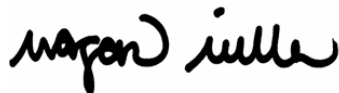


TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION
Workforce Development Letter

ID/No:	WD 08-23
Date:	July 11, 2023
Keyword:	Child Care
Effective:	May 17, 2023

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**

PURPOSE:

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

RESCISSIONS:

WD Letter 08-21

BACKGROUND:

TX3C, powered by KinderSystems, includes automated attendance tracking functionality and was introduced on May 17, 2023. The new system will allow parents and/or caregivers (sponsors) 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 Board staff to view
- [KinderSign](#)—An application for child care providers' iPad and Android tablets that makes it easier for a parent and/or caregiver (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 parents and/or caregivers (sponsors) to enter attendance information using a personal smartphone

On April 25, 2023, the Commission agreed to a rollout and implementation period from May 17, 2023, to September 30, 2023. The Commission also [voted](#) to reinstate all child care attendance requirements and procedures effective October 1, 2023, in conjunction with the implementation of the full case management system.

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 will begin to ship tablets in May 2023 and will prioritize providers that stated in the Subsidy/Scholarship Child Care Provider survey that they did not have a tablet to use for attendance entry. These devices will arrive ready to use, with the appropriate software already downloaded.

NLF: Boards must provide information on how to access the automated attendance tracking system through KinderConnect or KinderSign to child care provider staff members who have their own personal computer or tablet.

NLF: Boards must notify all subsidy-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 has completed its setup.

NLF: Boards must be aware that providers that use case management software supported by an application programming interface connection may choose to continue to use their current case management system for attendance collection. Only attendance information for children receiving child care subsidies will be uploaded to KinderSystems. The following case management software programs are currently supported:

- Brightwheel
- ChildCare Sage
- ChildWatch
- Daycare Works
- Early Learning Ventures
- EZChildTrack
- KinderTales
- Luvnotes
- Procure
- Schoolcare Works
- SmartCare
- WonderSchool

NLF: Boards must provide parents and/or caregivers (sponsors) with information on how to access the automated attendance tracking system through the KinderSmart or KinderSign applications. Parents and/or caregivers (sponsors) may plan to download the KinderSmart application on their personal device from the appropriate App store (iPhone or Android). Additionally, parents and/or caregivers (sponsors) must be informed of how to use KinderSign on the provider’s tablet if they choose not to use the KinderSmart application.

NLF: Boards must notify parents whose child care provider will continue to use their existing case management software, that they will continue using their provider’s existing attendance system.

LF: Boards may use Attachments 1, 2, and 3, or determine other methods of communication, to inform parents, caregivers (sponsors), and providers of the new automated attendance tracking system and that automated attendance collection has resumed.

NLF: Boards must be aware that an adoption period, which is from May 17, 2023, through September 30, 2023, will allow providers, parents, and caregivers (sponsors) time to learn how to use the new system and become familiar with the new process. Additionally, absences that would normally count toward the 40 absences threshold, as set forth in [§809.2\(11\)](#), will not begin to count until October 1, 2023.

NLF: Boards must be aware that an informational website, [TX3C Information Site](#), and help desk support will be available to help child care parents, caregivers (sponsors), and providers in using the new child care automated attendance tracking system.

NLF: Boards must 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 parent and/or caregiver (sponsor) to determine whether the child still requires child care.

NLF: 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 [§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 on October 1, 2023.

NLF: Boards 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: Boards must be aware that absence notifications to families and providers must begin with the launch of the new system on **October 1, 2023**.

NLF: Boards must continue to ensure that Form 2450 or a locally developed notification of enrollment is sent to the provider and documented in The Workforce Information of Texas (TWIST) Counselor Notes. Beginning May 17, 2023, Boards and providers have access to view authorized referrals in the new system, KinderConnect.

NLF: Boards must be aware that beginning May 17, 2023, child care providers are no longer required to report five consecutive absences.

NLF: Boards must be aware that if the termination process for excessive absences has begun based on absences accrued by the child and reported by the child care provider prior to May 17, 2023, the termination process may continue.

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.

INQUIRIES:

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

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Child Care Provider Template KinderConnect

Attachment 2: Child Care Sponsor Template KinderConnect

Attachment 3: KinderSystems TX3C Flyer

REFERENCES:

Texas Workforce Commission Chapter 809 Child Care Services Rules

Texas Workforce Commission Child Care Services Guide