not aware of one. I know  
11 that the Department of Public Safety has several different  
12 waiver programs, but I don't know--

13 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Okay.

14 BEN HOLQUIST: --specifically anything about  
15 that.

16 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Thank you. That's it,  
17 ,Chairman.

18 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Additional questions,  
19 comments?

20 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: None here, Chairman.

21 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None.

22 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion?

23 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, I move that  
24 we approve the policy concept for the creation of chapter 808  
25

1 regarding the youth driver education funding program, as  
2 discussed by staff.

3 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Second.

4 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: And post a policy  
5 concept to the TWC website for public comment.

6 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Second.

7 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and  
8 seconded. We're unanimous. Thank you. This is Agenda Item 11,  
9 policy concept for chapter 804, JET grant program rule project.

10 ABBY AUSTIN: Good morning, Chairman Daniel,  
11 Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Demerson, and Mr. Serna. For  
12 the record, my name is Abby Austin with the Outreach and  
13 Employer Initiatives division. Commissioners, before you today  
14 for your consideration for approval is a policy concept relating  
15 to the potential rule amendments, the chapter 804 Jobs and  
16 Education for Texans, or the JET grant program. In 2017, the  
17 85th Texas legislature passed house bill 2431, amending Texas  
18 education code to include public state colleges and as defined  
19 by Texas Education Code 61.003 to the list of eligible entities  
20 to apply and receive JET grant funds. And then most recently, in  
21 2021, the 87th Texas legislature passed senate bill 346,  
22 including the addition of open enrollment charter schools in  
23 house bill 4279, which strikes the term independent from  
24 independent school districts, and expands the definition of  
25 eligible school districts to include the Windham School

1 District. Chapter 804 includes multiple references to eligible  
2 entities as public junior colleges, public technical  
3 institutions, and ISDs. Staff recommends amending the references  
4 to add public state colleges, school districts, and charter  
5 schools, and to also remove ISDs to align the rule with recent  
6 legislation. Section 804.41(a) also includes a reference to  
7 Texas Government Code 403.356, which was repealed in 2013 by  
8 house bill 437. Staff also recommends removing that reference.  
9 The Texas Education Agency administrative rule 19100.1001  
10 defines a charter school as a Texas public school operated by a  
11 charter holder under an open enrollment charter granted either  
12 by the state board of education or commissioner of education,  
13 pursuant to the Texas Education Code 12.101, identified with its  
14 own county district number. Texas Education Code 61.003 defines  
15 public state colleges as Lamar State College Orange, Lamar State  
16 College Port Arthur, and the Lamar Institute of Technology.  
17 Staff recommends amending 804.1 to include those definitions,  
18 while also removing the definition of ISD and replacing it with  
19 school districts to be defined as independent school districts  
20 or the Windham School District. Staff seeks direction on  
21 amending chapter 804 to update eligible entities to be in  
22 alignment with legislative changes, and to define the newly  
23 eligible entities. This concludes my presentation. I'm available  
24 to answer any questions that you might have.

1 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is this your first time to  
2 present--

3 ABBY AUSTIN: Mm-hmm.

4 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: --in front of our  
5 commission? Should we have difficult, complex, and complicated  
6 questions, or just our usual questions?

7 ABBY AUSTIN: I mean, whatever you feel like  
8 throwing at me.

9 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Ah, that's what I want to  
10 hear. Are there any questions or comments?

11 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: None here. Great  
12 presentation.

13 ABBY AUSTIN: Thank you.

14 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: I have no questions  
15 here, thank you.

16 ABBY AUSTIN: Perfect.

17 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, no questions.  
18 Is there a motion?

19 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, I move that  
20 we approve the discussed policy concept for chapter 804, jobs  
21 and education for Texans, better known as JET, grant program  
22 rules, and post to the TWC website for a three-week comment  
23 period.

24 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Second.

25



1 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and  
2 seconded. We're unanimous. Thanks. This is item 12, FY 2022 JET  
3 advisory board recommendations.

4 MATT SNIADOCKI: Good morning, Chairman,  
5 Commissioner Demerson, Commissioner Alvarez, Mr. Serna. As you  
6 are all aware, the JET advisory board met on September 30, 2021,  
7 to discuss program parameters and funding for fiscal year 2022.  
8 One of the big discussion points being the additional funding  
9 allocated from the Texas Education Agency, to the sum of \$50  
10 million. Additionally, TWC was appropriated 7.52 million in  
11 general revenue per year for the FY 2022/'23 biennium. At that  
12 meeting, the board made the following recommendations: The first  
13 for funding allocation would be to allocate 100 percent of the  
14 general revenue funding to IHEs. I will note IHEs are not  
15 eligible for the 50 million allocated by TEA. The other was the  
16 minimum and maximum grant amounts per application. IHEs would be  
17 set at 40,000 and 350,000 as the max. Open enrollment charter  
18 schools and school districts would have the same minimum amount  
19 at 40,000, but a maximum amount of \$750,000. The minimum point  
20 threshold would be 50 points for applications, and then maximum  
21 grants per eligible entity IHEs would be set at two applications  
22 per RFA and open enrollment charter schools and school districts  
23 would be set at three applications. However, I will note that  
24 this past Friday we received some new information that will  
25 affect these recommendations. Windham School District we

1 believed to be eligible for the 50 million is not eligible for  
2 the 50 million. So obviously, that affects the recommendations.  
3 And I'm here to answer any questions, and--

4 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Okay. So, Windham School  
5 District gets put in, how will they be treated under this  
6 particular strategy?

7 MATT SNIADOCKI: I believe staff believes as  
8 an eligible entity that they should be in that pot of general  
9 revenue funding--

10 CHAIRMAN DANIEL:

11 MATT SNIADOCKI: --with IHES.

12 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Okay. And this was late-  
13 breaking news from TEA on Friday, you said?

14 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yes, sir.

15 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Okay. Have they--I  
16 understand the money came via TEA. I think we were right to  
17 accept responsibility for that money, but are they through  
18 making rules for it?

19 MATT SNIADOCKI: I believe so.

20 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Okay. Because we kinda  
21 need to put this to bed. All right, other questions or comments?

22 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: So, yesterday I asked  
23 Matt during a meeting if he had an opportunity to reach out to  
24 the advisory members of the committee, and I wanted to know what  
25 their input was before we made any decisions here. I'd also

1 referenced that in the past, we generally had accepted the  
2 recommendations of staff, but because of the changes and some of  
3 the updates that we received as of last Friday, I understand the  
4 position that we are in right now as an agency. But I'm just  
5 curious, Matt, have you--did you reach out to any of the  
6 advisory members last night?

7 MATT SNIADOCKI: I reached out to all of  
8 them. I only was in contact with Mario Lazoya [SP] and obviously  
9 gave him the update.

10 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: And what was his  
11 response?

12 MATT SNIADOCKI: His response was when I--  
13 the anticipated changes to the recommendation with Windham  
14 falling into the general revenue pot, he was in agreement with.

15 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Okay. For right now,  
16 that's the only question I have.

17 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: So, let me make sure  
18 I understand this. Windham originally was going to be in the  
19 school districts, the independent school district's pot,  
20 correct?

21 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yes, school districts and  
22 charter schools, yes, sir.

23 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: School districts.  
24 School districts. And so, they would have made application under  
25 the independent school district's area. Now we're saying we're

1 gonna move Windham out of ISDs, out of the school districts, and  
2 place them into an institute of higher education.

3 MATT SNIADOCKI: In that same funding pool,  
4 yes, sir.

5 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: That same funding  
6 pool. And that same funding pool is for independent institutions  
7 of higher education, correct?

8 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yes, sir, IHEs are not  
9 eligible for the 50 million.

10 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Right.

11 MATT SNIADOCKI: So, the only pot of funding  
12 they would be eligible for was the general revenue.

13 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: So, when--

14 MATT SNIADOCKI: And with Windham as a new  
15 eligible entity, the only pot that they would be able to pull  
16 from as an ineligible applicant for the 50 million would be the  
17 general revenue funds.

18 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: And so, when they're  
19 submitting an application, they're doing that in conjunction  
20 with the community colleges that are submitting applications as  
21 well.

22 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yes, sir. They would be  
23 pulling from that \$7.52 million.

24

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1 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: So, when they're  
2 submitting an application, they're going to be competing with  
3 those other community colleges, if I'm not mistaken.

4 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yes, sir.

5 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: And so does the  
6 application allow for that? Will they even score?

7 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yeah, and I will note that  
8 the other parameters, because Windham is only one entity--

9 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Mm-hmm.

10 MATT SNIADOCKI: --the board had recommended  
11 setting a maximum amount of applications for those entities. So,  
12 prior, under the 50 million, they would have been eligible for  
13 three applications with a maximum of \$750,000.

14 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: So, I understand  
15 that part. What I'm trying to address is basically Windham, the  
16 way that they're set up, community colleges, and the way that  
17 the applications are scored, will they hit any of the criteria?  
18 I mean, will they even get in a position to communicate, or  
19 would they always be at the bottom? I mean, has that been looked  
20 at?

21 MATT SNIADOCKI: I'm sorry, Commissioner,  
22 I'm a little--

23 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: So, in terms of the  
24 application for [inaudible] students of higher education, if  
25 Windham submits an application, will that application match up

1 with the community colleges and the like? Because I'm not sure--  
2 they were originally in the independent school districts  
3 category, and now we're moving them over--

4 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yeah.

5 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: --to the community  
6 colleges. Do they stand up as a community college?

7 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yeah.

8 MARY YORK: Good morning, Commissioners.

9 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Morning.

10 MARY YORK: Mary York, Office of Outreach  
11 and Employer Initiatives. Commissioner, I wanna make sure I  
12 understand your question properly.

13 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

14 MARY YORK: Are you questioning how the  
15 scoring would be done for Windham as compared to IHEs, those  
16 community colleges?

17 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Somewhat.

18 MARY YORK: Okay.

19 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: If Windham's going  
20 to submit an application, and they're not, in the traditional  
21 sense, a community college, and so the criteria that you utilize  
22 for community colleges, I'm wondering if Windham will even be  
23 able to compete with those community colleges.

24 MARY YORK: We anticipate we were already  
25 going to have to adjust the scoring mechanism--

1 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Yeah.

2 MARY YORK: --for Windham. They're not  
3 required to meet the same criteria as an ISD.

4 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Mm-hmm.

5 MARY YORK: So, we were already going to  
6 have to adjust the way that the scoring was done. So, we would  
7 take that into account.

8 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Okay, good. If you  
9 were going to already adjust it, because I know they won't stand  
10 up as-is. They're not going to qualify at all, so. Okay. If  
11 we're gonna look at that--and that's what we need to do, we need  
12 to definitely look at that in order to have them standing up to  
13 be able to compete in that community college area. Okay.

14 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: The ISDs, regardless of  
15 the addition of the money via TEA, the ISDs, is there still a  
16 requirement for them to partner with community colleges on their  
17 applications?

18 MATT SNIADOCKI: There is, for ISDs, yes,  
19 sir.

20 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Yeah. The same  
21 requirement's not in effect in reverse. A community college or  
22 other institution of higher education--

23 MATT SNIADOCKI: It is not--

24 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: --would stand on their own  
25 merits on their application.

1 MATT SNIADDECKI: It does. There is a bonus  
2 section and bonus points allowed for IHEs who partner with ISDs.

3 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: In the reverse?

4 MATT SNIADDECKI: Yeah.

5 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Windham here, the  
6 treatment of Windham as different from ISDs in open enrollment  
7 charter schools, it strikes me as merely a result of the origin  
8 of the money. In other words, if we were running this program  
9 just simply on the general revenue dollars that we would  
10 typically run it on, Windham would probably be treated as an  
11 open enrollment charter school or an ISD would be. Is that  
12 correct?

13 MATT SNIADDECKI: It is correct. There's  
14 information in evaluating those applications from data from TEA.  
15 TEA does not provide that data from Windham, so we would most  
16 likely rely on regional data instead of TEA data.

17 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Mm-hmm. So, no matter what  
18 happens here, we have to have some innovative or unique  
19 treatment of Windham, because it's just a slightly different  
20 kind of construction, in terms of the way that school district  
21 is put together. And so no matter what we do, we're gonna have  
22 to adapt our processes to accommodate that.

23 MATT SNIADDECKI: Yes, sir.

24 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Yeah. The \$50 million is  
25 for a two-year period?



1 MATT SNIADDECKI: It is. It has to be  
2 encumbered by the end of '23.

3 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: What's the origin of that  
4 money, besides TEA?

5 MATT SNIADDECKI: Federal CARES dollars.

6 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: So, okay. So, it has some  
7 CARES rules attached to it, as well as whatever TEA has to do as  
8 a matter of their business?

9 MATT SNIADDECKI: It does, and I'm not clear  
10 on whether the Windham disallowance is a federal mandate, a part  
11 of the CARES Act, or a TEA rule.

12 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Mm-hmm. Let's do run that  
13 down, just so we can know the answer to it. The fact of the  
14 matter is is TEA is more or less making the money available to  
15 us, and so their rules are applicable here. But I think just for  
16 our own understanding and our ability to be able to work with  
17 Windham in a comprehensive way. No matter under any  
18 circumstance, the best possible treatment of Windham would only  
19 have yielded three applications, although they would have had a  
20 higher maximum rate for those three applications, had they been  
21 treated the way we originally anticipated. Here, we move them to  
22 two applications, and a maximum of \$350,000 per application. So,  
23 that's--I mean, just the way I read this, that's the material  
24 change for Windham here.

25 MATT SNIADDECKI: Yes, sir.

1 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right.

2 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, I have some  
3 additional comments.

4 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: [sounds like] Okay.

5 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: It is worth noting  
6 that H.B. 1525, which we have here, became effective September  
7 1, 2021, and the legislation modifying eligible JET recipients  
8 to include Windham was effective immediately May 25 of 2021. We  
9 can only conclude that the authors of H.B. 1525 were aware and  
10 meant to include Windham as an eligible participant. The  
11 Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act,  
12 CRRSAA, and American Rescue Plan, ARP, 2021 was meant to support  
13 other education-related entities, which I have right here.  
14 Support to address a learning loss due to the pandemic. Great  
15 report, read this last night after having a meeting with both  
16 you all. Moreover, ARP [inaudible] required the state to submit  
17 plans which included stakeholder engagement, to include children  
18 who are incarcerated in the federal guidelines that they gave  
19 us, and other underserved students--those in foster youth and  
20 others [sounds like] that population, et cetera. Plan  
21 requirements clearly focus on equity and groups most impacted by  
22 the pandemic. This federal pandemic funding was designed to  
23 include Windham juveniles engaged in CTE. That's the way I  
24 interpret it. And so, I certainly understand the position that  
25 you're in, your office. I understand we've got a timeline, we've

1 gotta get these grants out. Chairman, you as the chairman and us  
2 just serving as somewhat of advisers to the JET program, I  
3 certainly look at further comments that you have on here. I have  
4 additional comments on how we could use the money, but again,  
5 I'm just focusing on the report that TEA forwarded to us and how  
6 this money was to be used, and it does inform us, individuals  
7 that have been incarcerated is [sounds like] in this chapter, or  
8 in this report.

9 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: What's the origin of the  
10 money? Is it CARES Act? It's not ARPA or CRRSAA?

11 MATT SNIADOCKI: Corona Response and Relief  
12 Supplemental Appropriations Act, and American Rescue Plan Act of  
13 2021.

14 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: I think our [inaudible].

15 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yeah.

16 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Mr. Chairman  
17 [inaudible]--

18 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: That's TEA.

19 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: So basically, I  
20 guess when the advisory board made a decision to allocate 100  
21 percent of the proceeds, 100 percent of the appropriation, to  
22 institutes of higher education, if I'm not mistaken, the general  
23 revenue dollars, they were doing that under the understanding  
24 that Windham was going to be participating in the 50 million

25

1 [sounds like] tranche for the independent school districts and  
2 the like.

3 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yes, sir.

4 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: And so it's--because  
5 right now we're in that situation where now they're not in a  
6 position to participate with the independent school districts,  
7 and we're gonna move them up to the IHEs area. With that, I  
8 think one of the processes, and Chairman, you may have been  
9 trying to get--or alluding to this, is that if Windham is  
10 participating in the IHE category, maybe looking at a process  
11 where they're having to work with the community college, similar  
12 to what an ISD would have to do with that normal process. If  
13 you're a school district, I think we have to be in collaboration  
14 with a community college, if I'm not mistaken.

15 MATT SNIADOCKI: That is correct.

16 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Mm-hmm.

17 MATT SNIADOCKI: Windham is not required  
18 [inaudible].

19 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: They're not required  
20 to do that?

21 MATT SNIADOCKI: They are not.

22 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Do you think we  
23 should make that a requirement or so--I mean, I'm not asking the  
24 question, but just look into that, because we're taking them and  
25 placing them up into the institutes of higher education. If

1 we're not setting anything aside for it, maybe it's a moot  
2 point. But [inaudible] look at that, and just kinda [inaudible].

3                   CHAIRMAN DANIEL: You know, and I mean, this  
4 is complicated by the fact that because of the ability for us to  
5 have this additional \$50 million, we have a sort of bifurcated  
6 tranche of funds now, and we've gotta have a certain set of  
7 guidelines for one tranche of funds, which is one-time money. I  
8 mean, it may be two years, but it's not likely to come back  
9 after those two years. And so, you know, whatever we do here, I  
10 think where the 50 million's concerned, this commission can sort  
11 of set out whatever parameters that we want to for that \$50  
12 million. Personally--and perhaps I'm biased because I'm also the  
13 chair of the advisory board--but it was a good discussion, it  
14 was actually a really robust discussion.

15                   COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Mm-hmm.

16                   CHAIRMAN DANIEL: And there was a lot of  
17 back-and-forth between advisory board members. And so, I'm quite  
18 confident that even this change for Windham probably--and it  
19 certainly doesn't change my intent on what came out of the  
20 advisory board. It's--I would sort of score this under the  
21 category of it's unfortunate that we didn't have a full  
22 understanding of TEA's concerns about this until Friday. And I  
23 know we were actively working with them for months, so that's  
24 how that worked out. I'm not gonna make any further comment on  
25 that. But it's--Commissioner Demerson, you're kind of pushing

1 beyond the scope of sort of how do we deal with this \$50 million  
2 and the 7.5 of general revenue, which I think you're wise to do  
3 in the sense of it does appear that Windham is a unique entity.  
4 Personally, I think they serve an incredibly useful purpose for  
5 the state. I think CTE programs in general are pretty critical,  
6 particularly for high school education, and I think for  
7 incarcerated individuals I think those CTE courses can be even--  
8 probably more impactful in terms of the ability to find and get  
9 a good job, you know, following their term. So, at least in  
10 terms of spending the money, I think we only have one  
11 alternative, which is to move Windham to the 7.5 million. I  
12 might respectfully draw a distinction with you, because I don't  
13 necessarily view them as being in direct competition for the  
14 IHEs, no more than anybody else is in direct competition for the  
15 money. I think Windham can post and hold their own in terms of  
16 the application process because they are slightly unique to the  
17 IHEs and don't have a requirement to include them in their work  
18 or their plan of work the way ISDs. And so, the unanswered  
19 question for me then is is what about open enrollment charter  
20 schools. Are they required to work with an IHE the way ISDs are?

21 MATT SNIADDECKI: Yes, sir.

22 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: They are. So, indeed,  
23 Windham is this unique entity.

24 MATT SNIADDECKI: Unique, yep.

25

1 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: I think that perhaps in  
2 the spirit of what Commissioner Demerson said, and I can see in  
3 my peripheral vision Commissioner Alvarez nodding, our interest  
4 is in fostering Windham in this program and seeing that they too  
5 can be successful. I don't see an impediment because of this \$50  
6 million. If I could, I would say my preference today would be to  
7 accept the recommendations of the advisory committee with the  
8 change, regarding Windham in terms of what pool of money, and  
9 press forward. Commissioner Demerson raises what I think is a  
10 very valid point in the sense that we need to monitor Windham  
11 and understand, moving forward, if our processes are in any way  
12 presenting impediments to them, given that they're a little bit  
13 of a unique entity. But I personally--and I've looked at this a  
14 couple times now because of my role on the advisory board, I  
15 don't see an impediment just simply moving them from one fund to  
16 another for this one-time period of funds. So, I think we can  
17 safely move forward today. I would just simply put you on  
18 caution to say that if the commission moves forward with this  
19 today, and I hope that we will, that you would alert us as soon  
20 as possible if you have detected some particular impediment to  
21 Windham. Because early in the process, it's not too late. One  
22 contracts start getting made and things like that, then we can't  
23 really intervene. But where we're dealing with just the ability  
24 to make the money available and to accept applications for that  
25 money as we discover other things, I think we would wanna know

1 about that, because I do think we can continue to make necessary  
2 changes to this right up to the point when the RFAs go out. But  
3 once that happens, I don't really see us being able, or at least  
4 not efficiently, be able to come back to that. But this notion  
5 of Windham, I'm sensitive to that as well because I really want  
6 to see them succeed at this. I think there's some opportunities  
7 for them here, and I think those are good opportunities for the  
8 state of Texas. But I'm not seeing a problem today. Just simply  
9 we have to move them and the potential for them to be able to  
10 apply for and secure no more than \$700,000 out of \$7.5 million  
11 in one fiscal year. Because there's another tranche of GR  
12 dollars that would come in the next fiscal year as well.

13 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yes, sir.

14 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: So, you're actually  
15 talking about 50 and 15. I know that's not how we're presenting  
16 it today, but that's--the 50 is for two fiscal years, a  
17 biennium.

18 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yeah.

19 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: So, the corresponding  
20 dollar amount would be 15. And so, that opens up a little more  
21 of a playing field for Windham as well than what we're actually  
22 looking at on the sheet of paper right here.

23 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yes, sir.

24 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Right?

25 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yes, sir.



1 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Okay.

2 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Wow, what a position  
3 you're in, you know? And it's always good news when you receive  
4 money, right, especially for great things that have actually  
5 transpired, and the great work that your office has done to  
6 expand and promote the JET program. So, congratulations to you,  
7 Matt, and of course Emily at [sounds like] some time was part of  
8 this group. You know, I'm a little torn by this, only because of  
9 the advisory committee, their appointees as well. And so, I  
10 certainly, you know, I certainly have them in my thoughts as I  
11 make this--make additional comments. But the chairman stated  
12 that he, if I'm not mistaken, has conversations with them, and I  
13 guess you don't feel like this might be of anything that may--

14 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: And so, to be fair, I  
15 haven't talked to them specifically about this. This just  
16 happened yesterday, and I was waiting to hear Matt report back  
17 on his phone calls. But the spirit of the meeting, and you were  
18 in it [inaudible]--

19 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Oh, yes, yes.

20 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: I think the spirit of the  
21 meeting was as long as we've made available to any eligible  
22 entity all the funds that might be eligible to that entity, that  
23 struck me as the spirit of the conversation at the advisory  
24 board meeting. Let's just be sure we've--

25 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: [Inaudible]

1  
2 CHAIRMAN DANIEL:--[sounds like] maximized  
3 our ability to get resources to people.

4 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: I agree. So, I do  
5 have some additional comments, and these were some of the ideas  
6 that I shared with you while you were in my office yesterday.  
7 So, I ask for the record the following be put in. Fifty million  
8 dollars is a lot of money to get out the door for school  
9 districts. We all know that. Staff should consider finding ways  
10 to make the application process easier and more flexible to  
11 getting funding out the door. It's a lot of money, again.  
12 Outreach would be critically important to encourage all eligible  
13 grantees to apply. School districts, open enrollment charter  
14 schools. Outreach should also include clarification to school  
15 districts that JET grants can help existing programs if they  
16 intend to expand--existing programs. I would also suggest that  
17 we not limit applications from one open enrollment charter  
18 schools and school districts to three. We should allow multiple  
19 applications and monitor the balance. If the number of amounts  
20 exceed funding, then limit the number of grants per school, as  
21 recommended by the advisory committee. Funding allocations--this  
22 is something that--we were talking about general revenue, so  
23 this is important. Funding allocations--of the 7.5 million in  
24 general revenue, I would suggest carving out 1.5 for Windham  
25 School Districts, and any money not used to go to institutions

1 of higher ed. So, if they don't use the 1.5, send it to higher  
2 ed. Minimum/maximum grant amounts: Just like the group had  
3 recommended, the advisory committee, 40,000 to 350 for  
4 institutions of higher education and Windham; 40,000 to 750,000  
5 to open enrollment charter schools and school districts. These  
6 are all recommendations. Minimum 50-point threshold for  
7 successful applications. Maximum grants per eligible entity: Two  
8 applications per institutions for higher ed, four applications  
9 for Windham--again, any money not used to go to the higher ed--  
10 open enrollment charter schools and school districts. I would  
11 suggest we not limit applications from open enrollment charter  
12 schools and school districts to three. We should allow multiple  
13 applications and monitor the balance. If the number of amounts  
14 exceed funding, then limit the number of grants per school. So,  
15 I think that addresses--the majority of those were  
16 recommendations by the advisory committee, the minimum  
17 thresholds of applications. The only difference here is that I  
18 am actually asking for 1.5, so that doesn't change much of the  
19 money that had been used in the past for higher-ed institutions.  
20 One-point-five and any money that's not used that would go to  
21 higher ed.

22 MATT SNIADOCKI: With a maximum of four  
23 applications, correct?

24 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: With a maximum of  
25 four applications.

1 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: So, we essentially  
2 are carving out money for Windham in particular, and that's not-  
3 -that's different than what the advisory council actually  
4 recommended.

5 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Well, this whole  
6 thing is.

7 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Yeah. I'll say this  
8 and then we can get back to the conversation--I think Mary, you  
9 guys addressed it, the tweaking of the application, I think  
10 that's--you're in the process, and I think the chairman just  
11 alluded to it. That early on, we can do that and kind of  
12 understand it. We'll be okay from that standpoint. And if  
13 they're under the IHEs, then they have an opportunity to compete  
14 with those colleges, with those tweaks that you guys are talking  
15 about. So, I'm fine there, I appreciate that. In regards to the  
16 carve-out, that's something that it's outside of what the  
17 advisory board has actually recommended, and so we'd have to  
18 have a lot of discussions in that regard.

19 MATT SNIADOCKI: I will note that at 350,000  
20 maximum grant and four grant amounts, that would be 1.4.

21 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: That's correct.

22 MATT SNIADOCKI: Okay.

23 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: So, we would already  
24 have 100,000 left over.

25 MATT SNIADOCKI: [Inaudible]

1 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: And that's assuming  
2 that they were to use those programs, you know?

3 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yes, sir.

4 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: That's assuming that  
5 they would use it. And again, I understand your concern, but the  
6 advisory committee, I think, all of these recommendations that I  
7 laid out in front of you were recommendations that the advisory  
8 committee had already supported in supporting Windham. But  
9 because of the circumstances that we're now facing, all I'm  
10 asking is for a carve-out of some of that money be specifically  
11 designed to go to them. And again, if they don't have a program,  
12 any of the money that's left over would actually go to the  
13 higher ed. So, they could eventually get over six million--well,  
14 it's gonna be six million-plus. But to address--again, this is  
15 coming from the guidelines that were laid out in front of us,  
16 and the fact that we have already approved Windham as one of the  
17 eligible applicants. All I'm doing here is carving out money,  
18 and they were gonna get awarded anyway, up to 2. And you can  
19 correct me if I'm wrong, Chairman. I know that was a  
20 presentation, and I think they were all in agreement that  
21 Windham should be on the receiving end of something [inaudible].

22 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Well, I think they were in  
23 agreement of--everybody was in agreement that Windham should  
24 [inaudible].

25 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Mm-hmm, mm-hmm.

1 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Participate.

2 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: I disagree with you in  
3 principle today, only because carving out one entity over the  
4 others is problematic for me, procedurally, because we're gonna  
5 have to undo that at some point. And I don't want to create  
6 special categories among the applicants. The spirit in which you  
7 offer that, I understand what you--it strikes me that you would  
8 like to do, or at least are considering--would want us to  
9 consider doing is to treat Windham as we contemplated in the  
10 advisory board discussion--

11 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Mm-hmm.

12 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: --in terms of what they  
13 would be eligible for while moving their tranche of money. Some  
14 part of me appreciates that. I wouldn't be able to support that  
15 today because I don't wanna create categories. I'm already  
16 uncomfortable with the two tranches of money, and I'm already  
17 uncomfortable with one-time money, and I'm already uncomfortable  
18 with what seems like we're creating tiers of applicants. And so,  
19 I hope you'll appreciate my concern has zero to do with Windham.  
20 I'm glad they're now eligible. I'm just a little concerned about  
21 creating a special carve-out for them, because, you know,  
22 another agency has a guideline that we really apparently can't  
23 control. So, I wouldn't be in favor of that today. I mean, we  
24 have a couple options here. We can continue to debate this and  
25 arrive at some plan, or we can--you've made your issues,

1 concerns, recommendations known. Commissioner Demerson has made  
2 a few comments. I think I've been pretty clear here today. We  
3 could push a week and let staff crunch through this and  
4 understand what the numbers look like and bring it back, or we  
5 can continue discussion today. Does one week kill you in any  
6 way? I mean, it's problematic, I know, but is that an issue?

7 MATT SNIADECKI: No, I may be able to get  
8 further clearance from TEA as to why Windham isn't eligible, but  
9 no, a week doesn't kill us.

10 MR SERNA: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman, it would  
11 be two weeks. There's not a--

12 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Yeah.

13 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Oh, well, does two weeks  
14 kill you?

15 MATT SNIADECKI: No.

16 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Does two weeks present a  
17 problem?

18 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: I think it's--

19 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Great.

20 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: --probably well  
21 advised to do that, based on what we're talking about.

22 [crosstalk]

23 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: I'm in agreement with  
24 that.

25

1                   CHAIRMAN DANIEL: [Inaudible] there's enough  
2 changes here and let me also--let me get on the record also,  
3 too. I am--I have a longtime relationship with a couple of  
4 advisory board members. I have a professional relationship with  
5 the rest. I've actually worked with everybody on the advisory  
6 board now. They are appointed by the governor, lieutenant  
7 governor, and speaker, and TWC. And frankly, it's an outstanding  
8 group.

9                   COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Mm-hmm.

10                  CHAIRMAN DANIEL: But the final decision is  
11 made by the Texas Workforce Commission, with the advice of this  
12 advisory board. Now, I respect them professionally and  
13 personally, in all cases, actually, and so I want them to be  
14 comfortable with the decision. But at the end of the day, it's  
15 the three of us that vote on this, and if we disagreed with the  
16 advisory board, we would, as a commission, be free to act on  
17 that disagreement. I don't think we are here, and I think the  
18 spirit of what we're trying to get done--if it's not a killer,  
19 I'm leaning toward spending two weeks understanding what this is  
20 and continuing our conversation with TEA and coming back at  
21 this. If there's no objection from you or--and certainly if  
22 there's no objection from either commissioner, I think it's in  
23 this commission's best interest to get to the right answer and  
24 really understand what's going on via TEA, and what all of our  
25 options and parameters are here.



1 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: All right, so  
2 [inaudible]--

3 [crosstalk]

4 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Hey, Matt, so if you  
5 do meet with the advisory committee, if you could inform the  
6 other two commission offices that you're gonna be meeting with  
7 them, certainly would like an opportunity to hear what they have  
8 to say, and I'm sure you'll invite us. And of course, I'd also  
9 like general counsel, for clarification on some of the points  
10 that I pointed out earlier today, especially regarding the  
11 report and how that money is supposed to be used.

12 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yes, sir.

13 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Okay?

14 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Yeah. And Mr.  
15 Chairman, it sounds like you've brought up a point that I think  
16 we've all known, and if we're making the ultimate decision, then  
17 I think Commissioner Alvarez's 1.5 comes on the table, if it's  
18 only us to do it, and so [inaudible].

19 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Oh, I--yeah, for sure, I  
20 think it's a point of discussion, absolutely.

21 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Mm-hmm.

22 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Okay.

23 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Again, my disagreement  
24 with Commissioner Alvarez today is merely on principle, and I  
25 think the right thing for me to do is to look at all the angles

1 of this and try to understand what that actually means for the  
2 commission, and what it means for the program going forward.

3 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Right.

4 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Yeah. One more question?

5 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: None here, Chairman.

6 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None.

7 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: No more questions? I have  
8 one more. In hindsight, Matt, doesn't it make more sense for you  
9 to have swapped with Abby and for you to have done the rule  
10 layout, and Abby to have done this?

11 MATT SNIADECKI: [Inaudible]

12 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Or no, don't [inaudible]  
13 that question. Listen, reluctantly, we're gonna postpone  
14 consideration of this Agenda Item--

15 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Good job.

16 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: --until the next scheduled  
17 commission meeting. In the meantime, you've heard what  
18 Commissioner Alvarez has asked you, you heard Commissioner  
19 Demerson and myself, various comments. Go back, get some  
20 understanding from TEA. I will tell you I fully anticipate that  
21 you will, again, brief all three commission offices on what you  
22 find out.

23 MATT SNIADECKI: Yes, sir.

24 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: And I think I will also  
25 say general counsel's comments or opinion notwithstanding, I

1 think you should bring it back exactly like it is. I think you  
2 should give commissioners an understanding of where--what each  
3 of the things that you've heard today mean. But commissioners,  
4 if you have a particular change you'd like to make to what  
5 you're seeing, please be ready to bring that to the next  
6 commission meeting, and present that yourself. Let's don't put  
7 that burden on staff, to try to cobble something together from  
8 three offices that they can't actually confer with face-to-face  
9 because of Open Meeting Acts requirements and some other things.  
10 So, commissioners, if you could, a difference of opinion here is  
11 healthy, because I've heard nothing today that's just an  
12 absolute problem for the program. I think whatever differences  
13 of opinion we have, I firmly believe we can work out. Let's do  
14 that at the next available commission meeting, but let's be  
15 prepared to do that from the dais, if we could.

16 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yes, sir.

17 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right.

18 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: And one question,  
19 Matt--you guys on the timeline, if you can help us with your  
20 timeline, that would be appropriate, and that way, we can adjust  
21 and react even quicker.

22 MATT SNIADOCKI: Yes, sir.

23 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: All right, thanks.

24 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Thank you, Matt.

25 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thanks [inaudible].

1 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Thank you, Ms. York.

2 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Good discussion.

4 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Very good. Let's see, that  
5 was 12, right? So, we need to pick up 13. This is EEO hiring  
6 practices report.

7 BRYAN SNODDY: Good morning--

8 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Good morning.

9 BRYAN SNODDY: --Chair Daniel, Commissioner  
10 Alvarez, Commissioner Demerson, and Mr. Serna. Brian Snoddy with  
11 the Civil Rights division. Today before you for discussion,  
12 consideration, and possible action, we've provided you with the  
13 Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Hiring Practices  
14 report for the governor and legislature, pursuant to Texas Labor  
15 Code sections 21.0035, 21.504, and 21.553. We've noticed  
16 substantial similarity in the previous report of 2017/2018. This  
17 report does form the basis for updating the workforce  
18 utilization analysis tool. Further, I'd be remiss if I did not  
19 give explicit acknowledgement to the controller's office and the  
20 office of the state demographer that provided all the data for  
21 this report, so we're thankful for them. Staff does seek  
22 approval to present the report and make nonsubstantive clerical  
23 changes to the Office of the Governor and Legislature,  
24 consistent with the law. This concludes my presentation, and  
25 it's my pleasure to entertain any questions at this time.

1 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Any comments or questions?

2 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: None here, Chairman.

3 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None.

4 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion?

5 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Nice to see you

6 again, Bryan.

7 BRYAN SNODDY: Good to see you, sir.

8 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: I move to approve the

9 Equal Employment Opportunity and Minority Hiring Practices

10 report for fiscal years 2019 through 2020, to be submitted to

11 the governor, legislature, and legislative budget board.

12 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Second.

13 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and

14 seconded. We're unanimous.

15 BRYAN SNODDY: Thank you, sir.

16 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: I'm told staff has nothing

17 under item 14, staff has nothing under item 15. That brings us

18 to item 16. This is childcare development block grant, COVID-19

19 federal funding, third tranche of new initiatives, 2022

20 childcare relief.

21 MS. MILLER: Good morning, Chairman,

22 commissioners. Reagan Miller, with the childcare and early

23 learning division. This morning for your consideration is a

24 discussion paper on the 2.45 billion in stabilization funds that

25 TWC received through the American Rescue Plan Act. This is the

1 90 percent portion of the stabilization funds, which must be  
2 spent directly in awards to childcare programs. In issue one,  
3 you'll see that the first portion of the overview provides a  
4 summary of the federal ARPA parameters that TWC must consider.  
5 We then go on to lay out considerations for TWC's implementation  
6 of these funds through new 2022 childcare relief funds. Our  
7 recommendations relied heavily on how we structured the 2021  
8 childcare relief funds, which were funded through the covid  
9 response and relief supplemental appropriations act. The details  
10 are laid out in the discussion paper, and at a high level  
11 funding would be made available to all regulated childcare  
12 centers and homes that are not on corrective action, and TWC  
13 would make funds available on a rolling basis for three months  
14 with the goal of initiating awards in January 2022. The Office  
15 of Childcare's instructions to states notes that we should  
16 implement these funds with the goal of reducing the burden and  
17 bureaucracy on childcare providers. Regarding award amounts,  
18 OCC's instructions allow states to develop a formula to estimate  
19 a provider's operating cost that is based on provider capacity,  
20 age of the child, and region of operation. At the bottom of page  
21 four, the paper outlines the proposed formula based on these  
22 factors. And for your consideration, provider awards may also be  
23 enhanced based on three factors: Whether they are a quality-  
24 rated program; if they're located in a childcare desert as  
25 defined in the Texas Labor Code, and based on the CDC's SVI

1 score. This is a calculation that the CDC does to identify  
2 communities most vulnerable to negative impacts from disasters  
3 and public health crises. We'll calculate the final award  
4 amounts based on the number of eligible regulated providers as  
5 of December 31. But in order to provide a general sense of how  
6 much providers might expect to see, we did calculate some sample  
7 award amounts in attachment one. These will change once we have  
8 the final list of eligible providers from childcare regulation  
9 as of 12/31/21. The chart on page six outlines the rolling  
10 application period, when providers will be able to apply for  
11 funds, and when TWC will send funds to the providers, and that  
12 will be done in two increments, at application, and then six  
13 months later. Providers can use these funds to assist with their  
14 operating expenses, and as outlined in the ARPA statute, that  
15 could include personnel costs, like wages, stipends, and hazard  
16 pay; facility costs, like rent, utilities, facility maintenance,  
17 or insurance; PPE or other cleaning and sanitation supplies;  
18 update to equipment and supplies to respond to COVID; goods and  
19 services to maintain or resume childcare; and finally, mental  
20 health supports for children and employees. Providers will have  
21 the flexibility to determine how to use these funds to best  
22 address the needs of their program. Providers must also comply  
23 with the three required federal certifications which are  
24 outlined at the bottom of page six. And finally, we note that  
25 providers must retain documentation on the use of funds, are

1 subject to monitoring, and must comply with TWC's reporting  
2 requirements. So, that is the issue one in your document. And  
3 the second issue for your consideration is budgeting funding for  
4 TWC oversight and administration of the childcare program  
5 through fiscal year '24, totaling 42.5 million. And that  
6 concludes my remarks this morning. I believe Mr. Trobman is--

7 MR. TROBMAN: Commissioners, Les Trobman,  
8 general counsel. We do have three individuals who'd like to  
9 address you, if this is a good time. We first, in person, Cody  
10 Summerville.

11 CODY SUMMERVILLE: Good morning, Chairman  
12 Daniel and Commissioners Alvarez, Demerson, Mr. Serna. My name  
13 is Cody Summerville. I'm the executive director of the Texas  
14 Association for the Education of Young Children. I'd first like  
15 to say thank you to the commission for all you've done to  
16 support high-quality urban learning and childcare through the  
17 pandemic. The 790 million in corona response and supplemental  
18 relief funds that you allocated for childcare relief grants and  
19 the commission's recent action to increase childcare scholarship  
20 reimbursement rates is very appreciated. Thank you. As you know,  
21 the state's economy is in recovery mode, and as you also know,  
22 many industries are struggling to recruit and retain high-  
23 quality staff, and unfortunately, this is seen in great  
24 magnitude within childcare and early learning. I hear stories  
25 every day of childcare centers having to close classrooms or



1 close altogether because they do not have staff. Eight-six  
2 percent of childcare providers are struggling with staffing  
3 shortages currently. Childcare is the backbone of our economy,  
4 and Texas is home to a lot of working families. Those families  
5 can't go back to work if they don't have childcare. We have a  
6 shortage of childcare in all parts of the state, and it's  
7 hindering the workforce in all industries. The average wage of  
8 an early childhood educator is around \$11 an hour, which  
9 typically comes with no benefits. Teachers are performing high-  
10 skilled and challenging jobs, and unfortunately our childcare  
11 teachers are not appropriately compensated for the work they do.  
12 Low wages is the number one reason that early childhood  
13 educators are currently leaving the field. We see a vicious  
14 cycle. Early childhood educators are not appropriately  
15 compensated, so there are staffing shortages; staffing shortages  
16 are leading to underenrollment and long wait lists for families.  
17 Without the ability to clear these wait lists, centers are  
18 running impossible margins, and that's making it impossible for  
19 them to increase compensation is perpetuating the cycle. And  
20 this cycle is undermining our state's economy and recovery  
21 efforts, and without a solution, even a short-term solution, the  
22 cycle will lead to more closures and further deplete the supply  
23 of childcare in our state. Today I present you each with a  
24 letter signed by over 600 early childhood professionals, family  
25 members, community members respectfully requesting you all to

1 allocate funds from the American Rescue Plan Act for the express  
2 purpose of increasing compensation for the early childhood  
3 workforce. Stabilizing the supply of high-quality early  
4 childhood educators will go far in stabilizing the supply of  
5 labor in all industries. Your leadership throughout the pandemic  
6 has demonstrated that you understand that childcare is essential  
7 to our economy, and we look forward to seeing your leadership  
8 take action to stabilize the early childhood workforce. Thank  
9 you.

10 MR. TROBMAN: Our second commenter is  
11 virtual. Stephanie Gray, if you could unmute yourself, introduce  
12 your name and who you represent, and proceed.

13 STEPHANIE GRAY: Good morning. Can you hear  
14 me?

15 MR. TROBMAN: Yes, we can.

16 STEPHANIE GRAY: Thank you. Good morning,  
17 Chairman and commissioners. My is Stephanie Gray. I am the owner  
18 and director of Books and Bibs Childcare here in San Antonio.  
19 I've been open a little over four years, and my center is a  
20 four-star TRS center. I'm specifically speaking in regards to  
21 allocating funds specifically for increasing the pay of our  
22 early childhood educators. Between the ages of one and four, the  
23 most important years in children's lives, is when they first  
24 learn how to interact with others, including peers, parents, and  
25 of course, their early childhood teachers. Early childhood

1 educators are the building blocks of learning for our children  
2 for the rest of their lives. Yet they are the absolute lowest  
3 paid in the entire education system. Stability at an early age  
4 is vital; however, it's extremely hard if we can only pay our  
5 staff \$10 an hour, especially if they can go to the nearest fast  
6 food and make \$15 an hour. So, it's pretty much impossible for  
7 us to compete with that without raising our rates, which then  
8 makes it unaffordable for parents. So, again, we do need the  
9 help. Like, we're in crisis mode. For me specifically, my  
10 facility holds 118 children. I only have 54 enrolled, not  
11 because children are not available; it's because I don't have  
12 the staff. In order to stay in ratio, of course I can't allow  
13 those kids to be enrolled if I don't have the staffing. So,  
14 again, we definitely, definitely need help with this. Thank you  
15 very much.

16 MR. TROBMAN: Our final commenter is Sarah  
17 Baray. If you could unmute yourself, introduce your name and who  
18 you represent.

19 SARAH BARAY: Good morning. I'm Sarah Baray,  
20 CEO of Pre-K 4 SA. Thank you for allowing me to provide comments  
21 this morning. Pre-K 4 SA operates four licensed early learning  
22 centers. We also support providers across San Antonio. So, I'm  
23 here today both as a provider and advocate of high-quality early  
24 learning and care. As commissioners of TWC, you know better than  
25 most the critical role childcare plays in the economy. If people

1 do not have care for their young children, they cannot go to  
2 work. This is why when the pandemic struck, the governor stood  
3 up a task force on early learning and care. The governor  
4 understood that childcare was essential to reopening Texas. I  
5 had the opportunity to serve on that task force and was proud  
6 that Texas took such decisive and effective action to ensure our  
7 childcare system survived the pandemic, and I thank you for the  
8 role that you played in that by allocating funds to help  
9 childcare through that crisis. We need similarly decisive action  
10 now. The childcare system is still in crisis. As Cody mentioned,  
11 a recent survey of providers indicates 86 percent are  
12 experiencing staff shortages, and low wages is cited as a  
13 primary reason they cannot hire staff. Providers who participate  
14 in a subsidized care system who serve our most vulnerable  
15 children are hardest hit. The average childcare worker makes 10  
16 to 11 dollars an hour, and who can blame them when they leave  
17 childcare to go work at a fast food restaurant or a retail store  
18 that pays 15 to 20 dollars an hour for a job that requires far  
19 less education and responsibility than caring for young  
20 children. Now, I understand that solving the childcare wage gap  
21 has been around for a long time, and it's not going to be easy,  
22 but we must start by stemming the current crisis. Investing ARPA  
23 dollars to supplement wages will help to stabilize the system so  
24 that it does not collapse, which it is on the verge of doing. If  
25 we do it right, we can also begin to build a sustainable, high-

1 quality early learning and care system for our most vulnerable  
2 children and families. And the good news is we know how to do  
3 this. We have models of how to strategically invest in wages to  
4 increase childcare systems so that we retain our teachers while  
5 simultaneously increasing their education levels. For example,  
6 in San Antonio, a local business owner invested in a pilot  
7 program to increase education and retention among infant-toddler  
8 teachers. What we learned from this project is that incremental  
9 wage supplements are an effective incentive for increasing  
10 childcare teacher qualifications and retention. Of the 14  
11 teachers that began the program in 2020, before the pandemic,  
12 before we knew what was coming, they all earned child  
13 development associates certificates, and they are all still in  
14 their post. ARPA funding is a unique and perhaps once in a  
15 lifetime opportunity to make strategic investments that have  
16 lasting impact. I encourage you to provide guidance to local  
17 boards that helps them to put the ARPA dollars where they are  
18 most needed and will have the longest-term impact in wages for  
19 childcare workers. Thank you.

20 MR. TROBMAN: Commissioners, this item is  
21 now before you for your deliberation.

22 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right. Any questions  
23 or comments for Reagan?

24 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Do you have anything,  
25 Chairman? I mean, Commissioner or Chairman?

1 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: I was gonna say,  
2 Reagan, as--

3 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: [Inaudible]

4 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Okay.

5 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: --some of the items  
6 that were mentioned, and models and things of that nature, I'm  
7 interested in seeing some of those that were mentioned by Pre-K  
8 in SA, models that allow us to get to where we're going.  
9 [Inaudible] mentioned we have the examples of how to do it  
10 right, and so I'm curious to see some of those.

11 MS. MILLER: Yeah, so it sounds like Sarah  
12 was describing a project that provided wage supplements upon  
13 completion of some educational attainment.

14 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Mm-hmm.

15 MS. MILLER: So, there are models where a  
16 wage gain is tied to earning your CDA or improving your  
17 education, very similar to registered apprenticeship programs,  
18 where you're both working and involved in improving education  
19 and training skills. There are some other programs that simply  
20 provide wage supplements, signing bonuses, retention bonuses, in  
21 an effort to encourage staff to stay at the center, at the home,  
22 and continue working there.

23 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Mm-hmm.

24 MS. MILLER: All of those models, with this  
25 2.4 billion, as it's designed now, providers would be able to

1 invest any or all of the funds that they received on these types  
2 of wage supplementation programs.

3 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Okay. Thank you.

4 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: So, that was one of my  
5 questions, which is what--of the 2.4 billion that we're talking  
6 about today, what are some things it can be used for?

7 MS. MILLER: So, the federal law lays out  
8 six areas that providers can spend their funding on: Personnel,  
9 facility costs, PPE and cleaning, updates to equipment and  
10 supplies, goods and services, and mental health supports. So,  
11 providers would have the ability to spend their money on any of  
12 those activities, and other operational costs.

13 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Mm-hmm. So, this--so the  
14 2.4 billion that we're discussing today, compared--what's the  
15 total amount of extraordinary childcare dollars that have been  
16 made available via the three or four, I guess at this point,  
17 federal acts? What's the total amount of that gonna be?

18 MS. MILLER: Texas has received 5.9 billion.

19 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: So, \$6 billion, roughly;  
20 just under \$6 billion.

21 MS. MILLER: Yes.

22 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: For this sector. Now,  
23 we've not distributed all that money. This \$2.5 billion is a  
24 chunk of that money that you--of the 6 billion that you just  
25 described. This one, if I'm not mistaken, is probably one of the

1 more restrictive provisions in the different childcare dollars  
2 that have been made in the sense that we were essentially given  
3 the opportunity to distribute this to any open and operating  
4 licensed childcare facility.

5 MS. MILLER: That's correct, 90 percent of  
6 these stabilization funds, 2.4 billion, did have to go out in  
7 grants to childcare programs.

8 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Yeah, and there's, like,  
9 100--not 100; there's about 13,500 of those in the state?

10 MS. MILLER: Roughly, yes.

11 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Right, and that'll change  
12 a little, because there's constant movement on licensing and  
13 different things like that. So on average, that's like \$177,000  
14 per center, if you just divide. Now, we're not doing it that  
15 way. We have a bit of a formula here. So, this 2.5 billion could  
16 be used to support wages, to increase wages, although it would  
17 be, I suppose, on a short-term basis, and it's a one-time  
18 funding stream. Is that correct?

19 MS. MILLER: Yes, sir, these are one-time  
20 funds.

21 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Yeah. As to the formula,  
22 childcare deserts, I understand why we would offer some  
23 additional support in childcare deserts. I wholeheartedly  
24 support our supportive, quality-rated providers with the funding  
25 enhancement for two, three, and four-star providers. I am a



1 little bit interested in how we arrived at using the social  
2 vulnerability index, and this seems like an unusual use of that  
3 index. It's typically used to schedule evacuations and, you  
4 know, other types of disaster support issues.

5 MS. MILLER: It is. This--

6 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: So, I'm trying to  
7 understand how this fits in with our enhancement of quality-  
8 rated producers [sic] in childcare desert alleviation programs.

9 MS. MILLER: Yeah, so this SVI index is  
10 something that's been highlighted by the Office of Childcare on  
11 several technical assistance webinars. It's comprised of about  
12 15 different demographic data elements, and it is a way to help  
13 identify communities that may have a difficult time preparing  
14 for and responding to these kinds of crises. So, our enhancement  
15 would provide a slight increase to that base amount for  
16 childcare providers that are living in one of those communities  
17 that have a high preponderance of those demographic factors.

18 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Are we gonna calculate  
19 that at the census tract level or at the county level?

20 MS. MILLER: We are going to calculate that,  
21 I believe, at the census tract level.

22 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Okay. And what--tell me  
23 how many childcare centers would be located in a childcare  
24 desert that would also have a social vulnerability index score  
25 that would net them additional funds.

1 MS. MILLER: I'm going to have to get back  
2 to you. I don't know that I have that data on me right now.

3 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It strikes me, looking at  
4 the 15 individual components of the index, that there might be a  
5 high probability that those would also be childcare desert  
6 areas. I'm only concerned that it might be a little redundant. I  
7 mean, there's nothing about the social vulnerability index  
8 that's problematic, and I can clearly see mathematically how it  
9 might yield aid in an area that we all would want to yield aid  
10 in. I guess at great risk to the discussion, perhaps I'm--I see  
11 the elimination of childcare deserts as perhaps being more  
12 advantageous to the state of Texas and TWC than worrying about  
13 at the census tract level the social vulnerability index. But if  
14 it's an available index and your use of that is solely because  
15 you're trying to ensure that centers who perhaps are in an area  
16 of more need, or they have challenges beyond some others, I can  
17 comprehend that. I think there might have been better ways to do  
18 it, but I also understand the need to move \$2.5 billion out the  
19 door. And while I'm on that point, I might also say it's--I  
20 think when you're looking at \$6 billion, you think it would be  
21 very easy to distribute \$6 billion responsibly to the state, and  
22 you find that when you get into it, it's not as easy as it looks  
23 to be responsible with the money and ensure that the taxpayers  
24 are getting the highest level of efficiency for those dollars,  
25 and I do commend you for what you've been able to do with that.

1 I know we're not through distributing that money, because  
2 there's still more to go. And I should also say, on the heels of  
3 a decisive vote that was taken yesterday in the legislature, we  
4 have at this point \$6 billion available for childcare programs.  
5 In the totality of the pandemic, the state of Texas' share of  
6 unemployment insurance benefits that we paid out was roughly 7.5  
7 billion, so just slightly larger, during a 20-something-month  
8 period, just slightly larger than what we're investing at this  
9 point in childcare. It's a very healthy investment in childcare,  
10 and I appreciate the care that you've taken with making sure  
11 that all the dollars are impactful. And so, if you could get  
12 back to me on that one point on the SVI index and childcare  
13 deserts, and how those cross over each other, I would appreciate  
14 it. It's not gonna hold up this item today, I'm just trying to  
15 understand how these dollars are being distributed, because  
16 there are more dollars to distribute, and I wanna make sure all  
17 that's able to fit together in some coherent kind of way.

18 MS. MILLER: Yes, sir, happy to do that.

19 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you.

20 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, I'd like to  
21 ask Reagan a few questions. One is you said personnel cost. Can  
22 you tell me exactly what that covers? Would I be safe by saying  
23 that it would cover retention bonuses and one-time bonuses?

24 MS. MILLER: Yes, sir.

25

1 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: I think it's  
2 certainly worth noting that we need to inform our providers, and  
3 I'm sure they are aware of that. I know the SVI is about a 5 or  
4 a 10 percent increase, depending on the score. So, I just have  
5 some comments that I'd like to make. I certainly believe, and I  
6 always have believed, that, you know, our childcare providers  
7 should be paid more. That is by no doubt has always been my  
8 position. But I also believe in sustainability models in this  
9 one-time infusion of money, right? So, I do wanna inform the  
10 person who spoke at the very beginning of today's commission  
11 meeting regarding childcare breakouts during the conference. As  
12 you know, my super session is childcare, and we're very  
13 fortunate to have some really--Quintana Moore, Dr. Quintana  
14 Moore [inaudible] Rice, and some other people that will be  
15 providing us remarks, and Reagan, you'll be serving as the  
16 moderator, so I'm very grateful to you for that. And I'd  
17 certainly think this is something that needs to--we need more  
18 people--what we'd like for people to understand some of the  
19 challenges that we face, and how some of the money that we've  
20 had, or how we've distributed some of the money was used. I'd  
21 also like to thank the folks that have called in. And Chad, a  
22 good friend of mine, who I saw in Fort Worth recently. I'd like  
23 to acknowledge and thank [sounds like] Casey and Texas AC for  
24 their valuable input. We value Texas workers and understand the  
25 challenges the workforce faces. Two weeks ago, I attended a

1 graduation at Fort Worth campfire for graduates of their  
2 childcare apprenticeship program. I encouraged childcare  
3 providers to look at this model as referenced earlier about  
4 educational attainment, as by one of our speakers. And look at  
5 this model to encourage childcare providers to look at this  
6 model, again, as I said, as a way to professionalize this  
7 sector, and to tie wage increase to skill increases. As these  
8 are one-time funds, I am concerned about requiring the funds to  
9 be used across the board for designating pay increases for wages  
10 subsidies. Each provider will be able to use these funds for  
11 these types of initiatives, and they will be in better place to  
12 judge how best to use the funds to support staff retention. So,  
13 those are my comments. I certainly appreciate those that  
14 provided remarks today, and I certainly understand their  
15 concern. The educational attainment that was referenced earlier  
16 by the young lady in San Antonio, I do want folks to know that  
17 the apprenticeship program that was implemented by the Fort  
18 Worth or Tarrant County Workforce Board allows for 33 hours of  
19 college credit at Tarleton State University. And so, they are  
20 thinking of innovative ways to retain their workers, and they  
21 are providing the best professional development that's out  
22 there. And so, again, those are just some of the comments that I  
23 have to make, but I did want people to understand that the  
24 personal costs that specifically will address maybe some of the

1 needs is to provide them with one-time bonuses, or retention  
2 bonuses.

3 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Reagan, I just  
4 continue to appreciate the work that you and Allison and that  
5 entire team's doing in this industry. You're always seeking  
6 stakeholder input, and we continue to appreciate that. And I  
7 appreciate those employers that are out there, and those  
8 childcare employers. Cynthia Pearson was--Commissioner Alvarez,  
9 she was the one who raised the question and cornered me about  
10 two years ago at a session and said they wanted childcare to be  
11 raised to the front versus the back. So Reagan, if you have an  
12 opportunity to circle back with her, let her know what we're  
13 doing at the conference, and that her voice has been heard from  
14 that standpoint. I remember getting with you and Courtney right  
15 away, saying I met this young lady that wants to elevate  
16 childcare rather than having it behind, and Commissioner Alvarez  
17 for putting on a super session around that interest. Thank you.

18 MS. MILLER: Yes, sir, I'm happy to do that.

19 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Any other questions or  
20 comments?

21 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: None here, Chairman.

22 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None.

23 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion?

24 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, I move that  
25 we approve implementing childcare relief grants as discussed,

1 with targeted rollout date of January 20, 2022--January 2022,  
2 and budgeting 2.5 of the ARPA discretionary funding to support  
3 program oversight and administration.

4 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: I second.

5 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and  
6 seconded. Motion carries. This is Agenda Item 17, board  
7 nominations.

8 SHUNTA WILLIAMS: Good morning, Chairman,  
9 commissioners, and Mr. Serna. For the record, Shunta Williams  
10 with the workforce development division. And for your  
11 consideration this morning we have workforce board nominations  
12 for Workforce Solutions Concho Valley, North Central Texas,  
13 Golden Crescent, West Central Texas, Rural Capital Area, and  
14 Texhoma. Staff recommends that all nominees be approved, and I'm  
15 here to answer any questions you have.

16 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Any comments or questions?

17 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: None here, Chairman.

18 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None.

19 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion?

20 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: I move to approve the  
21 board nominees for Concho Valley, North Central Texas, Golden  
22 Crescent, West Central Texas, Rural Capital Area, and Texhoma.

23 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Second.

24 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and  
25 seconded. We're unanimous.

1 SHUNTA WILLIAMS: Thank you.

2 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Nothing on Agenda Item 18.  
3 Legislative proposals--is there a legislative report today? Yes,  
4 Michael is making his way up here. I like that he sits in the  
5 back. It gives me more time to come up with questions for him.

6 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: He looks different  
7 today.

8 MICHAEL BRITT: Good morning, Mr. Chairman,  
9 Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Demerson, and Mr. Serna. For  
10 the record, Michael Britt, governmental relations. Last night  
11 the Texas house and Texas senate adopted the conference  
12 committee report for senate bill 8 by Senator Nelson. This  
13 legislation appropriates Federal American Rescue Plan Act  
14 funding, including approximately 7.2 billion, to the UI trust  
15 fund for the purpose of retiring the state's title XII advances  
16 and restoring the UI trust fund to the statutory floor. The bill  
17 will now go to Governor Abbott for his action. This concludes my  
18 remarks. I'm happy to answer any questions. I prefer Jeopardy-  
19 style, if you have questions.

20 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Do we have to play the  
21 music?

22 MICHAEL BRITT: Tom said he'd hum it from  
23 the back.

24 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Tom--Tom's a whole other  
25 topic. Any other questions?



1 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: None here.

2 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: No questions.

3 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, thank you so  
4 much.

5 MICHAEL BRITT: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Mr. Serna, an executive  
7 director's report?

8 MR. SERNA: One of the things that I'd like  
9 to report, and Clay will come up and provide details on one  
10 particular aspect of it. But I wanted to make sure the  
11 commissioners knew that we continue to take action on the  
12 lessons we learned during the pandemic, the height of the  
13 pandemic, and adjusting our operations to improve our services  
14 to our customers. And Clay's gonna highlight some of the things  
15 that they're doing in UI right now, so.

16 CLAY COLE: Good morning, Chairman Daniel,  
17 Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Demerson, Mr. Serna. For the  
18 record, Clay Cole, unemployment insurance. Yeah, just wanted to  
19 give you a UI update, like Mr. Serna indicated. It's been a  
20 while since I've been here, and I tell you, some encouraging  
21 signs that we're seeing is fewer individuals are needing our  
22 services as we go forward right now, and of course there's  
23 plenty to do in the unemployment insurance division as we--it's  
24 really good timing as we really get to focus on replacing our  
25 legacy system with a UI system replacement project. And we're

1 really stepping it up. And on the tax side, which has been going  
2 on for several months, we're on iterations four and five. We're  
3 starting those up and we're testing iterations one through  
4 three, and we're about to kick off the benefit portion and the  
5 appeals portion of the project. So, good timing as things  
6 improve in unemployment insurance. We continue to see calls and  
7 claims trend downward, and of course you know effective with the  
8 week ending June 26, 2021, the federal pandemic benefits ended  
9 in Texas, except we continue to pay a significant number of  
10 individuals on state extended benefits, and that program ended  
11 with the--as we triggered off state-extended benefits. And the  
12 last benefit week for state-extended benefits was September 11,  
13 2021. And so--and we do have some people that we are paying  
14 retroactively because of appeals or claims adjustments, and  
15 there are some exceptions to continue some of those programs  
16 retroactively. But the individuals being served has decreased  
17 substantially. For example, last week was the best week we've  
18 experienced in terms of performance since the pandemic. We had  
19 the lowest number of [sounds like] deflects since February 23,  
20 2020, roughly about 22,000, which is a huge improvement. And we  
21 saw our average speed of answer average around six and half  
22 minutes for the entire week, which is well below the LBB  
23 standard, and in the position we wanna be. So, really good signs  
24 there, and the improvements there are in many ways too  
25 attributed to a lot of the changes that we made, like Mr. Serna

1 said. One of them is the virtual hold pilot that we introduced  
2 that provides customers with an option to call us back, and even  
3 they can do that through one of our contract partners. And so  
4 since that pilot began in August, we've seen about 13,885  
5 individuals request a call-back through the virtual hold pilot,  
6 and about 13,299 were successfully--we connected with and were  
7 able to serve. So, really good signs there, really optimistic  
8 about the future of that improvement. And also we've had some  
9 other customer service improvements that I wanted to share, the  
10 first being with senate bill 2099, relating to the methods by  
11 which a claimant may check the status of a claim for  
12 unemployment compensations filed with the Texas Workforce  
13 Commission. Specifically, this is where a customer can receive a  
14 return phone call or email response from the commission with a  
15 reasonable timeframe. We implemented that last week on October  
16 13, and as of Sunday, we had a little over 2,000 people that  
17 requested a call-back, and roughly--and we were able to contact  
18 over 1,820 of those individuals. So, good improvement there. We  
19 also enhanced our ID Me desk aide that we developed and  
20 distributed to UI staff and [sounds like] contracted call center  
21 staff to improve guidance and instruction provided to customers  
22 with our ID Me processes. And this enables us to get the  
23 appropriate assistance based on individual needs. So, that's  
24 some material too we can share with your staff, if you're  
25 interested in. Just let us know. And finally, I just wanted to

1 mention that we are working on a DoL grant opportunity for  
2 promoting equitable access to UI programs. Although we've been  
3 providing equitable access to unemployment insurance customers  
4 even through the pandemic, but we intend to utilize these funds  
5 awarded within our modernization programs already underway, such  
6 as the UI system replacement project and the IVR upgrades, just  
7 to ensure both claimants and employers maintain equitable access  
8 to our UI systems. And so, this is, again, we feel like a great  
9 opportunity. We really wanna be mindful of our capacity limits  
10 in terms of resources, because given that we continue to see  
11 higher than normal activity in certain areas, we just wanna be  
12 mind--and especially the fact that we're already taking on the  
13 UI system replacement project to replace our legacy system. We  
14 wanna try to identify those opportunities within those projects  
15 we've already planned or plan to do to enhance those, to ensure  
16 that, you know, we have made sure that we met the equitable  
17 access within all systems that we administer. And this concludes  
18 my update, and I'll be happy to answer any questions you might  
19 have.

20 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Any comments or questions?

21 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Thanks, Clay, for the  
22 report.

23 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None here, thank  
24 you.

25

1 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, thank you very  
2 much.

3 CLAY COLE: Thank you.

4 MR. SERNA: I have nothing else, sir.

5 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Mr. Serna, if I could get  
6 a list from you of all the statutorily required reports that TWC  
7 has to make and what the due date is for those reports, I would  
8 appreciate that very much.

9 MR. SERNA: Yes, sir, we'll do that.

10 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you. Is there any  
11 other order of business to come before the commission?

12 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: None here, Chairman.

13 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None.

14 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Is there a motion to  
15 adjourn?

16 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, I move that  
17 we adjourn.

18 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Second.

19 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and  
20 seconded to adjourn, and we are adjourned. Thank you.

21

22

23

24

25

Texas Workforce Commission Meeting  
October 19, 2021

Item 16A:  
Use of American Rescue Plan Act Child Care  
Stabilization Funds for 2022 Child Care  
Relief Funds to Regulated Child Care  
Providers

Written Comments

October 19, 2021

Texas Workforce Commission  
101 E 15th Street, Suite 122  
Austin, TX 78778-0001

Dear Chairman Daniel, Commissioner Alvarez and Commissioner Demerson:

We applaud the Texas Workforce Commission's efforts this past year to recognize the critical impact quality early learning has on children, families, the workforce, and the economy. The bold and meaningful actions the Commission has taken to allocate federal COVID-19 relief funds for Child Care Stabilization Grants and the most recent increase in child care scholarship reimbursement rates demonstrates the type of leadership Texas needs to ensure a robust supply of high-quality child care is available for the working families of Texas.

We hope that the Commission will continue to seize opportunities to address systemic challenges within the sector and work to build a stronger, sustainable early care and education infrastructure across the State.

**Collectively, we respectfully request the Texas Workforce Commission designate American Rescue Plan funds to be used for compensation of the early childhood workforce in Texas.** We love the children of Texas and are passionate about educating the workforce of tomorrow, enabling the current workforce to return to employment and strengthening the state's economic recovery.

As early childhood educators, we cannot continue to do this essential work when we are unable to feed our families and meet our basic needs with our current wages. Research indicates that 56% of the Texas early childhood workforce qualifies for at least one or more public assistance programs to meet basic needs. Optimal child development requires children's teachers to provide a warm, nurturing, positive environment. This is dependent on a physically and mentally healthy teacher. Both of which are compromised when wages fail to cover a living wage. Inadequate compensation of early childhood educators compromises the health, well-being, and educational foundation of our future generation.

As administrators, we are facing an unprecedented staffing crisis. Effective and highly qualified staff are leaving the field for higher wages. We struggle to recruit qualified staff to work for the compensation we can provide with the constraints on what families can pay, what we are reimbursed, and the other expenses we incur. 86% of child care programs in Texas are experiencing staffing shortages. Unlike other businesses who can simply raise the cost of their goods and services, the early learning industry is unable to do so--families cannot afford to pay any higher tuition. Most families are paying 13% of their yearly income on child care, almost double of the suggested amount. And the average cost of child care in Texas exceeds that of the average tuition at a public university. Without an immediate response, child care programs will continue to close, further reducing the limited supply of child care in Texas, which will be catastrophic for families, businesses and the economic recovery.

In April 2020, the state of Texas asked us to step up and open our doors, and our hearts to care for the children of essential workers. We were willing to put our own health and safety at risk to meet this need. It is time now to recognize the early childhood workforce as the backbone of the economy and ensure that compensation of early childhood professionals is reflective of the work we all do.

Thank you for your consideration,



Texas Association for the Education of Young Children



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Abiding Love Children's Center

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Associate Professor  
San Antonio College

Sara Sides  
Teacher  
Friendswood Christian school

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Katherine Sage Temple Child Care Center

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Stacy Jo Signaigo  
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Country Acres Child Development  
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LATRICE BROWN  
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All gods children daycare

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Foundations academy

Veronica Banks  
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Pioneer pathways

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Ashley Studebaker  
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Upbringing In A Better way Child Care

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Smart Start Child Care

Chelsea Finkbeiner  
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Charlie Lancaster

Janet Pavlic  
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BriTanya Bays  
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Natasha Spears  
Teacher  
Head Start

Andrew Foerschler

Stephanie Wilson  
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Madison square child Development  
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Michelle chapman  
Director  
Grayson institute for learning

Denise Alvarado  
Teacher  
I'm just a kid

Gigi Foerster  
Owner  
Parents choice

Angelina Yesufu  
Administrator  
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Instruction & Education

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UTSA Child Development Center

Jaenikque Griggs  
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Kingdom Class Academy

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Quenten Gonzalez

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Margaret English-Knipp  
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Beckys Kiddie Land

Jillian Human  
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Esperanza Baldwin  
Director  
Pearland Private Preschool

Nicole Perez  
Owner/Director/Lead Teacher  
Pint-Size Playhouse

Tanya Waymire  
Director  
Kids R Kids of Copperfield

Tammy Clark  
Vice Principal  
Wenzhou-Kean University Experimental  
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Chandler Rockward  
Owner  
The Joy of Life Academy

Tracy Payne  
Owner  
Kids R Kids

Pyreisha Hosey  
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Kidco learning center

Maria Velayo  
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Kids 'R' Kids Learning Academy of  
Liberty Field

Ayanna McNeil  
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Eric Lacy  
Owner  
True Love Childcare

Melissa Novak  
Friendswood Christian

Holly Dzierzanowski  
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Brooks Jones  
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Marcella Murray  
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Penny Chandler  
Retired CPs CAseworker/ECE Director

Carol Silva  
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Blessed Sacrament Academy

Nicole Haladyna  
Teacher/Program Owner  
Woodland Schoolhouse

Laura Mejias  
Teacher  
Ebony and Ivory's CC & LC

Rebecca Courtney  
Friendswood Christian school

Justin Richards  
Supervisor  
Creative Children's Center

Vicki Thurman  
Owner  
The Kid's Corral

Etta Spivey  
Owner  
Registered Home Daycare

Chelyn Butts  
Owner/ Director  
Bright Beginnings Learning Center

Anna Johnson  
Director  
Kids Konnection Learning Academy

Judy Mata  
Director  
Brighter Futures Learning Center

Lauren Dowden  
Teacher  
Sunshine House, Frisco T.X.

Tanna Berg  
Registered Home Daycare



Xochitl Sanchez  
Director  
St. Mary of the Miraculous Medal Early  
Childhood Center

Mailene Labrador Nieves  
The Goddard School

Gloria Pelayo  
Owner / Director  
Little Sprouts Child Care Center

Donna Miles  
Program Director  
Agape Christian Preschool and Child  
Care Center

Holly Rodenberg  
Parent  
Friendswood Christian School

Robb Rodenberg  
Parent  
Friendswood Christian School

Shante Smedley  
Owner  
Promise Kids Learning Academy

Stephanie Gray  
Owner  
BOOKS & BIBS CHILDCARE and  
LEARNING ACADEMY

Calla Pfeifer-Campos  
Assistant Director, Early Childhood  
Services  
JCC Block and Dreeben School for  
Young Children

Tylane Barnes  
CEO  
Converse Christian School & Early  
Learning Center

Kristy Pulcher  
Enrichment Teacher  
First United The Weekday Program

Jessica Wells  
Assistant Director  
The Pillars Christian Learning Center  
Singing Hills

Italeigh  
Childcare worker  
ECC

Karen Rodriguez  
Ecc

daphne adair  
teacher  
the weekday program

Stephanie Shoemake  
Director / President  
Peas in a Pod Learning Center

Melissa Mobilia  
Teacher  
FUMC Plano

Tammy Finley  
Preschool Teacher

Karen Nichols  
Director  
Creative Steps Academy LLC

Shakirae Ajaga  
Pre K 4 Educator  
G.W. Truett in Dallas ISD

Carmen Cartier  
Parent Educator  
\_\_\_\_\_

Paige Ruiz  
Owner  
Just Kids Christian Academy

Janice Davis  
Director  
A Creative Genius Learning Academy

Lisa Dail  
Vice Principal of Early Childhood  
Liberty Christian School

Bradley J Allen  
Parent  
Friendswood Christian School

Sherrie holly  
Director/owner  
Christian child home care

Maria Esther Garza  
Pre-K Teacher  
Burchett Elementary School/ Spring ISD

Alicia Altieri

Jess Hoffman  
Friendswood Christian School

Hannah Jeffrey  
Lead Caregiver  
Early Childhood Development Center  
GCISD

Waco ISD

Chelsea Thomas  
Assistant Caregiver  
Early Childhood Learning Center  
(GCISD)

Vicki Fields  
Lead Teacher Early Childhood  
Education  
Early Childhood Development  
Center/Grapevine Colleyville ISD

Suzanne Brown  
Lead Caregiver  
ECDC Grapevine-Colleyville  
Independent School District

Rosaline Quiles  
Lead Caregiver  
Early Childhood Development Center

Rebecca Gatwood  
Lead Infant Teacher  
Stephen F. Austin State University Early  
Childhood Lab

Christine Underwood  
Lead Caregiver  
ECDC at Grapevine- Colleyville  
Independent School District

Emily Watson  
Assistant Caregiver  
Early Childhood Education Center

Mya Dominguez  
Executive Director  
Generations Child Development  
Centers

Marti Burris

Rebecca Rueda  
Project Manager  
Early Learning Alliance

Teresa Gonzalez  
Pre K Teacher  
Werkday Program 3169 E. Spring  
Creek pkwy Plano Tx, 75074

Rebecca Robles  
teacher  
PSJA ISD

Dr. Keri Harvey  
Education/Child Development Professor  
Grayson College

Katy Emery  
Assistant Caregiver  
Grapevine-Colleyville School District

Chris Miller  
early childhood practice consultant  
Start Early

Kelly wommack  
3 year olds class caregiver  
Early Childhood Development Center

Salwa Al- Harbi  
Texas Women's University

ILEANA WHITTINGTON  
Teacher  
Friendswood Christian School

Dr. Rania Salman  
Associate Professor/Assistant  
Department Chair, Child Care and  
Development  
Austin Community College

Lin Moore, Ph.D.  
Professor  
Texas Woman's University

Alexandria Monteith  
Assistant caregiver  
Grapevine Colleyville ISD ECDC

Cynthia Baker  
Child Development Specialist  
St. Philip's College CDC

Stacey Katzianis  
Lead Caregiver  
Ecdc

Fran Gott  
Lead Teacher  
ECDC in GCISD

Rose yepiz  
Director  
Nature Bear Academy

Erin Garcia  
Assistant Caregiver  
Grapevine Colleyville ISD

Stephanie Chapman  
Administration  
Something Special Children's Center

Donna Bernelle  
Toddler Lead Teacher  
Sheldon Early Learning Center

Cynthia Flores  
teacher  
Madison Square CDC

Lisa West  
Director, Early Learning Center  
Corsicana ISD

Diana  
Director  
Light the Way CLC

Lynore Samford  
Program Director  
Opportunities for Williamson and Burnet  
Counties

Scott Gadd  
Sr. Supply Chain Analyst  
Hess Corp.

Ashley Bates  
Teacher  
Friendswood Christian School

Maria Angeles Tolle  
Owner  
Registered Home

Silvia Trejo  
Infant Teacher  
Madison Square CDC

Debra Brown  
Director  
Little People Learning Place

Claudia Barnes  
Education Coordinator  
Opportunities Head Start

Tanya Graham  
Family and Community Engagement  
Coordinator  
Opportunities for Williamson and Burnet  
Counties

Bobbi coleman  
Director  
Childrens Learning Centers

Melanie Rubin  
Director  
North Texas Early Education Alliance

Yadira De La Cruz  
EHS CCP Education and Special  
Services Coordinator  
Hartis County Department of Education

Monica Sanchez  
Director  
Kidco Learning Center

Mona Garas  
Assistant caregiver  
ECDC-GCISD

Kerri Christensen  
Caregiver  
GCISD Early Childhood Development  
Center

VICTORIA PALACIOS  
CENTER DIRECTOR  
MAKE A WISH LEARNING CENTER

Crystal Brock  
Director  
Anna Mudpies and lullabies

Christie Koch  
Teacher/Director/owner  
Butterfly Kisses Family Child Care

Marketa Lewis  
Center Director  
MET EHS Hempstead

Jamie Smith  
Owner  
Lil' Cats Child Development Center

Aderonke Akinremi  
Assistant Teacher  
Kids R Kids Learning Academy

Diana Gomez  
Assistant director  
Early Met Head Start

Heather Merriman  
Preschool Director  
Woods Chapel Baptist ECEC

Scott Wille  
Director  
Del Valle ISD Child Development  
Center

Audrey Walker  
Campus Administrator  
Upbring

Amanda Garcia  
CCP  
DV CDC

Jazmine Durham  
CFC  
Met early head start

gail jones davis  
child care coordinator  
Del Valle CDC

Aletha Laterza  
Center Director  
OWBC

Dena Yantz  
Education Coordinator  
Opportunities for WBC

Tricia Hisey  
Instructional Coach  
owbc

Angela Ganner  
Center Director  
Opportunities for WBC

Debora Trejo  
Director  
Bartlett Early HeadStart/ Opportunities

Kirstie Avila  
Toddler Teacher  
Bartlett Early Headstart

Krista Ortiz  
Family Advocate  
OWBC

Victoria Vanek  
Early Head Start Teacher  
Opportunities for Williamson and Burnet  
Counties

Tasha McMullan  
Program Manager  
Family Service Associates of San  
Antonio

Veronica Valles  
Director  
Head Start

Esperanza Baldwin  
Owner Director  
Pearland Private Preschool

Kevin Winter  
Collaboration Coordinator  
OWBC

Lisa Lechow  
Director  
Mary Bailey Head Start

Gracie Cantu  
Family Advocate  
Opportunities for Williamson & Burnet  
County Head Start

Victoria Zuniga  
Children's Learning Coach  
Texas School Ready

Gloria Roberson  
Director  
Opportunitiesforwbc

Jacinta Claypool  
Lead Teacher  
Head Start

Rui Cao

Dulie Nooyen  
Lead Teacher  
Harris Ross Head Start

Erica Hamilton  
Early Childhood Specialist  
Lewisville ISD

Debbie Martinez  
Teacher  
Opportunities for Williamson Burnet  
Counties

David Feigen  
Policy Associate  
Texans Care for Children

Kolby Monnig  
State Director, Texas  
Council For A Strong America

Nikki Riley  
Speech Language Pathologist  
Friendswood Christian School

Linda McDonald  
Preschool Director  
Legacy Academy Frisco

Kerri Stringer  
Office Manager  
Creative Children's Center

Jana Sanders  
Professor of Education  
TAMUCC

Jessica Vasquez  
Teacher  
opportunitiesforwbc

Diana Reyes-Galindo  
Teacher  
Opportunitiesforwbc

Sophie Phillips, LMSW  
CEO, TexProtects  
TexProtects

Angela McKoy  
Instructional Coach/Teach  
Opportunities for Williamson & Burnet  
Counties

Keyaira Gadison  
Early Head Start Teacher  
OpportunitiesforWBC

Robin Donahoo  
Owner/Director  
The Robin's Nest Childcare & P

Renee Brooks  
Director  
Oak Creek School

Mercedes Elliot  
Site lead  
Ymca

Kim Kofron  
Director of Early Childhood Education  
Children at Risk

Jaden Davis  
Community Teacher  
Jeremiah Program

Frances Cook  
President  
The Toddler House, Inc

Erin Lundie  
Franchise Owner  
Primrose School of Lantana

Belen Hernandez  
Bilingual Coordinator  
Child Inc

Angelica Cordova  
Co-Director  
St. Louis ECDC

Anastasia Vallejo  
Family Advocate  
OWBC / Round Rock Head Start

Cyndy Karras, Ph.D.  
Lecturer  
Texas State University

April Gosnell  
Front Lead Staff  
The Childre'sn Academy @ the  
Woodlands Family YMCA Of Greater  
Houston

Roxann Gray  
Director  
Cubs Country Child Care

Georgia Mendez  
Childcare provider  
Del valle child development center

Jill Tarpey  
Senior Compliance Specialist  
Kids 'R' Kids, Intl

Monique Mathis  
Intensive Coach  
opportunitiesforwbc

Julie Grebe  
School Leader  
Parker-Chase Preschool

Cynthia Prince  
Family Advocate  
Opportunities for WBC

Teresa Robledo  
Interim Center Coordinator  
San Antonio College Early Childhood  
Center

fatima lakhlifi  
child care provider  
Dvisd

Patricia Simpson  
director/owner  
Little Flowers Child Development

Rose Castro  
Admin Assistant  
Del Valle Child Dev Center

Jordana Bernstein  
Early Childhood Director  
Akiba Yavneh Academy

Tammy Beck  
Director  
Weekday Christian Preschool

Yasmeen Gonzales  
Child Care Provider  
Del Valle CDC

Danielle Otento  
Director  
Care Child Development Center

Kim Kramer  
Administrative Manager  
First Kids

Rachel Waller  
Assistant Director  
Legacy Academy Frisco

Courtney Benavides  
Friendswood Christian School

Dawn Leach  
Vice President Programs and Services  
Austin Chapter TXAEYC

Jose Alfredo Perez  
Case Manager  
Fairweather Family Lodge/Endeavors  
Inc.

m. Cobb  
Director  
Childrens Lighthouse

Kristine Luisi  
Director  
Early Learning Center of St. Mark  
Presbyterian Church

Jessica Johnson  
Director  
Westminster Presbyterian Day School

Whitney Farris  
Head of School  
St. Luke's Parish Day School

Melissa Atkins Wardy  
parent  
El Paso, TX

Brandi Ramirez  
Director  
AISD Travis HS CDC

Suzanne Garza  
Head of School  
Hillside Early Childhood Center

Sheila Matthews  
Director of Operations  
Open Door Preschools

Miracle Mosely  
Director  
Wesley School

Maryam Pourkohan  
Director  
Kids USA Montessori

Julie Oatman  
Director  
Jeremiah Program

Dara Richardson  
Blue Hole Primary Principal  
Wimberley ISD

Citlelli Hernandez  
Assistant Director  
Methodist Weekday Child Development  
Center

Manjula Vedala  
Owner  
Legacy Academy Frisco

Cheryl Driver  
Owner/Director  
Repair the Breach Early Learning Ctr.

Kathryn Bookout  
Owner  
The Busy Bee Preschool

Rebecca Medina  
Coach Mentor Trainer  
Rebecca's Training Service " Simply  
Learning"

Jerri Thompson  
Head of School  
St. George's Episcopal School

Kimberly Hodge  
Texas Rising Star Assessor  
Brazos Valley Workforce Board

Patsy Harnage  
CEO  
Bright Beginnings

Erin Arnold  
Child Care Program Specialist Quality  
Initiatives  
Workforce Solutions Capital Area Board

Bridget Brown  
Campus Manager  
Headwaters School Springs Campus

Tim Kaminski  
Director/Owner  
Gingerbread Kids Academy

Yolanda Arrieta  
Director Assistant  
Susy's Daycare Center

Cynthia Pearson  
President/CEO  
Day Nursery of Abilene

Barbara Sagehorn  
School Leader  
Carpe Diem Private Preschool

Anaelys Prieto  
assistant director  
open door preschool m station

Danielle dieckman  
Director  
Open Door Preschool Mstation

Brenda Peak  
Program Director  
Day Nursery of Abilene

Lindsay Rombach  
Assistant Director  
Children's Lighthouse

Yvette Aguilar  
Director  
West Austin Youth Association

Sheri Losoya  
Early Childhood Director  
Salem Lutheran Early Childhood

Laura Olson  
Organizing Director  
GoAustinVamosAustin (GAVA)

Harapriya Nagarakanti  
Owner  
IvybrookAcademy

Brenda Pace  
Director  
Pace and Ross Learning Center LLC

Richa Lawania  
Owner  
Childrens Lighthouse Round Rock

Jason Gindele  
Executive Director  
Mainspring Schools

Di Fontenot  
Director, Clinical Asst Professor  
Texas State University Child  
Development Center (CDC)

Sherry Miller  
Director  
First Methodist Preschool

Teresa Williams  
Director / Co-Owner  
Babe's-N-Tots Childcare Center

Meredith Kollman  
Administrative Assistant II  
Texas State Child Development Center

Lilia Sanchez  
Director  
Uphaus Child Development Center

Erica Miller  
Executive Board Member  
Champions for Children of Smith  
County

Cynthia McCollum  
Executive Director  
Open Door Preschools

Rita Medellin  
owner / director  
Leap Ahead Learning

Katherine Gagne  
Manager of Child and Family Learning  
Perot Museum of Nature and Science

Sharon Knight  
Director  
Tarrytown Children's Center

Natalie martinka  
Lead teacher  
Trinity child development center

Amanda Gomez  
Director  
Day Nursery of Abilene

Dillon Myrick  
Board Member  
Smith County Champions for Children

Adrine Sam  
Preschool teacher  
Jeremiah program

Tonia Williams  
Center Director  
Teeter Totter Village

Erin Mahoney  
Board Member  
Champions For Children

Lola  
Director  
Blessed Sacrament CDC

Joshu Rogalski  
Child Care Teacher  
Texas State University Child  
Development Center

Paula Allen  
Board of Director  
Champions for Children

Andria Horton  
Executive Director  
Smith County Champions for Children

Lisa Adair  
Director  
Ace Kids Academy

Kimberly Benford Johns  
Prek teacher  
Jeremiah Program

Sandy Paniagua  
Instructional Coach  
Opportunities For OWBC

Angela Camp  
Director  
CLP

Gloria Hernandez  
Infant Teacher  
Texas State University Child  
Development Center

Lauren Nash  
Director  
First Presbyterian Children's Center

Debra McCormick  
Executive administrator  
CHRIST THE REDEEMER

Debbie Degollado  
VP of Youth Development  
YMCA of Greater San Antonio

Shabnam Kasturi  
Owner/Director  
McKinney Academy

Lisa Lujan  
retired

Chasity S Archer  
Director  
KSTCCC

Jessie Kinney  
Owner  
Belle's & Beau's Childcare Center

morgan gooding  
assistant  
trinity lutheran woodlands child  
development center

Meliea Cox  
Business Office Assistant Manager  
Trinity Lutheran Church

Karen R Crawford  
President of the Board of Directors  
Smith County Champions for Children

Nancy Kennerly  
Center Director  
First Baptist Church Child Development  
Center

Victoria N Nunnery  
Director  
Bagdad Head Start

Amy Rickard  
Head Start Teacher  
Child Inc./ Del Valle Child Development  
Center

Kasandra Sanchez  
Preschool teacher  
Jeremiah Program

Gloria Miller  
Teacher  
Weasley School

Ashley Eglan  
Site Director  
UT Child Development Center- Capitol  
Complex

Moulshae Tuff  
Toddler teacher  
Del Valle CDC

Leroy Davis  
Executive Director  
Ebenezer Child Development Center

Blanca S. Sanchez-Lerma  
Director  
Joys of Heaven Daycare and Learning  
Center

Otilia Elizabeth Flores  
Teacher  
OWBC

Valerie Uvalle  
CFC  
Early Head Start

Catherine Eckhoff  
Pre K teacher and music teacher  
Tarrytown Childrens Center

Glendy Gomez  
Teacher  
OWBC

Lorena Rivera  
Teacher  
Opportunities for Williamson and Burnet  
County

Jamie Burns  
Teacher  
Opportunities for Williamson & Burnet  
Counties (HeadStart)

Crystal Goden  
Teacher  
Hutto Head Start/ Opportunities for  
Williamson and burnet counties

Jerri Love  
Owner/Director  
Turtle Creek Kids



LeAnn Hildebrand  
Teacher 2  
OWBC Head Start

Keyzaria Gadison  
Teacher  
Bartlett Early Headstart

Michelle Gonzales  
Teacher  
Bartlett Early Headstart

Samuel Horn  
Mentor  
ChildCareGroup

Charlae Moody  
Family Advocate  
Headstart

Deborah Carrell  
Owner/Director  
This Little Light Learning Center

tammy peterson  
teacher  
Stephan f austin

Lakitsha J. Proctor Lee  
Director/Owner  
Neighborhood Christian Learning  
Center of Dallas, Inc.

Katy Fisher  
Lead teacher  
The Corner School

Erin DeConcini  
Infant/Toddler Team Lead; Lead  
Teacher  
TCS at TASB

Sandra Marines  
Child Develop Specialist  
Alamo College REFC

Janie Nevares  
teacher  
OWBC

Patricia Adams-Williams  
Director/Owner  
American Care Academy

kristin nance  
headstart teacher  
Rawleigh elliot

Paula Fontenot  
Owner-Director  
Sleepers to Sneakers Daycare

Julie Johnson  
TRS Mentor  
Child Care Group

Lori Jones  
Child Care Services  
CCS

Martha Sue Perry  
Administrative Assistant  
Christ Lutheran Preschool

Nebra Brown  
Academy Director  
Bethlehem Children's Academy

Monica Ivener  
Child Care Director  
Legacy Kids Academy

Yasmina Garay  
Teacher  
Early Head Start

Mary K Jamsek  
Consultant  
MKJECE

Ella Gardner  
Lead baby teacher  
Tarrytown Children's Center

Marissa Acuna Rocha  
Curriculum Coordinator  
Kids R Kids Liberty Field

Riley Walsh  
Lead One's Teacher  
Tarrytown Children's Center

Lenzi Belcher  
Owner/Director  
Kidz World Learning Center

Tammy Fyfe  
School Director

Bertha Francis  
Head Start Teacher Assistant  
Child Inc./ Del Valle Child Development  
Center

Dawn Patterson  
Owner  
CP Preparatory School

Isabel Huerta  
Executive Director  
Sammy's House

Jennifer Torres Morales  
Child Care Provider  
Child Development Center/Del Valle  
Independent School District

Iris Duran  
Preschool teacher  
Del Valle CDC

Alicia Downing  
infant teacher  
Del valle ISD

Jessika Castruita  
Asst. Director  
Paso del Norte Children's Development  
Center (IELC)

Makia Thomas  
Associate Director of Early Childhood  
Education  
Children at Risk

Lia Rosen  
Director of Student Affairs & Services  
Magnolia Monstessori for All

Lauren Carney  
Executive Director  
Trinity Child Development Center

Mariana Font  
Owner  
My Little Team Texas Daycare

Kimberly Danysh  
Teacher Pre K 4  
Gingerbread School

LaQuetha Ford  
Director  
First English Lutheran Child  
Development Center

Reynaldo Delgado Jr.  
Administrator  
ADL Services Inc

Savannah Anderson

Anna Robles  
Program Director  
A Child's Place Learning Center

Elizabeth Piper  
Owner  
Mrs Beasley's Playhouse

Anetress Mathews  
Assistant Director  
First Methodist Preschool

Robyn Michalove  
Associate Pastor  
First Presbyterian Church

Becky Reynolds  
Early Childhood Educator  
Early Head Start

Rosa Brewer  
Senior Lead Care Giver  
Grapevine Colleyville ISD

Jeanne Burton  
Director  
ABC Academy LLC

Nancy Langdon  
Owner  
RFH

LaRonda Robbins  
President  
Gingerbread House Academy Inc

Melissa Olvera  
Teacher  
Madison Square Child Development  
Center

Annabel De La Rosa  
Teacher  
Madison square CDC

Jessica Bermea  
Teacher  
Madison square Cdc

Jason Ray  
CEO  
Clayton Youth Enrichment

Robyn McMinn  
Director  
enCourage Preschools

Kawanbir Singh  
Head of Operaions  
Kido International Preschool

Melonea Luke  
Director  
Something Special Children's Center

Retis Henderson  
Center Assistant  
Christ Lutheran Preschool

Sara Pastor  
Pre-K teacher  
Tarrytown Children's Center

AMI CASTRO  
Director  
Shoreline Learning Center

Huma Hosain  
Director  
Teeter Toddler

Anne Sabetti  
Assistant Director  
Trinity Child Development Center

Lydia Martinez  
Infant Teacher  
MSCD

Luvon price  
Toddler Teacher  
Pace And Ross Learning Center

Jimmy Ellis  
Emotional Wellness Coordinator  
Opportunities Head Start

Madison Mattise  
Director of Pre-K Partnerships  
United Way for Greater Austin

Shavannah Campbell  
School Director  
Cadence Academy Preschool

Emily Sutton  
Early Childhood Educator

Tammy Robinson  
Lead Teacher  
ECDC / Grapevine/Colleyville ISD

Gabriela Olivas  
Center Coordinator  
Day Nursery of Abilene

Margie Medina  
Center Director  
Day Nursery of Abilene

Reyna Ortiz  
Family Advocate  
Opportunities for Williamson & Burnet  
Counties- Head Start

Jasmine Pitts  
Pre K Teacher  
Pace and Ross Learning Center

Bill Schlesinger  
Co-Director  
Project Vida

Keia mende  
Lead teacher  
Opportunityschool

Crystal Pineda Arellano  
Teacher  
Wesley School

Tiffany Mays  
Director/Practitioner/Owner  
The Seed Tree School

Jennifer Burton  
Director, Onsite Owner  
The Goddard School in Steiner Ranch

Cecily Davis  
Director  
The Goddard School in Steiner Ranch

Marissa Zavala  
Teacher  
Prek 4 sa

Juana Bell  
Director  
Gingerbread House Academy, Inc

Gail Bruce  
Director of Education  
ABC Academy

LaRonda Robbins  
Owner  
Gingerbread House Academy, Inc.

Cynthia Catlin-Gaskins  
Director  
University Presbyterian Children's  
Center

Alison Guadiano  
Instructional Coach  
PreK4SA

Gabrielle Stevenson  
Teacher  
Kids R Kids

Dolores Rios

Tiffany Brown  
Para- Caregiver assistant  
GCISD Early Child Development Center

Claudia Gabriela Jimenez  
Infant teacher  
Kids R Kids Liberty Field

Cindy L Moreno

Kathy Cameron  
Owner  
Guiding Hands Christian Academy

Katie Campbell  
Program Coordinator  
Hays CISD Pregnancy, Education and  
Parenting Program

Latonia Lampkin  
Early preschool teacher  
Pace and Ross Learning Center

Sarah Lancaster  
Chapter/Member Specialist  
Texas Association for the Education of  
Young Children

Eddie Johnson III  
City of San Antonio

Shannon Harris  
Owner  
ABC Academy LLC

Brenda Cuellar  
District Manager  
Childcare Network

Adrian Coleman  
Director  
Childcare Network 170

Tedra Roberson  
Director  
Childcare Network 171

Patricia Gayle  
Director  
Childcare Network

Teresa Gerhardt  
Director  
Childcare Network

Donna Patterson  
Director  
Childcare Network 198

Misty Foster  
Director  
Childcare Network

Jennifer Stogin  
Director  
Childcare Network

Alyssa Finch  
Asst. Director  
Childcare Network

Patricia Smith  
Owner  
Sweet Briar Child Development Center

Krystal Canales  
Parent  
PreK4SA

Edna Garcia  
Owner  
Make A Wish Learning Center

Kecia Bolton  
Director  
Precious Lambs Learning Center

Russ Arnold  
Executive Director  
The Children's Academy/Country Club  
Montessori

Amanda Tew  
Program Manager  
Friendswood Christian School

Regina Puckett  
Executive Director  
Origins Learning Community

Lindsay Locke  
Director  
Lindsay's Lillypads

Dawn Hallman  
Educator  
Dallas Association for Parent Education

Kerstin Brinson  
Vice President of Operations  
The Pillars Christian Learning Center

Laura Nelson  
Director  
The Pillars Christian Learning Center

Michelle Rivera  
Vice President of Education  
Brighton Center

Andi Bruggman  
Administrative Assistant  
Friendswood Christian School

Elizabeth Self  
Program Coordinator of Child  
Development  
Tarrant County College