

**Meeting Subject:** Texas Early Learning Council

**Meeting Date:** 1/15/2021 11:00 AM

**Location:** Webex

**Attendance**

- Katherine Abba, Ph.D. (Faculty and Program Coordinator, Faculty and Program Coordinator, Child Development Program for Houston Community College)
- Travis Armstrong, Ed.D. (Director of Early Learning for Wichita Falls Independent School District)
- Weldon Beard (Director of Head Start and Early Head Start for the Greater East Texas Community Action Program)
- Terri Breeden (Section 619 Lead Coordinator for the Texas Education Agency)
- April Crawford Ph.D. (Dir. of Strategic Initiatives and Program Implementation for The UT Health Science Center at Houston CLI)
- Alferma Giles, Ph.D. (Dir. of the Texas Head Start State Collaboration Office at The UT Health Science Center at Houston CLI)
- Melissa Horton (Franchise owner with Primrose Schools and President of the Texas Licensed Child Care Association)
- Becky Huss-Keeler Ph.D. (Associate Professor of Early Childhood Education at the University of Houston-Clear Lake)
- Kim Kofron (Executive Director for the Texas Association for the Education of Young Children)
- Jerletha McDonald (Licensed home child care center provider and the owner and director of Kiddie Corner Learning Center)
- Dana McGrath (Director of Early Childhood Intervention Program for the Texas Health and Human Services Commission)
- Reagan Miller (Director of the Child Care and Early Learning Division at the Texas Workforce Commission)
- Julie Richards (Director of Field Operations for the Texas Health and Human Services Commission)
- Teresa Robledo (Early childhood teacher at San Antonio College Early Childhood Center)
- Stephanie Rubin (CEO of the non-profit organization Texans Care for Children)
- Amber Scanlan (Senior Vice President and Director of Client and Community Relations for PNC)

- Kiersten Schwab (Executive Director of the Texas Public Broadcasting Association)
- June Yeatman (Lead teacher for the Austin Community College Children's Lab School)
- Audrey Young (Child and Adolescent Health Branch Manager and the Title V Children with Special Health Care Needs Director in the Maternal and Child Unit at the Texas Department of State Health Services)

### **1. Call to Order**

Stephanie Rubin called the meeting to order at 11:01 AM.

### **2. Welcome Remarks**

A quorum was met during roll call.

### **3. November 2020 Minutes Approval**

Kiersten Schwab moved to approve November 2020 meeting minutes and Alferma Giles seconded the motion. A vote was taken and approved.

### **4. Public Comment**

Nine individuals registered for public comment as listed below.

1. Tere Holmes, Vice President of Operations with Crème de la Crème, Inc., registered a written comment which was read by Shay Everitt. Request for support of Child Care workers to be included in Group 1B for receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. Also requests consideration for COVID-relief funding for non-subsidy providers.
2. Dennis Maple, President and CEO of Goddard Systems, registered a written comment which was read by Shay Everitt. Requests additional stabilization funds available to all licensed child care centers.
3. Anna Thompson, representing the School of Pflugerville, delivered an oral comment. Requests consideration for COVID relief funding for all child care providers. Also requests priority for child care workers to access the COVID-19 vaccine.
4. Jacob Stewart, representing the Early Care and Education Consortium, delivered an oral comment. Requests considerations for use of funds from the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2021 and CCDBG.
5. Tim Kaminski, owner of Gingerbread Academy, delivered an oral comment. Requests consideration of funding for all child care.
6. Michael Barnes, representing Learning Care Group and La Petite, delivered an oral comment. Requests consideration for funding to assist with rent, salaries, and operating expenses for all providers. Encourages funding to get families enrolled quickly.
7. Stephanie Rutherford, President of Texas Licensed Child Care Association, delivered an oral comment. Request for support of Child Care workers to be included in Group

1B for receiving a COVID-19 vaccine. Also requests consideration for COVID-relief funding for all providers.

8. Sonia Dominguez, Chief Programs Officer with AVANCE, delivered an oral comment. Requests continued support for family child care providers in the CCDF State Plan, including funding support and technical assistance for licensing.
9. Kara Waddell, President and CEO of Child Care Associates, delivered an oral comment. Requests consideration for state action to fund business coaches, provide monthly data on the permanent closures of child care businesses, and simplify and incent Pre-K partnerships with child care programs.
10. Cecilia Sims, Vice President Government Relations with KinderCare Education, delivered an oral comment. Requests consideration of use of COVID-relief funding for all providers.

Council members had 5 minutes to ask questions for commenters.

- Reagan Miller thanked commenters and addressed comments regarding the attendance policy for the child care subsidy program and reimbursement rate increases.
- Kim Kofron asked commenters with child care centers in other states to share lessons learned about COVID-19 relief grants. Mr. Stewart and Mr. Barnes recommended formula-based grants similar to those used in North Carolina, Illinois, Alabama, and Arizona.

Members may send questions for commenters to Shay and she will coordinate with commenters before the next meeting to get those answered.

## **5. TELC Chair Appointment**

Stephanie Rubin announced that there is no update. The new Chair is expected to be announced by the next meeting.

## **6. 2021 Meeting Dates**

The TELC confirmed the 2021 meeting dates.

- 1/15
- 3/5
- 5/21
- 7/16
- 9/17
- 11/12

## **7. COVID-19 Updates**

- Julie Richards presented Child Care Regulation data on closures, new permits, and recent COVID cases (regionally and statewide).
- Kim Kofron presented National Association for the Education of Young Children child care survey data.

- For further reading, TELC members may access a [new white paper](#) from Child Care Associates in Tarrant County: *Will Child Care Business Survive 2021?*

## **8. Texas Child Care Availability Portal**

Shay Everitt presented an overview of the Texas Child Care Availability Portal, including an analysis of enrollment rates and next steps for the Portal.

## **9. Texas Workforce Commission Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) State Plan**

Reagan Miller and Cathi Arwood presented an overview of the current process and deadlines related to the CCDF State Plan and solicited TELC input. Reagan Miller described the process for council members and the public to provide input on the CCDF State Plan.

## **10. Legislative Updates**

Reagan Miller presented an overview of [H.R. 133, the Consolidated Appropriations Act](#).

Stephanie Rubin provided an update on the Early Childhood Legislative Caucus.

## **11. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 1:00 PM