



**MEETING OF THE
TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION**

DATE

AUGUST 20, 2020

1 THURSDAY, AUGUST 20, 2020

2 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Good afternoon,
3 everybody. This meeting is called to order. Trobman, has
4 anyone signed up for public comment?

5 MR. TROBMAN: Good afternoon,
6 Commissioners. Les Trobman, General Council. We have one
7 person registered for the public comment session this afternoon.
8 After I recognize you, please unmute yourself and state your
9 name and who you represent for the record before going ahead and
10 proceeding with your comments. We have Jody Barr.

11 JODY BARR: Hello?

12 JOAN ALTOBELLI: I'm not Jody Barr, but I
13 was just asked to unmute. I'm Joan Altobelli with the YMCA.

14 MR. TROBMAN: Well, first we have Jody Barr
15 to present in public comment. Jody?

16 JODY BARR: Yeah, can you all hear me?

17 MR. TROBMAN: Yes, sir.

18 JODY BARR: All right, Commissioners,
19 [unintelligible], my name is Jody Barr. I'm a reporter with
20 KXAN here in Austin. I asked each of you for an interview
21 several days ago. Are you ready? Sorry.

22 MR. TROBMAN: Yes, please proceed.

23 JODY BARR: Okay. I'm Jody Barr with KXAN
24 News here in Austin. I asked each of--each of you for an
25 interview several days ago but we did not get a response from

1 any of the three of you, and that's what's brought us to this
2 meeting to try to get these questions asked and hopefully
3 answered on behalf of more than 300 unemployed Texans who
4 contacted us begging to be put into contact with the TWC. Here
5 are the questions we would like for the three commissioners to
6 please provide us and the public the answers to.

7 We're now five months into this--into the
8 pandemic, you've opened eight call centers, put more than 1,000
9 call takers to work. Those call centers are open seven days a
10 week, 12 hours a day. Why are people still unable to contact
11 these call centers to get their unemployment problems taken care
12 of? Are you all going to answer as we go or are you just taking
13 the comment as I've got a few more points?

14 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: We'll just take your
15 comments and then follow up as necessary.

16 JODY BARR: Okay, thank you. The next
17 point is we sent the TWC 111 names last month of people who have
18 placed thousands of calls to your call centers were never--they
19 were not able to get through. We aired an update last week
20 where your agency said the best advice to those people still
21 having trouble getting through to the call centers today is to
22 just keep calling. We got 300 new complaints just in the last
23 week from people across the state of Texas having the same
24 problem and, it's simple, they cannot get through to the call
25 centers. Is there no other answer that you just keep calling?

1 We've also compiled 300 new names. Al
2 these new complaints we will be sending those to your
3 communication office. But I think you all would agree that this
4 isn't the role of a media outlet to be this conduit. That these
5 people who are trying to get through to y'all would like to be
6 able to follow the process of the TWC so that they could be
7 provided the services that their tax dollars pay for.

8 We're also looking into the time it takes
9 for the TWC to hear an appeal. People tell us right now that
10 it's taking upwards of three months in some cases for an appeal
11 to be heard. Can you tell us how that is happening, why, and is
12 there any way to speed this up?

13 And the last point, question we would like
14 to have answered is, do you find it acceptable that five months
15 into this we have just heard from 300 unemployed Texans that
16 are--those are just the people who have seen our report who have
17 written in, we don't know what that number is statewide, but is
18 the--is it acceptable five months into this to--for these people
19 to still be falling through the cracks and unable to get a dime
20 out of the unemployment commission so they can continue to
21 support their families and keep roofs over their head and food
22 on the table? And thank you very much for hearing us out.

23 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, thank you.
24 Mr. Trobman, is there any additional public commentary?

25 {00:00:00}

1 MR. TROBMAN: No, not during the public
2 comment session. And when we get to the childcare items, we
3 will proceed with that topic. So, with that, I think we are
4 [unintelligible].

5 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right. Thank you
6 very much. Let's move to Agenda Item 3, go ahead, Ms. Miller.

7 MS. MILLER: Yes, sir. Good afternoon.

8 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you. Things brings
9 us to the end of Agenda Items 3 through 7. Let's pause for a
10 couple minutes to reset for the rest of the meeting. All right,
11 Commissioners, are we ready to proceed?

12 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Yes
13 [unintelligible].

14 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Yeah.

15 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, thank you.
16 Let's move to Agenda Item 8, discussion, consideration, and
17 possible action regarding approval of products offered by
18 certified community rehabilitation programs and the Purchasing
19 from People with Disability state use program.

20 MICHAEL HOOKS: Good afternoon,
21 Commissioners, Mr. Serna. This is Michael Hooks with the
22 Vocational Rehabilitation Division. [Unintelligible] resources
23 code Chapter 122 and TWC's Chapter 806 requires that TWC
24 determine the fair-market price of all products manufactured or
25 provided by individuals with disabilities offered for sale in

1 state agencies and political subdivisions by community
2 [unintelligible] participating in the PPD program. Today we
3 have seven community rehab programs that are presented 39 new
4 products to be purchased through the PPD program. The prices
5 are competitive with those new products and for individuals with
6 disabilities [unintelligible] paid above minimum wage.

7 Also, we have eight community rehab
8 programs that have presented 48 products with price revisions to
9 be purchased through the PPD program. We've, once again,
10 determined that those prices are competitive and the individuals
11 with disabilities working on these are paid above minimum wage.
12 We're seeking direction on your potential approval of 39 new
13 products. There's [unintelligible] seven CRPs and 48 price
14 revisions presented by CRPs.

15 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Any comments or
16 questions?

17 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Nothing from here,
18 Chairman.

19 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None here.

20 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Do we have a motion?

21 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: I move that we
22 accept the new products and price revisions as discussed.

23 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: I second.

24 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's unanimous. Thank
25 you. Agenda number 9, discussion, consideration, and possible

1 action regarding approval of services offered by certified
2 community rehabilitation programs under the Purchasing from
3 People with Disabilities state use program.

4 MICHAEL HOOKS: And, once again, Chapter
5 122 of the Human Resources Code and TWC's Chapter 806 requires
6 that TWC determine the fair-market price of all services
7 provided by individual with disabilities in [unintelligible]
8 real estate agencies and political subdivisions through the PPD
9 program. And proposed fair-market prices determined by state
10 agency negotiations, [unintelligible] work for us and the CRP
11 reach service contract required. [Unintelligible] reviews the
12 contract's [unintelligible] to determine that all requirements
13 are met. We've done so on the following comments, and I have
14 these to present today. [Unintelligible] community rehab
15 programs to prevent--present a temporary, new, renewal, and
16 transferred service contracts to take to TWC for approval.
17 [Unintelligible] quite a few, it's the end of the year, and we
18 have one big one that's an important one that's due at the end
19 of the year. Details as follows.

20 We had temporary service contracts, there's
21 66 of those, the--less than--totaling about \$455,000 with about
22 \$200,000 paid to individuals with 12 individuals working on
23 those and they're all paid above minimum wage. We had 79 new
24 contracts with 299 individuals with disabilities working on
25 those, and all those individuals get paid above minimum wage.

1 We have 650 renewal contracts [unintelligible] wages paid on
2 that's about \$28,000,000 to individuals with disabilities.
3 2,668 of them [unintelligible] individuals with disabilities are
4 all paid above minimum wage. A minimum wage or above, I should
5 say to be accurate. Our transfer contracts, there are 50
6 contracts totaling about \$4,000,000. We've got 156 individuals
7 with disabilities employed. [Unintelligible] those. And all
8 individuals are paid at or above minimum wage.

9 And then, finally, we have one statewide
10 umbrella, Secure Destruction Services contract. We've utilized
11 this multiple CRP. This is a statewide term contract.
12 [Unintelligible] we replace the existing contract expiring at
13 the end of this fiscal year with six community rehab programs
14 approved and can provide the Destruction contract services
15 through this contract. And the Texas Comptroller accounts has
16 negotiated price increases for three of those six. The CRPs
17 that are working on these are all paying at or above minimum
18 wage to individuals with disabilities.

19 We're seeking direction on approving all of
20 the above mentioned contracts offered by community rehab
21 programs. [Unintelligible] questions you may have.

22 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Comments or questions?

23 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, I just had
24 one question, and it was because I lost some during his remarks.

25

1 I think I may have a bad connection here. Mr. Hooks, on the 650
2 renewal contracts, what was the total amount again?

3 MICHAEL HOOKS: The total amount, the value
4 of the contracts--

5 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Yes.

6 MICHAEL HOOKS: --were [unintelligible]
7 right at \$58,000,000.

8 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Okay, great. Great.
9 For some reason I heard--I thought you said \$28,000,000, so
10 clarification, thank you very much, Mr. Hooks.

11 MICHAEL HOOKS: Yes, sir.

12 MALE: [Unintelligible] questions
13 [unintelligible].

14 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None here.

15 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: None. Do we have any
16 motions?

17 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Yes, sir. I move
18 that we approve service contracts offered by CRPs under the
19 Purchasing and People with Disabilities program as recommended
20 by staff.

21 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Second.

22 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and
23 seconded, and we're unanimous. Thank you. We'll be postponing
24 Item 10 to a future meeting. Under Agenda Item 11, I'm informed

25

1 staff does not have anything additional to present under this
2 item.

3 MALE: We do not.

4 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Let's move to Agenda Item
5 12, [unintelligible] discussion, consideration, and possible
6 action regarding guidance on resource utilization and
7 implementation of services and strategies to target disaster
8 relief efforts and public health emergencies, including those
9 funded with the Department of Labor's Disaster Dislocated Worker
10 Grant. We have two items here. The first item--actually Reagan
11 has both items so let's turn it over to Reagan now.

12 REAGAN MILLER: All right, thank you,
13 Chairman, Commissioners. For the record, Reagan Miller with the
14 Child Care and Early Learning Division. The first issue I'll
15 discuss concerns school-aged child care. So today we are
16 seeking your direction in how we authorize child care for
17 school-aged children as the next school year begins.

18 Traditionally, school-aged children are authorized to receive
19 part-time afterschool child care during the school year.
20 However, due to the impacts of COVID, Texas School Districts are
21 considering altertnive--alternative instructional models.

22 The federal Office of Child Care has
23 recently issued guidance noting that it is up to each state to
24 determine if they will pay for full-day subsidies when children
25 are completing remote learning. They also provided guidance

1 that states cannot use CCDF to fund instruction or any
2 educational services. The Office of Child Care also notes that
3 they encourage states to set perimeters that restrict the use of
4 CCDF for child care services during times when schools are open
5 and children are able to attend.

6 Due to COVID and based on guidance from the
7 Texas Education Agency, some schools may now be closed to in-
8 person instruction at the beginning of the school year or at
9 periods during the year. As I said, historically, we've only
10 authorized part-time afterschool care during the school year,
11 but during times of school closure, working parents may be in
12 need of full-time child care. I will note that these initial
13 closure periods are temporary. The TEA guidance does require
14 that following the beginning of the school year schools
15 physically reopen and that parents are provided with the option
16 of in-person instruction.

17 We are seeking the commission's direction
18 on the following: for students who do not have the option to
19 physically access in-person instruction based upon the school's
20 schedule, allowing the authorization of full-day subsidies, and
21 for students who do have the option to physically access in-
22 person instruction based upon the school's schedule, we would
23 only authorize afterschool part-time subsidies as we have
24 traditionally done during the school year. And that concludes
25 my presentation.

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CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Mr. Trobman?

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MR. TROBMAN: Commissioners, for the record, Les Trobman. We have eight individuals who have registered to address the commission on this topic. Once [unintelligible] meeting, go ahead and please unmute yourself and state your name and who you represent for the record before going ahead and proceeding your comments. First up, we have Joan Altobelli.

JOAN ALTOBELLI: Good afternoon, Commissioners. Thank you for allowing for public comment. I am with the YMCA of Austin, and throughout the COVID period, we have been providing child care for children of essential workers and then, when opened up, we allowed for presenting--providing summer camp for all children who needed to access that. We are currently serving children on an extended summer because of the school year calendar being changed, but we will, in the next few weeks, be providing support during the virtual presentation of instruction during an 11-and-a-half hour day of full-time daycare.

If we were to reduce the rates for the provision of that 11-and-a-half hour to the part-time reimbursement rate, instead of just losing \$55.00 an hour, which is what we lose when you reimburse us with the full-time enhanced rate, we would be losing a double amount to which would

1 be \$122.00 per child per week. And we serve, currently this
2 week, 70 children who are on CCS scholarships, so that results
3 in \$8,540 a week or translates to \$33,160 per month.

4 The YMCA is a non-profit organization. We
5 are losing money on having unlimited amounts of children who
6 qualify through the CCS funding. We will, for the first time in
7 50 years, have to reduce the number of children we accept who
8 are coming to us with CCS funding with a loss of \$33,000 a
9 month. Last month, of July, we lost \$365,000 total just from
10 our limited amount of services and limited amount of space to
11 provide. So I would like to encourage you to not change during
12 this period of time. They do receive instruction during the 11-
13 and-a-half hours that we see them, but we cannot tell our
14 employees to go home. They still are supervising the children,
15 helping with toileting and restroom breaks, helping them with
16 any Wi-Fi or electronic issues, technology, that they have
17 during the instruction. This is still full supervision. We're
18 keeping their masks on because they're with their classmates.
19 We're keeping them socially distant. We--we need to be paid at
20 the full rate.

21 So my suggestions to you are, please, do
22 not drop the rates while we're providing 11 hours and 15 minutes
23 of licensed child care from 7:15 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. regardless of
24 whether the schools are providing a short period of time of
25 virtual instruction during these days. If you do choose to drop

1 the la--rates, please do not do that till after the second wave
2 of infections happen when school will likely go virtual
3 instruction again in the spring. Please consider not doing this
4 until at least March of 2021 with reduction of fees.

5 Parents have to go to work. Parents need
6 affordable child care. Schools are only providing supervised
7 instruction in-person for a couple of hours a day or even
8 virtually for a couple hours a day. We have them the rest of
9 the day. The enhanced rate, along with the full day rate, has
10 allowed us to provide services and still only lose \$55.00 per
11 day or 3,800 a week or 15,000 a month. If that doubles, we will
12 have to reduce our enrollment. Thank you for the time.

13 MR. TROBMAN: Thank you. Stephanie
14 Brustos? Go ahead and unmute yourself if you are
15 [unintelligible]. We have, next up, we have Cynthia Stimpson.
16 And unmute [unintelligible]. Next we have Tama Bankhead.

17 CYNTHIA STIMPSON: This is Cynthia
18 Stimpson. Can you hear me?

19 MR. TROBMAN: Yes, Ms. Stimpson. Go ahead.

20 CYNTHIA STIMPSON: Okay. Thank you. My
21 name is Cynthia Stimpson. I'm the owner of Cornerstone
22 Childcare in Fort Worth, Texas. I would like to--I agree with
23 the previous comments with [unintelligible] as far as the
24 financial impact, but I also would like to point out some of the
25 family impacts that this would do. We've been servicing--my

1 center is approximately 80% subsidy children. We're in a very
2 at-risk community. We've been servicing essential workers since
3 this pandemic began, therefore a lot of these students have been
4 in the same controlled groups since March and April. Parents
5 are apprehensive even if there is in-person learning at these
6 schools. Parents should have the choice whether they put their
7 students back into a new group of students. They're comfortable
8 with the fact that they've been in somewhat of a controlled
9 environment, at least within our school. We cannot control,
10 obviously, what people do when they're out in the public, but
11 while their children are in our care, they have been in the same
12 groups with the same children for the past five months.

13 Putting the parents in a position where
14 they have to send their children to school if that's an option,
15 most of our districts are doing parent choice, virtual learning
16 or in-person. If you give the parents no option and they have
17 to put them back in public school, not only are you causing
18 their children to blend with new groups but, then, those
19 children can bring it back to siblings and those siblings are in
20 our care. So the ripple effect of all that is way greater than
21 we all see.

22 The other thing I would like to point out
23 is that many of our families in this high-risk area do not even
24 have internet access. By providing virtual learning at our
25 school in these controlled groups, they are able to have

1 internet access with no problem. So I do not agree with--I do
2 agree with the continued full time if they don't have in-person,
3 but I do not believe there should be a choice where the parent
4 is forced to go back to school if they're not comfortable with
5 the exposure for their children. Thank you.

6 MR. TROBMAN: Thank you. Tama Bankhead?

7 TAMA BANKHEAD: Good afternoon. My name is
8 Tama Bankhead. I'm one of the directors of Lionheart Children's
9 Academy. We're located throughout the state of Texas with,
10 sorry, nine academies here--rather than just rehash numbers as
11 been shared, I would like to agree with my colleagues, Joan and
12 Cynthia, for the same reasons. If the funding is not available,
13 services will not be available for our families. The care that
14 they are asking us to provide is needed, but it can only be done
15 so with adequate funding. Thank you for your time.

16 MR. TROBMAN: Jacob Stewart?

17 JACOB STEWART: Hi, can you hear me?

18 MR. TROBMAN: Yes, sir.

19 JACOB STEWART: Hi. Thank you so much. I
20 agree with the others that have gone before me. First, a little
21 bit about myself. I am with the Early Care and Education
22 Consortium, which represents multiple high-quality child care
23 providers throughout the state. Altogether, our members operate
24 over 550 centers across Texas that employ nearly 13,000
25 educators and staff and normally have the capacity to care for

1 over 72,000 children. And just like those that went before me,
2 we definitely urge that commission to do full-day rate and
3 ensure there's enough funding available to adequately care for
4 these children.

5 As mentioned immediately before me, this is
6 a very big equity issue. As we know, the cost of care, it
7 normally is quite high and has skyrocketed even further, and
8 this truth is is that these providers are still providing care
9 for a full day. And that is expensive and that costs money.
10 And for a lot of these providers, if the funding is not there,
11 they will have two options. They will either have to stop
12 taking the subsidy because there's no way that they can operate
13 in that manner, or they're going to have to charge non-subsidy
14 parents an exorbitant amount just to try to ensure that their
15 operations can continue.

16 And so, we encourage you to do the full-day
17 rates to prevent either of those options from happening and
18 ensure that that care can be provided as [unintelligible] the
19 school year. Thank you.

20 MR. TROBMAN: Thank you. We have Farhat
21 Husain. Go ahead and unmute yourself. Next up is Kaye
22 Boehning.

23 FEMALE: Who? Who?

24 MR. TROBMAN: Farhat Husain or Kaye
25 [unintelligible]. And, lastly, we have Kathryn Canales.

1 KATHRYN CANALES: Hi. Yes, I am from Kid's
2 Cottage Child Development Center here in Mission, Texas. We are
3 in South Texas, and right now the pandemic has hit us greatly.
4 We have a lot of families who have also lost homes due to our
5 recent hurricane, and given everything that is going on, that we
6 have so many down here, the numbers of COVID are so high,
7 schools down here are not giving parents the choice of sending
8 kids back to school. We have been told that all children will
9 have remote learning.

10 Our parents are questioning if they send
11 their children to school or to daycare if the daycare is going
12 to be able to help children with their schoolwork while parents
13 are at work. And we obviously want to provide the best child
14 care that we can for these parents, so we don't want to have to
15 tell them no or have to tell them that we have to charge them
16 more for child care.

17 And I also agree with the other comments
18 that have been made. It's [unintelligible] tremendous--a
19 tremendous struggle on these daycare centers to not only comply
20 with social distancing, the masks, and everything else, but it
21 also has us have to hire new teachers so that we can keep in
22 compliance.

23 MR. TROBMAN: [Unintelligible] the comment?
24 We may have lost--we may have lost you. Are there any--any
25 other [unintelligible] here that would like to address the

1 commission on this topic? Please go ahead and introduce
2 yourself, Lisa Gore.

3 ANNETTE: Hello? Hello? Hello? Hello?
4 Hello?

5 MR. TROBMAN: Hello.

6 ANNETTE: Hi, this is--my name's Annette
7 and I am with Kinderclub Learning Center, and I'm in Laredo,
8 Texas, and thank you very much for giving us the opportunity to
9 speak. But, currently, the situation that we're encountering
10 here in Laredo, Texas, is that the students are not--the
11 afterschool students are not going back to the classroom. They
12 will not be doing face to face, they're doing remote distant
13 learning, and my center has established a assistant program for
14 that. They will be with us full daycare because parent's do
15 work eight hours a day, so they're going, meanwhile, they will
16 be with us full--full day, and we will be assisting them with
17 their virtual learning.

18 But the situation we're running into is
19 that we are not going to be--the parents are not--we will not be
20 paid the full-time rate. We are under the partial rate, so I
21 just wanted to advocate for the parents that being that the
22 students are not going back to school, that they do--that there
23 should be enough funding to cover full-time costs for the
24 afterschool students that we'll be having full day.

25

1 And so, we just want to make sure that
2 there's enough adequate funding to make sure that the parents,
3 you know, could use that--the programs that we're offering, and
4 we just want to make sure that there's funding to cover full
5 daycare for the students that will not be going back to class
6 face-to-face learning and they'll be doing distant learning with
7 the--with the learning centers and the daycares. They're going
8 to be with us full day, so we should be paid full day for them
9 and not part day 'cause technically they're going to be with us
10 full day now until probably god knows when they're going to
11 reopen the schools. We don't know.

12 MR. TROBMAN: Thank you very much. Are
13 there any--anyone else who would like to address the commission
14 on this topic? There's--we have received several written
15 comments on this matter, all of which have been provided to the
16 commissioners and will be made part of the [unintelligible]
17 record. So with that, Commissioners, this matter is now before
18 you for your deliberation and consideration.

19 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you, Mr. Trobman.
20 All right, Commissioners, do you have any questions or comments
21 for Ms. Miller?

22 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Yes, Chairman. I'd
23 to thank Ms. Miller for the hard work that she's put forth on
24 this agenda item. I also would like to thank those who provided
25 remarks today for allowing us to recognize their concerns and,

1 of course, their comments. I'd also like to thank them for the
2 care that they give to our young children and the love that they
3 convey to them on a daily basis.

4 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Mr. Chairman, I
5 would like to applaud the fact that you early on said we need to
6 be flexible and nimble, and that's something that Reagan and the
7 team have been doing as we try to provide the best solutions for
8 those that are in--the child care providers. We'll continue to
9 do exactly that. And I also would like to thank those that have
10 provided public testimony. We appreciate what you're doing and
11 we know that that work is hard and essential and we're going to
12 do our best to accommodate where we can whenever we can.

13 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: So, Reagan has an item
14 before us for our consideration and the commissioners. Is there
15 any motions on that item?

16 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Yes, sir. For
17 agenda--this specific item, I'd like to move that we approve
18 full-time subsidies for students who do not have the option to
19 physically access in-person instructions based upon the school's
20 schedule and authorize afterschool or part-time subsidies for
21 students who do have the option to physically access in-person
22 instruction as discussed.

23 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Second.

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

1 REAGAN MILLER: Thank you, Commissioners.
2 The second item we have this afternoon concerns child care
3 development block grant CARES Act funding, and we're seeking
4 your direction on budgeting some additional funds for several
5 child care related strategies.

6 First, we're seeking your direction on
7 extending the temporary 25% enhanced reimbursement rates through
8 December. We are estimating that we need an additional \$53.8
9 million for this effort. That would bring the total amount
10 budgeted for enhanced reimbursement rates to 153.8 million.
11 Attachment 1 of your document provides the initial estimated
12 amounts needed to reimburse boards for these costs through
13 October. We're seeking the commission's direction on approving
14 these funds and authorizing staff to make funds available to the
15 boards to support the actual costs of the enhanced reimbursement
16 rates through December based on actual billings and actual need.

17 Secondly, we're seeking your direction on
18 budgeting an additional 19.3 million to address the higher costs
19 of child care that we've seen as a result of COVID during this
20 board contract year. These higher costs can be attributed to
21 items outside of the board's control. For example, when we
22 waived parent co-payments in May, we paid the full cost of child
23 care and we estimated that that cost between \$10 and \$11
24 million. In addition, we also experienced increase costs with
25 schools closed last spring and many children who were previously

1 receiving part-time afterschool care then needed full-time child
2 care. For this, we are seeking the commission's direction in
3 budgeting up to 19.3 million to address these higher board
4 contract year 20 costs and authorizing staff to make funds
5 available to boards based on each area's specific higher costs
6 resulting from COVID that were outside of the board's control.
7 And we would brief each of your offices on the amounts needed
8 board by board.

9 The last item is an increase to next year's
10 board contract year 21 child care allocation through a
11 supplemental distribution of 33.3 million. Looking forward into
12 next year, we are continuing to anticipate higher costs as a
13 result of COVID and the impact that the varying school schedules
14 will have on the need for full-day subsidies rather than those
15 part-time subsidies, as we were just discussing. Looking at the
16 higher costs of care that we've experienced this year and
17 projecting these forward, we will be able to serve fewer
18 children. This \$33.3 million investment would allow us to
19 address these projected higher costs and increase the number of
20 kids that we would be able to serve.

21 And while we don't have the BCY 21 targets
22 yet, we're waiting for the final market rate survey. We're
23 doing--we are looking at some initial estimates, and I will say
24 this is an estimate, but we're hoping that this additional
25 investment could support around 5,000 more children per day.

1 Attachment 2 provides the board distribution amounts, and we're
2 seeking your direction in moving forward with this supplemental
3 allocation. And that concludes my presentation. I'm happy to
4 answer any questions.

5 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Comments or questions?

6 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: No comment, sir.

7 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None here.

8 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Do we have a motion?

9 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Yes, Chairman. I
10 move that for the child care and development block grants CARES
11 Act funds we authorize the extension of the 25% enhanced
12 reimbursement rate which is estimated to cost 53,800--53.8
13 million through December, that we direct staff to make
14 approximately 50% of the funds available to the boards now, and
15 that staff make the remaining funds available based upon the
16 amounts needed to support the actual reimbursement of the
17 enhanced reimbursement rates through December, 2020.

18 I also move that we direct staff to
19 distribute up to 19.3 million to boards to address the higher
20 costs of child care that boards have experienced due to COVID
21 during board contract year 2020, and that staff be--will be
22 brief--that--and that staff will brief each of our offices on
23 these costs prior to the distribution of these funds. And,
24 finally, I move that we approve a supplemental distribution of
25 33.3 million in board contract year 2021.

1 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: I second.

2 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been moved and
3 seconded. We're unanimous.

4 REAGAN MILLER: Thank you, Commissioners.

5 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: Thank you.

6 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you. Do we have
7 anything additional under Agenda Item 12?

8 ED SERNA: Just one quick thing. Per the
9 governor's directive, TWC has submitted its quest for a grant
10 from--to FEMA for the lost wage assistance program, and we are
11 awaiting FEMA's response on that.

12 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Thank you. Any question
13 or comments for Mr. Serna?

14 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: No, sir.

15 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None.

16 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right, thank you very
17 much. Let's move to Agenda Item 13, discussion, consideration,
18 and possible action regarding approval of local workforce
19 development board nominees.

20 SHUNTA WILLIAMS: Good afternoon, Chairman
21 Daniel, Commissioner Alvarez, Commissioner Demerson, and Mr.
22 Serna. For the record, Shunta Williams with the Workforce
23 Development Division. Before you for consideration we have
24 workforce four nominees for Workforce Solutions Capital Area,
25 Greater Dallas, Middle Rio Grande, Northeast Texas, Central

1 Texas, Permian Basin, and South Plains. This concludes my
2 presentation, and I'm here to answer any questions.

3 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Comments or questions?

4 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman, no
5 questions.

6 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: None here.

7 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Do we have a motion?

8 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Yes, sir. I move
9 that we approve the board nominees for Capital Area, Greater
10 Dallas, Middle Rio Grande, Northeast Texas, Central Texas,
11 Permian Basin, and South Plains as discussed by staff.

12 COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: I second that
13 motion.

14 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: It's been seconded and
15 we're unanimous. Thank you.

16 SHUNTA WILLIAMS: Thank you.

17 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Do we have an executive
18 director's report today?

19 ED SERNA: No, sir, nothing else to report.

20 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: All right. Is there any
21 other order of business to come before the commission?

22 COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: None here, Chairman.

23 CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Do we have a motion to
24 adjourn?

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COMMISSIONER ALVAREZ: Chairman and
Commissioner, I move that we adjourn.

COMMISSIONER DEMERSON: I second that
motion.

CHAIRMAN DANIEL: Been moved, seconded to
adjourn and we're adjourn. Thank y'all.

Texas Workforce Commission Meeting
August 20, 2020

Item 12 A: Subsidies for School Age
Children During the School Year

Written Comments



10083 FM 1097 W., Willis, TX 77318 936-856-3491 www.kidsworldtexas.com

8/19/2020

Melinda Scardino
Cell 281-797-9884

Item : 12a Subsidies for School Age Children During the School Year – DP
Please have this statement read

Kids World Learning Center has 100 school age children from Kindergarten to 6th grade. The virtual learning that is taking place currently has put an enormous economic impact on childcare today. The children need one teacher for every four children since they are not familiar with the new on-line software and working independently virtually. Our school system did not have enough laptops to give to every student putting the financial burden on childcare. We had to buy 10 desktops and 10 laptops which was not enough to make sure each child was able to do their work and log on to their virtual meeting two and three times a day. Our teachers at childcare are using their own phones and laptops to ensure the children are able to connect with their teachers.

The public school system teachers are also struggling with working with a new system. Each teacher has their own work for each individual student and each teacher has their own Zoom meeting times. We are working with around 50 teachers with their own unique codes and meeting times.

I think the stress on the public school teachers, parents and child care teachers and financial stress on center could be avoided by being prepared.

Willis ISD will open next week and we have to prepare for the worst and hope for the best. Please do not wait until they are shutting the schools down to help the parents and child care center to be able handle this financially and emotionally.

Child care centers are barely staying financial sound. We are having to hire more teachers because of the lower ratios, extra cleaning procedures and making sure we follow all the protocols.

Parent are unable to work all day and come home to do 3 to 4 hours of home work the expectation are too high.

Yes, we should be provided with full day tuition for our school age children and they should be classified as a toddler rate because of all the extra assistance that is required.

Over 50% of our children are on subsidized child care assistance , we need your help.

Thank-you,
Melinda Scardino
Owner / Director



2nd Step Daycare and Learning Center

4255 S.R.L Thornton Frwy
Dallas, TX 75224
(214) 372-2800

Greetings to the Texas Workforce Commission Board,

Thank you for taking out the time to discuss this agenda item, regarding Subsidies for School Age Children during the School Year. I am Ms. Meme and I serve as a Center Director for 2nd Step Daycare and Learning Center. We serve in the Southern Sector for Dallas County. Our Center has had the pleasure of partnering with our Parents and Community throughout this pandemic. We have followed all CDC requirements, maintained an open line of communication with our parents, and kept all children safe. As the school year has arrived for some children, we have begun virtual learning to allow parents the opportunity to work and have a source of income. We know, this year has not been ideal, but we maintain flexibility. The proposed Child Care Development Block Grant would be beneficial for our Center. It would allow us to enhance the learning platform for higher education. Just this week, we are serving 15 children with their virtual learning. Please consider granting this grant proposal, as centers have stepped up to foster higher educational learning and continuing safety measures for our children.

Be Regards,

Ms. Meme Williams

Center Director

2nd Step Daycare and Learning Center

August 19, 2020

- Kaye Boehning First and Last name
- 936-438-1624
- Agenda Item you intend to comment on or topic of your comment if it is not in regards to an agenda item (agenda has been attached)
Please refer to Item 12a: Subsidies for School Age Children During the School Year - DP
- If you wish to have a written statement read, please send it via email to this email address and ensure that you provide your name and contact information on the written statement.

If I cannot attend for some reason this is my statement:

Essential worker funding has ended. We have several essential workers that have children going to public school. We are expecting the schools to shut down again after a few weeks due to new Covid cases. We would be able to provide child care/online classes for these students, however, their parents would not be able to afford paying anything for it. (They need the public school to be open for a place for their child to go for free.) Will TWC offer help to these parents? As a child care center we need to have a plan in place for this to happen. Last spring was not a good experience for anyone.

Kaye Boehning, M.Ed.
Head of School
Tomorrow's Promise, Inc.
The Montessori School of Huntsville
2817 Old Houston Road
Huntsville, TX 77340

936-435-0303

936-439-0303

August 19, 2020

To whom it may concern,

I am a child care provider in Katy TX and am undergoing great financial difficulty due to COVID 19. My business has suffered much financial loss and we continue to lose money as parents lose jobs or continue to work from home.

As public school goes virtual, we are providing educational support, meals, snacks and attention to the school age children and it requires more staff to do this than the normal child/staff ratio required by Child Care Regulation. Hence, our cost goes up but we are unable to pass this expense on to the parents.

In this respect, I request you to consider that child care providers(taking care of school aged children) be given full payment(while the school aged children are at child care for full days).

If we receive only partial payments for the school aged children who are here all day, we will, unfortunately not be able to sustain our school age program and our small business will suffer more losses and not be able to employ as many staff.

We have been, and are proving an essential service to parents as we fill in the gap for parents who need to work, while their children attend school virtually. We are trying our very best to provide parents with the best option for their school aged child.

Thank you for your time,

Very respectfully,

Farhat Husain

832-526-6711

August 19, 2020

Debra Martinez

210-315-5986

Good afternoon,

1- Regarding school Age Children -

Why are school age getting paid more and pre school paid less during the pandemic?

Daycares have been overly stressed during the start of the pandemic now we are fitted with the challenge of virtual learning which has not been easy.

We are also worried when picking up school age children after school that we might be more at risk of bringing in Covid into our facilities.

We have also learned that you can still have Covid with out a fever.

Extra cleaning supplies and masks are needed to keep our children safe and now funding is cut.

Either school or virtual learning not both.

August 19, 2020

Thank you for the information, I wish to have a statement read.

My contact information is Gloria Simmons the Owner/Director of Polly Wog Early Learning Academy 4617 Miller Ave Ft Worth Tx, 817-606-9005.

Statement:

As a Professional Early Educator in the Child Care Sector, I along with many of my fellow Providers feel and know it is pertinent that funding be provided for school age children to be in our programs, many school districts are doing virtual learning and our parents have expressed it is a must that the children be in our care full time in order to do this while they are working. Weather from home or in the community parents must work and the children will need our service, If the children aren't allowed to be in our Centers fulltime and Providers be paid for fulltime everyone loses. Our children suffer, the parents are left without jobs and our centers go out of business.

As Providers we have been the last on the list to receive acknowledgment as Essential, as being Frontline workers putting our lives at risk and last to receive funding for what we Love and do, its time for all upper Officials to hear Provider's, and our families that we serve voices. Please grant us funding to help us stay afloat as we serve one our Nations most vulnerable groups, Our Children. After all, they are our Future.

Thank You

Gloria Simmons

Director of Operations, Polly Wog ELA

Ph: 817-744-8828

Where our children are hopping into the future!

August 20, 2020

Licensed Child Care – A Critical Piece of the School Age Puzzle

As many school districts across Texas have announced plans for either full-time remote or hybrid remote learning for the start of the school year, thousands of working parents, whose work cannot be done at home, are left scrambling to find a safe place for their children to do their remote learning while their parents must be at work. This problem is especially acute for low-income working parents who do not have the financial resources to pay for full-time care.

Licensed Texas child care providers have a critical role to play in providing safe environments for school age children to do their remote learning. Further, licensed Texas child care providers have a long history of providing before and after school care during the school year and full-day care during the summer months. Most importantly, for continuity of care, paying full-day subsidy rates for school age children who attend licensed care when completing their remote, virtual, or online schoolwork, will allow many school age children to remain in a safe environment that is already known to them and trusted by their families.

While earlier there was some uncertainty about what was permissible under federal child care subsidy rules, just last week, the Office of Child Care at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued guidance on how states may use their federal CCDBG dollars to support the cost of full-time care for school age children who need a safe place to do their remote learning while their parents are at work. Specifically, the HHS guidance states:

(27) Can Lead Agencies use CCDF funds to pay for subsidies for school-age children who participate in remote, virtual, or online schoolwork while in child care?

Yes, Lead Agencies have the option to pay CCDF subsidies for school-age children for time in child care when the children are completing remote, virtual, or online schoolwork.

(28) Can Lead Agencies pay full-time payment rates for these school-age children on remote learning days?

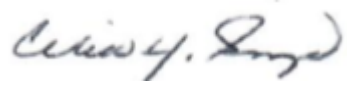
Yes, Lead Agencies may pay full-time subsidy payment rates for school-age child care as long as the Lead Agency is not paying for time when a child is physically attending school and is not paying for any regular education services.

On behalf of the many school age children of low-income working families we serve across the state of Texas, KinderCare urges the Texas Workforce Commission to pay full-time subsidy



payment rates for school-age child care when the children are completing remote, virtual, or online schoolwork.

Sincerely,



Celia Hartman Sims
Vice President, Government Relations
KinderCare Education
csims@kc-education.com
(703) 789-7969



August 19, 2020

**Comment from Marianne Willms, Executive Director
Country Home Learning Center**

- **Country Home Learning Center has 8 locations in San Antonio and 2 in Austin and we service 611 CCS children within these 10 schools. We are supporting school-age, Distance Learning children during COVID-19 by providing a classroom setting and a Teacher to facilitate the learning process, offer guidance and support for these children as they navigate virtual learning. We have collectively 168 CCS school-age children who are currently participating in our Distance Learning Program. We are advocating for these 168 children and their parents as we highly encourage you to provide flexibility and support to these parents seeking the best option for their school age child.**
- **We know these parents heavily rely on the CCS Program to help them stay employed and/or finish their education. They need quality care for their children during this very difficult time. So we implore you to allow the federal Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG) child care subsidy funding to reimburse centers for full or part day for school-age children this fall. Please help us, help these parents and children as we have stepped up to fill the gap to provide support and care for school age children during COVID-19 .**
- **Thank You For Your Time & Consideration!**

Marianne Willms
Executive Director
Country Home Learning Center
(210)688-0393

Wednesday, August 19, 2020

To: Texas Workforce Commission

Re: Agenda Item #12a Subsidies for School Age Children During the School Year

Dear Texas Workforce Commission,

The COVID-19 pandemic has created numerous challenges for all industries and individuals, but none more than our working families, childcare providers and schools.

As the 2020-21 school year begins, working families and caregivers are forced into the predicament of how to ensure that their child is in a safe, caring, high-quality learning environment while family members are at work. While some school districts are beginning the school year with in-person learning options, others have the option of pushing an in-person start until November at the earliest, leaving parents with limited care and school options. Additionally, as we've seen in other parts of the country, just because a school is open in-person this week, they could be closed next week, leaving working families without care at the last minute.

Our childcare providers have stepped in as the essential foundation for our economy throughout this pandemic, adapting to provide safe, quality care and learning for children so that parents and caregivers can continue to go to work. This unique role providers are playing will not end in the foreseeable future and we can and should support our providers as they continue to adapt to meet the needs of working families.

We encourage the commission to utilize the approximately \$170M unallocated CARES Act fund to continue to support and sustain our providers with the enhanced 25% subsidy rate until the market is stabilized and to increase subsidy rates to a full-day rate for school-aged children with no in-person school option. We further suggest that the commission work in partnership with TEA to provide necessary resources for effective school-age learning.

The current before/after care rate was based on the premise of larger child: teacher ratios and classroom sizes and for shorter hours than what is the reality of our providers during this season. We cannot expect a center to be able to sustain the cost of a 10-hour day of care at a 4-hour subsidy rate. Increasing the school-aged rate to a full-day rate will allow our childcare providers to sustainably offer school-aged classrooms that provide in-person care and learning options so parents can continue to work while schools are closed or remain virtual.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Chelsea Jeffrey, Senior Manager, Early Matters Dallas

chelsea.jeffrey@commitpartnership.org

Supporting Organizations:

Early Matters

The Commit Partnership

Dallas College

Texans Care for Children

Dallas Regional Chamber

August 19, 2020

Hi – thank you for this.

- Maggie Moore
- Calling from 561-288-9271
- 12a: Subsidies for School Age Children During the School Year – DP
- Maggie Moore, Director of Government Relations for The Learning Experience - a licensed child care provider that manages 2 centers (Sugarland and League City). I believe that CCDBG funding should be used to reimburse centers for full day school age subsidy children in order to best support children and providers during these times which are under extreme financial burden.
Name: Maggie Moore, Contact; 561-288-9271

Maggie Moore

Director of Government Relations

210 Hillsboro Technology Drive
Deerfield Beach, FL 33441
561-886-6377 Ext. 9271



August 19, 2020

Good afternoon,

I have signed up to attend tomorrow's meeting at 1:30pm regarding, 12a: Subsidies for School Age Children During the School Year - DP. I wanted to advise you that I do have a statement to make.

I know that at this time there is so much going on between the pandemic, violent storms leaving many with severe damage or even homeless, the struggle to find cleaning supplies, and all of the negativity surrounding us. The last thing that families or centers should have to worry about is the switch in child care from summer to school calendar year and whether or not children can be assisted with virtual learning. Our center has jumped into action purchasing extra needed materials, electronics, and even extending staff hours and hiring new staff to accommodate our school age children as we start on a new way of learning. We are well aware that some expenses were not necessary, but these are the ways that we are going above and beyond to help our community and those who serve it. In doing such, we think that some compensation would be helpful, appreciated, and necessary. Serving our community in a new way will be challenging, but it is our obligation as caregivers. We don't know the exact challenges these families may be facing at this time or when it will be any easier for them. All that we can do is provide them with the best child care that we can and assure parents that education and assistance with virtual learning will not be another hurdle to overcome. There is no need to put more stress or pressure on families and children when we are willing to help in any way that we can. We need to remind ourselves that we are all in this together and to put yourself in others shoes. Do unto others and you would want done unto you.

I look forward to attending the tomorrow's meeting.

Respectfully,

Kathryn D. Canales
Manager, Kid's Cottage Child Development Center
2310 N. Holland Ave.
Mission, TX 78574
Office: 956-205-2026
Cell: 956-648-8734

August 19, 2020

Name: Thelma Herrera

Phone: 512-928-8300

Advantage and disadvantages for the child to receive subsidies full time in to receive the best education at this time while the parent are at work, and no one home to help them with their lessons.

If you need anything else, please let me know.

Thank you.

Thelma Herrera

Director

 Rosie's Day Care #3 

(512) 928-8300/809-5796



AUSTIN CHAMBER

August 19, 2020

The Honorable Texas Workforce Commissioners
Texas Workforce Commission
101 E 15th St
Austin, TX 78778-0001

(Delivered electronically)

Dear Chairman Daniel, Commissioner Alvarez, and Commissioner Demerson:

The COVID-19 pandemic has created numerous challenges for all industries and individuals, but none more than our working families, childcare providers and schools.

As the 2020-21 school year begins, working families and caregivers are forced into the predicament of how to ensure that their child is in a safe, caring, high-quality learning environment while family members are at work. While some school districts are beginning the school year with in-person learning options, others have the option of pushing an in-person start until November at the earliest, leaving parents with limited care and school options. Additionally, as we've seen in other parts of the country, just because a school is open in-person this week, they could be closed next week, leaving working families without care at the last minute.

Our childcare providers have stepped in as the essential foundation for our economy throughout this pandemic, adapting to provide safe, quality care and learning for children so that parents and caregivers can continue to go to work. This unique role that providers are playing will not end in the foreseeable future. We can and should support our providers as they continue to adapt to meet the needs of working families.

We encourage the commission to utilize the approximately \$170M unallocated CARES Act fund to continue to support and sustain childcare providers with the enhanced 25% subsidy rate until the market is stabilized and to increase subsidy rates to a full-day rate for school-aged children when attending school is not physically available. We further suggest that the commission work in partnership with TEA to provide necessary resources for effective school-age learning in such child care settings.

The current before/after care rate was based on the premise of higher child: teacher ratios and classroom sizes and for shorter hours than what is the reality of our providers during this season. We cannot expect a center to be able to sustain the cost of a 10-hour day of care at a



AUSTIN CHAMBER

4-hour subsidy rate. Increasing the school-aged rate to a full-day rate will allow our childcare providers to sustainably offer school-aged classrooms while providing in-person care and learning options. This allows parents to continue working while schools are closed or online.

From a business perspective, the use of these funds for ensuring continuity of care for children will allow families that receive child care subsidies to continue focusing on their education, workforce training, and fully engaging as members of the State of Texas workforce while their children access public education in safe and supportive child care programs.

Sincerely,

Laura Huffman
President & CEO
Austin Chamber of Commerce

CC: Ed Serna, Executive Director of Texas Workforce Commission
Reagan Miller, Director of Child Care & Early Learning Division of Texas Workforce
Commission

August 20, 2020

I am scheduled to comment at today's TWC meeting, however I have a family emergency and won't be able to attend. I apologize for the short notice.

These are my 3 main points as to why TWC should consider Subsidized FT rate for School Age children DURING school.

1. Learning Centers have **incurred more expenses and recurring costs**, such as higher speed internet, hired more qualified staff to assist students with classwork, purchased protective equipment, (sneeze guards, individual desks, sanitize and disinfect equipment, etc.)
2. Most schools don't start at 100% until October 2020, 4-8 weeks.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Mrs. V. Valdez

Owner

KinderClub Learning Center TOO, LLC

(956)462-8782