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## Discussion Paper

### Subsidies for School Age Children During the School Year

#### Background

Due to the impacts of COVID-19, Texas school districts are considering alternative instructional models for the 2020-21 school year, including all-virtual, combined virtual/in-person, and hybrid models. These models will have an impact on child care. The federal Office of Child Care (OCC) has issued an [FAQ](#) that provides states with the flexibility to develop Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) subsidy policies for school age children who are also engaged in remote educational instruction.

Under this guidance, states have the option to pay subsidies for school age children for time in child care when the children are completing remote, virtual or online schoolwork. However, the only caveat is that under the CCDBG Act, it is not allowable to use child care funds for any regular education services for which students receive academic credit toward graduation or any instructional services which supplant or duplicate the academic program of any school, regardless of whether a child is physically at school or not.

#### Issue

The Texas Workforce Commission's (TWC) three-member Commission (commission) must determine if child care funds will be used to support full-day subsidies<sup>1</sup> for children who are also enrolled in school.

There are several different scenarios that must be considered:

- During the COVID-19 pandemic, schools have been provided the option of providing education 100% remotely during the initial weeks of the school year. As a result, many children will be required to start the school year with remote-only instruction and will not have the option to physically access in-school instruction.
- Some schools are also considering hybrid models, in which students attend school in-person on some days and receive remote learning on others. On their remote days, those children will not have the option to physically access in-person school instruction.
- In addition, when schools reopen for in-person learning, parents are being provided the option of in-person or remote learning. Some parents may elect remote learning once schools reopen, while at the same time requesting full day child care subsidies. In this scenario, children will have the option of physically accessing in-person learning at school.

In order to maximize limited CCDBG funds, the commission may wish to consider whether full-day subsidies should only be authorized when children do not have access to attend in person school.

#### Decision Point

Staff seeks the Commission direction on

- For students who do not have the option to physically access in-person instruction based upon the school's schedule, authorizing full-day subsidies, and
- For students who do have the option to physically access in-person instruction, based upon the school's schedule, only authorizing after-school/part-time subsidies.

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<sup>1</sup> TWC rule, [40 TAC §809.93. Provider Reimbursement](#), full day child care is defined as 6+ hours per day, while part-time care is defined as fewer than 6 hours per day.