



HB 376 Workgroup

Members in Attendance

Reagan Miller	– Texas Workforce Commission (TWC)
Michelle Adams	– Department of Family and Protective Services
Howard Morrison	– Texas Education Agency
Dr. John Gasko	– Texas Early Learning Council, QRIS Subcommittee
Dr. Elaine Zweig	– Collin County Community College
Doug Watson	– Healy-Murphy Child Development Center
Patricia Smith	– Little Dudes Learning Center
Sharon Davis	– North East Texas Workforce Solutions
Sul Ross	– Gulf Coast Workforce Solutions
Sandra Solis	– Lower Rio Workforce Solutions
Mary Clare Munger	– Amarillo College Child Development Lab

Members not in Attendance

Pattie Herbert	– Infants 123
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Additional Attendees

Texas Workforce Commission Staff:

Laurie Biscoe	– Deputy Director, Workforce Development Division
Patricia A. Gonzalez	– Director Workforce Policy
Phil Warner	– Child Care Policy and Program Supervisor
Regan Dobbs	– Child Care Policy and Program Analyst
Anjali Barnes	– Child Care Policy and Program Analyst
Kimberly Flores	– Child Care Policy and Program Analyst
Adela Esquivel	– Child Care Policy and Program Analyst

Meeting Summary

Welcome, Roll Call of Workgroup and Overview of Agenda

Reagan Miller, the presiding officer provided a brief overview of the overall agenda and took roll of the workgroup. She also welcomed the assembled guests and thanked them for attending and for their interest in the important scope the workgroup has been tasked to investigate.

The members of the TRS Workgroup introduced themselves.

Ms. Miller announced that Ashley Boggs has resigned from the workgroup due to family obligations. Reagan says the workgroup respects and appreciates Ms. Boggs decision, and



the professional courtesy she demonstrated providing the notice promptly. The Workforce Commission will fill the position with a 3-star provider.

Ms. Miller read a note from workgroup member Pattie Herbert, expressing her regret she is unable to attend the first in-person meeting. She is traveling to Africa to help set up quality child care programs. Ms. Herbert expects to participate by phone conference.

Chairman Alcantar greeted the TRS workgroup and assembled guests and provided comments. He acknowledged the important charge before the workgroup. Chairman Alcantar thanked the workgroup for volunteering their time and expertise, understanding the compressed time-frame and tremendous work ahead. He appreciates that everyone is present because they care about quality and preparing children to read, write, understand math concepts, and be ready for emerging markets.

Ms. Miller invited introductions from the people in attendance at the meeting. Ms. Miller informed the group the TRS workgroup website was recently established. She also provided some context in terms of the numbers of children receiving child care in Texas, children in subsidized child care, and children in care that has a quality designation.

Ms. Miller provided an outline of each subcommittee. She assured interested parties there will be opportunities to provide input on subcommittee work. Ms. Miller discussed the future meeting schedule and informed the group that all meeting dates are posted.

The end goal is for subcommittees to provide their recommendations to the workgroup as a whole at the March 2014 meeting.

Public Comments

The following attendees provided the public comments summarized below:

Sarah Crockett, Texas Association for Infant Mental Health (TAIMH)

- recognized the excellent work of the Texas Early Learning Council (TELC). She said this set the foundation for additional work on TRS.
- stated that there must be clear requirements for assessors; currently each Board spends money differently. The state needs uniform, standards and processes. This is an opportunity for quality to be ensured, promoting best practices.
- expressed that assessors should possess backgrounds of expertise in child care, with a 4 year degree.
- requested to make social/emotional development a measure in assessments.
- stated that TAIMH health consultants and infant family specialist as worthy and qualified candidates to provide TA.
- Also she urged the group to consider core competencies for coaches and mentors. She brought copies of her comments to provide to the Workgroup



Christina Thi, Obesity Prevention Specialist, DSHS

- stated she would like to see a strengthening of nutritional standards and an alignment standards with CACFP and licensing.
- recommended breast feeding standards be incorporated.
- highlighted a necessity to emphasize physical activities and obesity prevention.
- requested to serve as a resource for nutrition.

Angelica Brandt, Headstart

- announced herself as a new manager for Head Start TA
- stated caregiver and child interactions are very important

Andrea Brauer - Texans Care for Children

- believes there needs to be a paradigm shift for TWC, not just slots and vouchers.
- commented the 2% set aside needs more oversight, particularly to ensure uniformity.
- stressed the importance of holding the Boards accountable.
- stated it is great to have minimum requirements and she is pleased to see the mentor and assessor requirements.
- commented a CDA is not an adequate qualification for a mentor/assessor.
- commented there must be oversight of Board's the hiring process for TRS assessors and mentors.
- urged the group to incorporate breast feeding best practices, storing milk and providing that information along with nutrition and fitness activities.
- requested positive behavioral modification to be included as a TRS criteria as well.
- expressed that steps need to be taken to ensure Boards are responsive to providers.
- need to increased rates up to the 75% level.

Follow-up response:

-Reagan responded that recently more flexibility was provided for those Boards who were paying the lowest reimbursement rates to increase rates based on the children in care performance targets established by the Legislature for the FY 2014-2015 biennium.

Lonnie Hutson - Kids are Kids

- operates a TSR program
- reminded the group that these programs are voluntary; therefore, recommendations need to be something that providers will accept
- emphasized that the goal is to increase the number of providers providing quality care to children.

Mr. Hutson summarized "Big Five" issues:

- professional development, must be relevant
- a mentoring program is critical to success.
- interaction between teacher and the child is key. CLASS is a great model.
- parent involvement is crucial. What is done in class will be undone without this piece.



- assessment is most important; there must be an assessment tool. Find a tool and make sure what you are doing works, from small centers to large centers.

Alison Bentley - School Readiness Austin

- favored including multiple measures of quality, such as staff ratios and interactions, and safety.
- urged the use of assessments over time for all ages.
- commented that mentoring needs to be separate from assessors

David Fincher - National Child Care Coalition

- urged the workgroup to incorporate assessments. Unless you measure, you will never know about your program. Providers must measure. It must be first and part of an ongoing process.
- commented that Head Start assessments are very good.
- expressed that educational degrees may not always be effective indicators of good caregivers. Teacher behavior is the most important element
- stated that training needs to be specific to the care setting

Follow-up questions/responses:

-Dr. Gasko asked Mr. Fincher for clarification as to what assessment tools are used to measure/implement.

-Mr. Fincher explained that his center uses them to change teaching techniques, and as an improvement tool.

-Ms. Miller requested clarification on whether a menu of tools or one is recommended by Mr. Fincher for standardization?

-Mr. Fincher was prepared to suggest three tools: Skills matching checklist (for smaller centers), Kaplan, TSR instrument for literacy, and Infant/toddler guidelines.

Debra Parker - 4-star Provider

- wants to see increased structure and uniformity of assessment timeframe and assessing providers across the state. Some are visited multiple times a year, some are not. She commented visits should occur at least once a year.
- stated that if there is going to be such drastic difference in monitoring it should be a regional certification, versus a state-wide certification.
- minimum standards must be upheld.
- number of DFPS violations need to be a factor.

Don Titcombe - CLI

- separate mentoring and assessments is an important issue, particularly when considering high stakes decisions such as setting reimbursement rates.
- commented that if the workgroup is going to select a menu of assessments, then the assessment tools need to be equal and cover similar areas

Jackie Taylor-TAEYC



- TAEYC has prepared a position paper that she brought with her and would like to share with more in-depth comments.
- supports having separate mentors and assessors, and suggests that Healthy Child Care Texas and Texas Texas Association of Infant Mental Health are both good resources for mentors.
- She highlighted the importance for a background in early childhood education or family studies for mentors and assessors.

Melanie Rubin-Child Care Group

- discussed age appropriate ratios and training.

Cari Browning- DSHS

Ms. Browning:

- observed that remaining physically active is crucial for ages 0 to 5. Activeness reduces risk of diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, increases brain function, and increases confidence.
- requested to make physical activity a quality indicator. She references NAEYC, NASP, Obesity Prevention, and says there are many trainings and resources for providers.

Allison Reis - TXPost

- requested the workgroup keep in mind that TRS criteria need to account for all age groups, including after school care

TRS Guidelines Overview

Phil Warner provided a presentation to overview and outlined the TRS guidelines. He then accepted questions.

Adjourned at Noon; Subcommittee meetings begin at 1pm.

Session After Subcommittee Meetings

Reagan asked the subcommittees to report out on their meetings.

Subcommittee 1 – Director/Staff Qualifications and Training, Chair Elaine Zweig

- Accredited facilities should not be granted automatic 4 –star status. Not all NAEYC facilities are equal.
- Director Qualifications – What does the top end look like?
 - Training for directors is critical because it sets the standard and benefits teachers as well
 - Subcommittee has discussed establishing program certification for directors



- Will consider standards that are different for each level of TRS certification – if there is no real distinction between the requirements for each certification level, the higher levels of certifications have more meaning
- Will consider training differentials and measures that focus on the caregiver's age group
 - 0-3 years
 - 3-5 years
 - 6-8 years
 - 9-12 years
- Collect core competencies (Head Start, Out of school)
- Subcommittee is interested in whether a requirement could be established that all subsidized care providers be required to be TRS certified.

Subcommittee 2 – Caregiver/Child Interactions, Chair Mary Clare Munger

Ms. Munger reported the subcommittee had questions including:

- Subcommittee will consider which indicators are most valid
- Need to learn more about group size and ratios.
- Need to include criteria specific to homes
- Need to start with TELC, perhaps learn more from that research. How closely does the subcommittee/workgroup wish to align with those recommendations? Is it our guiding framework?
- Subcommittee will aim to keep providers in mind in all future work, by keeping ambitious but incentivizing.
- Will research other state systems

Subcommittee 3- Curriculum, Physical and Social Environments, Chair Dr. John Gasko

Dr. Gasko reported that the subcommittee, realizing the large scope of work, broke down the work plan into smaller subgroups:

- Health and Nutrition
- Indoor and Outdoor Environments
- Curriculum

Dr. Gasko reported the subcommittee is embracing the free reign to work in an imaginative space. The subcommittee has requested the TRS Guidelines in a word format to make revisions. An important theme emerged in the meeting that may be a crosscutting theme: extending learning across different areas, “Bridging the 30 Million Words Gap.”

Also the Subcommittee discussed dissatisfaction with “met” “unmet” as a measure. The subcommittee plans to do a sweep of open source assessment tools available in the public domain, to provide options for menus of tools that could be used at no cost.

Finally, the subcommittee will consider each of these criteria in terms of the Star levels, in relation to rate differentials.



Subcommittee 4- Parental Involvement, Chair Pat Smith

Ms. Smith reported the subcommittee discussed a variety of possibilities including:

- the group renamed the subcommittee - Parent Involvement and Education
- Restricting provider list to quality providers only
- Using the TRS logo more prominently for marketing
- Group had a discussion about concerns with self-arranged care, what rating it could or should be designated
- Subcommittee discussed the cost associated with parent involvement activities (providing food and child care)
- Group mentioned restricting subsidies to only providers with a quality designation.

Reagan suggested the resource, Little Texans, Big Futures.

Next Meeting and Next Steps

Reagan asks the group if they would prefer an additional conference call before the next scheduled in person meeting on November 7, to discuss the assessment issue, and the workgroup agreed to schedule a call.

Reagan Miller and other members of the workgroup made brief closing remarks.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:30.