

TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION
Workforce Development Letter

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Effective:	Immediately

To: Local Workforce Development Board Executive Directors
Commission Executive Offices
Integrated Service Area Managers



From: Reagan Miller, Director, Child Care & Early Learning Division

Subject: **Texas Child Care Connection and Child Care Automated Attendance—Update**

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this WD Letter is to provide Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with guidance on the implementation of automated attendance tracking and the new child care case management system—Texas Child Care Connection (TX3C)—as well as on the management of excessive child absences.

This updated letter reflects the new timeline for the implementation of TX3C.

RESCISSIONS:

WD Letter 08-23, Change 2

BACKGROUND:

TX3C, which is powered by KinderSystems and includes automated attendance tracking functionality, was introduced on May 17, 2023. The new system allows parents and/or caregivers (referred to as “sponsors” in KinderSystems’ applications) to report child care attendance in an automated manner through the following suite of KinderSystems products:

- KinderConnect—A web-based provider portal that collects child attendance data for providers and state or local Workforce Solutions staff to view
- KinderSign—An application for child care providers’ iPad and Android tablets that makes it easier for a sponsor to enter a child’s attendance status at the child care provider location
- KinderSmart—A mobile application for iPhone and Android devices that allows sponsors to enter attendance information using a personal smartphone

On April 25, 2023, the Texas Workforce Commission’s (TWC) three-member Commission (Commission) [voted](#) to reinstate all child care attendance requirements and

procedures in conjunction with the implementation of the full TX3C system. The launch date for full TX3C case management functionality is scheduled for December 9, 2024.

Boards notified all TWC scholarship-accepting child care providers that the new automated attendance tracking system, which consists of KinderConnect, KinderSign, and KinderSmart, became available on May 17, 2023, and that automated attendance collection began on May 17, 2023 (or as soon as the child care provider completed its setup).

PROCEDURES:

No Local Flexibility (NLF): This rating indicates that Boards must comply with the federal and state laws, rules, policies, and required procedures set forth in this WD Letter and have no local flexibility in determining whether and/or how to comply. All information with an NLF rating is indicated by “must.”

Local Flexibility (LF): This rating indicates that Boards have local flexibility in determining whether and/or how to implement guidance or recommended practices set forth in this WD Letter. All information with an LF rating is indicated by “may” or “recommend.”

Absence Reporting Responsibility and Information

NLF: Boards must be aware that KinderSystems began to ship tablets in May 2023 to providers that stated in the Subsidy/Scholarship Child Care Provider Survey that they did not have a tablet to use for attendance entry. These state-issued devices arrive ready to use, with the appropriate software already loaded.

NLF: Boards must also be aware that providers that use child care management software (CMS) supported by a KinderSystems application programming interface (API) connection may continue to use their current CMS for attendance collection. Only attendance information for children receiving child care scholarships will be uploaded to KinderSystems. The CMS programs that are currently supported can be found on the TX3C [List of Active and Certified KinderBridge](#) software.

NLF: Boards must provide sponsors with information on how to access the automated attendance tracking system through the KinderSmart or KinderSign applications. Sponsors may download the KinderSmart application on their personal devices from the appropriate app store (iPhone or Android). Additionally, sponsors must also be informed of how to use KinderSign on a provider’s tablet if they choose not to use the KinderSmart application.

NLF: Boards must notify sponsors whose child care provider will continue to use its existing CMS that the sponsors will continue using their provider’s existing attendance system, rather than KinderSmart/KinderSign.

NLF: Boards must be aware that an informational website, the [TX3C information site](#), and Help Desk support are available to help child care sponsors and providers in using the new child care automated attendance tracking system.

NLF: Boards must provide the following KinderSystems support information to sponsors who have issues recording attendance that the Board is unable to remediate:

- Support website: [Families, Parents, and Sponsors](#) page
- Phone: 1+ (888)265-6461
- Email: supportTX@kindersystems.com

NLF: Boards must notify Child Care Services (CCS) providers of the following:

- Providers that are not using the attendance system will be placed on a Service Improvement Agreement (SIA) notifying them that they have one month to use the new system.
- The SIA will also notify providers that if they are not using the new attendance system within one month of the execution of the SIA, CCS payments will be withheld until they come into compliance.

NLF: Boards must be aware that if a provider is unable to use the automated attendance system through no fault of their own (for example, they have not yet received a tablet), the provider must not be placed on an SIA or have their payments withheld. The provider must supply documentation of their due diligence to connect to and use the system.

NLF: Boards must also be aware that providers are required to report when a child stops attending a child care provider location so that staff may take appropriate action and reach out to the sponsor to determine whether the child still requires child care.

NLF: Additionally, Boards must continue to pay providers based on enrollment, with the exception of relative providers. Boards must ensure that a relative child care provider is not reimbursed for the days that a child is absent, as set forth in TWC Child Care Services rule [§809.93\(c\)](#).

Child Care Absence Tracking and Notification Process

NLF: Boards must be aware that attendance standards and notice and reporting requirements, as set forth in [§809.78](#), will become effective in conjunction with the full implementation of TX3C, scheduled for December 9, 2024. As of system launch, all children’s absences will be reset to zero.

NLF: Boards must be aware that the provider automated attendance and notification requirements, as set forth in [§809.95](#), remain in effect with the implementation of TX3C.

NLF: Boards also must be aware that, pursuant to [§809.2\(11\)](#), “excessive unexplained absences” are defined as more than 40 unexplained absences in a 12-month eligibility period.

NLF: Furthermore, Boards must be aware that absence notifications to families and providers must begin with the launch of the new system.

NLF: Boards must be aware that a relative provider will report a child’s attendance using the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system. The IVR phone number is (713) 242-1606.

NLF: Boards must be aware that, pursuant to [§809.95](#), only a sponsor may report a child’s attendance. However, in instances where there is not a sponsor performing the drop-off or pick-up of the child (such as when the provider is transporting the child to or from school), the provider may record the appropriate check-in/check-out. The sponsor must still record at least one daily check-in or check-out for the child; however, the sponsor does not have to perform both check-in and check-out.

NLF: Boards must notify providers that provide transportation to/from their program of the above information and requirements.

Provider Attendance Reporting Using the Provider’s Child Care Management Software

NLF: Boards must be aware that, except for the exception described above where the provider is transporting a child, the requirements in [§809.95](#) apply to providers using their own CMS for attendance collection, including the requirement that providers must not perform the attendance or absence reporting function on behalf of the sponsor. However, for providers using a CMS that does not allow sponsors to report back-dated attendance, providers may correct back-dated attendance on behalf of the sponsors.

NLF: Boards must be aware that provider misuse of attendance reporting, including intentionally entering false attendance reports through the provider’s CMS, is grounds for potential fraud determination.

NLF: Boards must be aware that attendance uploaded to KinderSystems, including provider-entered back-dated attendance, is subject to monitoring for accuracy. Based on local procedures, providers may be required to provide documentation from the sponsor of actual attendance for back-dated entries.

NLF: Boards must notify providers that use their own CMS for attendance tracking of the above information and requirements.

INQUIRIES:

Send inquiries regarding this WD Letter to childcare.programassistance@twc.texas.gov.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Revisions to WD 08-23, Change 2, Shown in Track Changes

REFERENCES:

[Texas Workforce Commission Chapter 809 Child Care Services Rules](#)
[Texas Workforce Commission Child Care Services Guide](#)