

Texas Rising Star 4-Year Review In-Person Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 29, 2019
10:30 am – 2:30 pm

Welcome, Overview and Introductions:

Workgroup was called to order at 10:45 am. 16 Workgroup members were present.

TWC reviewed the updated timeline to include additional conference calls between November and December, the materials the Workgroup would be using for reference, and the introduction of Workgroup members in attendance. No members attended via teleconferencing.

Commissioners arrived 10:50 am and addressed the Workgroup:

- Chairman Bryan Daniel thanked the Workgroup for their dedication and volunteer efforts stating that ‘all the work being done is important.’ Chairman emphasized that ‘there is nothing more important than providing child care solutions for people, regardless of their reason. Texas is already strong but will be stronger as we use our resources to offer quality contributions.’ Chairman concluded with asking the Workgroup to provide their best practices and ideas.
- Commissioner Aaron Demerson thanked the Workgroup members for what they do, as many are small businesses and stated that ‘what the workgroup is doing is every important and the input is very valuable.’
- Commissioner Julian Alvarez III thanked the Workgroup and stated that TWC will be visiting all the boards after the holidays on the “Baby Boot Tour.” Commissioner Alvarez wished the Workgroup continued success and he appreciates all the feedback the Workgroup has provided.

Commissioners departed at 11:05 am.

TWC Update:

Reagan Miller let the workgroup know that in this morning’s Commission meeting the Texas Rising Star reimbursement rates were discussed. Chair, Bryan Daniel has concerns about responsible use of taxpayer funds while ensuring policies also support high-quality child care.

Facilitated Discussion:

By request of the Workgroup, TWC reached out to Ms. Kelso and Ms. Goodreau to provide facilitated discussion on specified topics identified by the Workgroup.

- Gail Kelso, State Systems Specialist, Region VI, State Systems Specialists Network, Child Care State Capacity Building Center
- Char Goodreau, Quality Assurance Specialist Consultant, National Center on Early Childhood Quality Assurance

The Workgroup reviewed the following topics: Child Care Licensing and QRIS, Assessor/Rater Staffing and Certification, and Early Learning Program Director Qualifications.

The Workgroup was provided an overview of each topic, with some specific state examples and national trends within the topic.

Child Care Licensing and Quality Ratings Improvement Systems

Overview:

- 40 states require that a program participating in QRIS must be licensed. This is often one of the requirements.
- In 19 states licensing is the first level of QRIS. In some states, licensing is integrated in the system, such as in Tennessee, North Carolina and Ohio.
- Several states require programs to accept subsidy to participate in the QRIS program.
- States define “good standing” with licensing in different ways. Some definitions are minor, some are “no serious violations.” Florida has specific criteria but is flexible.

Trends

- More states are coordinating with licensing.
- There are more joint site visits happening between licensing staff and quality staff.
- In Washington, licensing is leading recruiting efforts to participate in their QRIS program. They are supporting initial onboarding activities.
- States are moving general health and safety standards from QRIS back to licensing, including developmental screenings. They are focusing in core training and Early Learning Guidelines.
- States focusing in establishing readiness level or activities.
 - States that use scoring tools like CLASS are having to do more work up front.

Discussion:

The Workgroup was asked “How do we treat existing Texas Rising Star providers when they have a deficiency?”

- The Workgroup discussed wanting to have cross training between licensing and quality staff. Currently only the Texas Rising Star staff looks at the licensing reports, but licensing is not involved with the quality system.
- There were concerns that deficiencies are always being highlighted rather than highlighting the positive things programs are doing.
- The Workgroup discussed that the background check issue is a systematic one due to high staff turnover in centers. It is important to have mentors, good data, and a system that prevents these issues.
- Child Care Licensing stated that the new portal for background checks makes it easier for directors to receive background checks. This requirement was implemented in January 2019, and the changes are not being seen yet.
- It was suggested to the Workgroup to wait a year to make this decision since it has not been a full year of the new requirements. No consensus was reached on this suggestion.
- No additional feedback on considerations regarding Child Care Licensing screening (initial applicants and/or current) was provided by the Workgroup.

Assessor/Rater Staffing and Certification

Overview:

- Observation tools and state standards

- Assessors need to be independent. They are not to be connected to the provider they are assessing.
 - Most states contract entities to do the work, usually universities.
- Reliability and ongoing reliability
 - 80%-90% reliability
- Data sharing
 - What level of information do people have access to?
 - For example, licensing, do they understand the data?
- State assessors example
 - Indiana: trained on self-developed tool to 80% reliability
 - Florida Duval: 80% agreement with ongoing reliability every 6-10 visits
 - Virginia moved from centralized assessors to regional assessors. They created a list of assessors that providers can pick from to be their assessors.

Trends:

- Self- assessments
- Desk monitoring vs onsite monitoring
- Longer assessment cycles
- Forecasting - rating cohorts or rating periods
- Re-rating fees

Discussion:

- Children's Learning Institute mentioned that through the study, they were able to get raters to reliability and maintained it. During the study, when raters were done assessing, the group would attend debriefs, weekly coding meetings, and use tracking systems to track examples of behaviors and non-examples.
- The Workgroup discussed the certification course that is being developed by Children's Learning Institute and the assessor's requirements.
 - What strategy is needed for all assessors to assess to the same standards?
 - How many chances do assessors get if they don't pass the certification training?
- The Workgroup discussed the assessors' process in their areas.
- The Workgroup placed any remaining thoughts and/or questions that they still had regarding assessors on the parking lot poster for later discussion.

Early Learning Program Director Qualifications

Overview:

- Professional development is required in most QRIS systems
- Most common in QRIS systems is a director credential.
 - The credential and course requirements are different across states.

Trends:

- Registries and degree verification
- Opportunities for staff to receive higher education
- Access to professional development in multiple languages and formats
- Resources to support program administrators

- Technical Assistance
- Start-up awards
- Mentoring

Discussion:

The Workgroup reviewed the specific measures within Category 1 for consideration.

- **S-DQT-02 Director Certification Course:** Recommendation is to remove and integrate into a proposed CQI model
 - The Workgroup discussed what current certification courses are accepted and potentially reviewing the process for adding others.
 - Questioned how this measure would affect current programs, such as an allowance given for current directors to obtain the training before being scored.
 - This consideration was left pending

- **S-DQT-04 Director Responsibilities:** Repword the measure to be specific to center-based director having a training plan and obtaining a minimum of 36 training hours (this would mimic similar measures for School Age/Homes)
 - Consensus was to modify as recommended
 - Later discussion included adding in the components of P-DEQT-06 into this revised measure.

- **P-DEQT-04: Part 4 Director Experience:** Remove this measure
 - The Workgroup discussed revising the distribution of years within scoring.
 - This consideration was left pending.

- **P-DEQT-06: Part 5 Director Training:** Amend scoring so that a score of 0 equates to having 36 hours; then leave scoring for 1, 2, 3 as is
 - Consensus was to remove this measure, but combine within the measure specific to director training (S-DQT-04)

- **S-COTQ-03: Staff Training Plans:** Combine this measure with S-COTQ-06 as both relate to having a training plan and it being completed
 - Consensus was to modify as recommended

- **P-CQT-03: Staff Training alignment:** Remove this measure
 - The Workgroup discussed the role the TECPDS Workforce Registry would contribute to this as well as the requirements for training within CCL and the Trainer Registry.
 - This consideration was left pending

Next Steps:

The Workgroup will continue to review considerations to reach final recommendations.

Additional conference calls will be added to the timeline and the timeline adjusted if needed.

The Workgroup and/or the public may provide feedback at any time via the email address:
TRS4YearReview@twc.state.tx.us