

1 **Child Care Collaborative Grants—Staff Retention Strategies**
2 **Discussion Paper**

3 **Background**

4 The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 (Act) was enacted on February 9, 2018. The Act included a
5 historic funding increase in the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) through the Child
6 Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG). The increased funding will support greater
7 investments in quality initiatives as well as direct care for eligible families. Because of the Act,
8 Texas received an additional \$229.9 million in CCDF funds for child care services. CCDF
9 regulations require states to spend at least 8 percent of the total CCDF expenditures in Fiscal
10 Year 2018 (FY'18) and FY'19, and 9 percent in FY'20 and each succeeding fiscal year for
11 activities designed to improve the quality of child care services.

12
13 On June 14, 2018, the Texas Workforce Commission's three-member Commission
14 (Commission) directed that \$8 million of the additional funds be made available for collaborative
15 matching grants, and on March 19, 2019, the Commission provided guidance on the proposed
16 uses of these funds, including the dedication of \$1 million to support staff retention strategies.

17
18 Staff retention strategies may include efforts to address compensation, targeted recruitment,
19 education, career pathways and work environments. For this initiative, the approved child care
20 staff retention strategy framework is aimed at the development of professional supports that
21 enhance provider work environments. Through strong program leadership, programs can be
22 enhanced to support early educators and create supportive work environments, which improve
23 employee engagement and retention.

24
25 This will be accomplished through the delivery of multifaceted services that aid early educators'
26 access to:

- 27 • professional development programs that build provider leadership skills and promote positive
28 work cultures;
- 29 • initiatives that aid early educators' access to local referral and peer learning networks and
30 facilitate coordination with early childhood services in communities; and
- 31 • initiatives that promote the development of daily schedules that provide built-in time for
32 lesson planning, reflective pedagogical supervision, coaching, and other development
33 opportunities.

34
35 Funding will be available for the development of these activities and other similar strategies that
36 promote staff retention, but it cannot be used for direct payment of child care provider staff
37 salaries.

38 **Issue**

39 As staff has developed the parameters for a pilot collaborative matching grant project focused on
40 staff retention strategies, staff members have noted that a more comprehensive framework would
41 benefit the project design. Staff recommends that all projects include coaching, an evaluation
42 component, and the development of materials to facilitate replication.

44 The evaluation component will include a pre- and post-evaluation, using a third party or
45 recognized child care program assessment tool. To facilitate replication of promising practices,
46 awardees must also develop and document model practices in a format that facilitates
47 information sharing for broader adoption.

48
49 The longer grant period will allow selected grantees to plan for a comprehensive program design,
50 including the following components:

- 51 • Outreach and recruitment of child care directors
- 52 • Delivery of services to improve program environments
- 53 • Ongoing coaching supports
- 54 • Evaluation
- 55 • Documentation of model practices to facilitate replication

56 **Decision Points**

57 To develop the staff retention strategies design noted above, staff seeks the Commission's
58 direction on increasing the Child Care Staff Retention Collaborative Matching Grant statewide
59 initiative from \$1 million to \$2 million with an approximate 30-month grant award period.

60

61 Staff also seeks direction on retaining the matching requirement at \$200,000 of the proposed \$2 million
62 initiative, or 10 percent of the new total.