

## *Texas Early Learning Council Meeting Minutes*

September 17, 2021 from 11:00am – 1:00pm

Teleconference via Zoom

### **Attendance**

- Katherine Abba, Ph.D. (Faculty and Program Coordinator, Child Development Program for Houston Community College)
- Sarah Abrahams (Deputy Associate Commissioner for the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services)
- Weldon Beard (Director of Head Start and Early Head Start for the Greater East Texas Community Action Program)
- Terrie Breeden (Section 619 Lead Coordinator for the Texas Education Agency)
- April Crawford Ph.D. (Co-Director of the Children’s Learning Institute, UT Health Science Center at Houston)
- Rachelle Daniel (Director of Daycare Regional Operations for the Texas Health and Human Services Commission)
- Alferma Giles, Ph.D. (Director of the Texas Head Start State Collaboration Office at the Children’s Learning Institute, UT Health Science Center at Houston)
- Melissa Hoisington (Franchise owner with Primrose Schools and President of the Texas Licensed Child Care Association)
- Becky Huss-Keeler Ph.D. (Professor of Early Childhood Education at the University of Houston-Clear Lake)
- Kim Kofron (Director of Early Childhood Education for Children at Risk)
- 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)
- Teresa Robledo (Early childhood teacher at San Antonio College Early Childhood Center)
- Stephanie Rubin (CEO of Texans Care for Children)
- Amber Scanlan (Senior Vice President and Director of Client and Community Relations for PNC)
- Kierstan Schwab (Executive Director of the Texas Public Broadcasting Association)

- 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**

Reagan Miller called the meeting to order at 11:00 AM.

### **2. July 2021 Minutes Approval**

Amber Scanlan moved to approve the July 2021 meeting minutes and Katherine Abba seconded the motion. A roll-call vote was taken and minutes were approved. A quorum was met during roll call.

### **3. Public Comment**

Marisa Barrett, United Way of Greater Austin, submitted written comment urging the Council to broaden the scope of training and support in reference to goal 4 of the Early Learning Strategic Plan (“Early childhood professionals are well-qualified and have access to the supports and training needed to improve kindergarten readiness and the resources to ensure they have a successful career serving children”) to include policy efforts that nurture teachers’ well-being.

### **4. Strategic Plan**

Council members provided feedback on progress made toward the [Early Learning Strategic Plan](#) (developed by the TELC in 2019 with Preschool Development Grant funding support) Goal 6: “Texas has strong coordination across its early childhood system and the underlying data system to support a high degree of collaboration”.

The discussion included:

- Texans Care for Children is in the early stages of building a holistic Kindergarten readiness dashboard, which would include data elements like mental health and access to health care.
- Children’s Learning Institute’s updates to Texas Early Childhood Professional Development System (TECPDS), including collaborating with state agencies to answer questions about the early childhood workforce and efforts to add the Texas Student Data System (TSDS) ID to child-level data, also called the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) ID or Texas Education Agency (TEA) Unique ID.
- Texas Head Start State Collaboration Office (THSSCO) has had initial discussions about using the TEA Unique ID in child-level Head Start data.
- The Early Childhood Inter-Agency Work Group (TEA, Texas Workforce Commission, Health and Human Services Commission, Department of State Health Services, and Department of Family and Protective Services) is beginning the process of developing an Early Childhood Integrated Data System (ECIDS) roadmap for Texas. An ECIDS can help states integrate, layer, or combine data across programs that serve young children to support cross-program collaboration and data-driven decision-making. The work group will work closely with the TELC to shape and inform this effort. See pages 4 to 6 in the [presentation slides](#) for further details.

### **5. Updates from TELC members**

Jess Trudeau and Faith Rivera provided an update on the state and local work of the PN-3 Collaborative.

Dana McGrath provided an update on Early Childhood Intervention's Child Find Self-Assessment, including an invitation for any interested members to take part in a workgroup to review a summary of the findings and develop an improvement plan.

Terrie Breeden provided an update on a new resource published on the [Texas Transition](#) website: [A Parent's Guide to Early Childhood Intervention and Early Childhood Special Education](#).

Jerletha McDonald provided an update on her work as an Office of Child Care's National Family Child Care Provider Panel Co-Chair.

## **6. Federal Stimulus Funding Update**

Reagan Miller provided an update on the federal stimulus funds being distributed by Texas Workforce Commission (TWC):

- TWC put out almost \$555M (to date) in grants to child care programs before the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds were put into place.
- ARPA funds also require about \$2.4B to go to child care programs to help with operating costs
- More details about funding allocations are available on the [TWC website](#).
- TWC continues to fund business coaching for child care programs; more details are available at [childcare.texas.gov](http://childcare.texas.gov).

## **7. 2022 Meeting Schedule**

The group discussed potential meeting dates for a quarterly meeting schedule in 2022 (January, April, July, and October).

## **8. Upcoming Early Childhood Events**

Rachelle Daniel shared about Child Care Regulation's presentation, [Who is Keeping Our Children Safe? Protecting Children in Child Care Settings](#), offered monthly from July through December 2021.

April Crawford shared about Children's Learning Institute's [Engage Data Conference](#) on September 21-23, 2021.

Sarah Abrahams shared about Department of Family and Protective Services Prevention and Early Intervention [Partners in Prevention Conference](#), "Forging Forward Together: Nurturing Communities and Families", on November 2-4, 2021.

Kim Kofron shared about [Texas Association for the Education of Young Children's Annual Conference](#) on October 14-16.

Kierstan Schwab shared that PBS Kids is premiering a new show called [Alma's Way](#) on October 4, 2021.

## **9. Adjourn**

Reagan Miller adjourned the meeting at 12:44 PM.