

TEXAS WORKFORCE COMMISSION LETTER

ID/No:	WD 55-07
Date:	September 27, 2007
Keyword:	Child Care
Effective:	Immediately

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



From: Laurence M. Jones, Director, Workforce Development Division

Subject: **Texas School Ready!™ Certification Program**

PURPOSE:

Section 19.111, Article IX, of the General Appropriations Act, 80th Texas Legislature, Regular Session (2007) stipulates that:

- child care providers that obtain certification under the Texas School Readiness Certification System established in Texas Education Code §29.161 (Texas School Ready!™) are eligible for enhanced reimbursement rates for services to children who are younger than six years of age; and
- the enhanced reimbursement rates must be at least equal to the Texas Rising Star (TRS) rates.

Additionally, §19.111 encourages TRS and Texas Early Education Model (TEEM) providers who receive increased reimbursement rates to use the funds to obtain Texas School Ready!™ certification.

This WD Letter provides Local Workforce Development Boards (Boards) with information on:

- the Texas School Ready!™ certification program; and
- enhanced reimbursement rates for licensed child care providers that obtain Texas School Ready!™ certification.

BACKGROUND:

Texas Education Code §29.161 requires the State Center for Early Childhood Development (State Center) to establish a school readiness certification program for early education and child care programs.

Texas School Ready!TM certification is based on a child care provider's demonstrated ability to prepare children for kindergarten. Preschool classrooms eligible for Texas School Ready!TM certification are composed of children who will be attending kindergarten the following school year and include:

- licensed child care centers (for profit, nonprofit, and faith-based);
- school district and charter school prekindergarten; and
- Head Start.

PROCEDURES:

Boards must:

NLF

- establish enhanced reimbursement rates for infants, toddlers, and preschool children enrolled with certified Texas School Ready!TM child care providers to be effective no later than January 1, 2008;* and
- ensure that the enhanced reimbursement rates for Texas School Ready!TM child care providers are at least equal to the TRS reimbursement rates.

Boards may establish enhanced reimbursement rates for school-age children enrolled with certified Texas School Ready!TM providers.*

LF

Boards must provide information about Texas School Ready!TM certification to TRS Providers and encourage them to apply for certification.

NLF

Attachment 1 to this WD Letter sets out general information, eligibility requirements, and application procedures for Texas School Ready!TM certification, including how to apply online for certification. It is recommended that Boards provide this information to all licensed child care providers caring for children receiving Commission-subsidized child care services.

LF

Boards must be aware that Texas School Ready!TM certification is valid for one year, and providers must reapply each year.

NLF

Boards also must be aware that TEEM child care providers do not need to apply online for Texas School Ready!TM certification. The State Center will provide TEEM providers with application information.

NLF

*(As required by Commission rule §801.51(f) and as detailed in WD Letter 10-07, Board members must take such action in an open meeting.)

NLF

INQUIRIES:

Direct inquiries regarding this WD Letter to the assigned contract manager for your local workforce development area.

ATTACHMENT:

Attachment 1: Texas School Ready!TM Eligibility and Application Procedures

RESCISSIONS:

None

REFERENCE:

General Appropriations Act, Article IX, §19.111, 80th Texas Legislature, Regular Session (2007)
Texas Education Code §29.161
WD Letter 47-07, issued August 15, 2007, and entitled “Increasing Reimbursement Rates for
Texas Rising Star Providers and Child Care Providers Participating in Texas Early Education
Model School Readiness Projects”

FLEXIBILITY RATINGS:

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” or “shall.”

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.”