

TEXAS RISING STAR FOUR-YEAR REVIEW OVERVIEW & QUESTIONS

Every four-years, the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) reviews and updates the Texas Rising Star (TRS) guidelines. Below is a high-level overview of the TRS Workgroup's (TRSW) recommendations, along with our guiding questions for sections we believe need further clarification.

CHILDREN AT RISK, Center for Early Childhood Education
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SYSTEM-WIDE RECOMMENDATIONS

TRSW recommends increasing the quality of child care and early learning by developing statewide plans for Continuous Quality Improvement and moving more child care providers into higher levels of quality. For instance, developing a 1-Star for all subsidy providers not currently enrolled in TRS and increasing participation in the Workforce Registry. *We agree with these recommendations, but additional details are needed, such as: Do all subsidy providers become mandated to participate in TRS? If so, what supports, timeline, and benchmarks are in place to help providers transition into TRS and progress beyond the 1-Star level? What is the timeline for subsidy providers to reach a higher level of quality to continue participation in TRS? What supports are provided for teachers to effectively utilize the Workforce Registry?*

TRSW is recommending that all assessors and mentors complete all required TRS Assessor Certifications, that all TRS staff receive skills-building and professional development opportunities, and to centralize the TRS assessment function under TWC to support stronger reliability and fidelity in ratings. *We support these recommendations and believe they will improve the reliability of ratings.*

RECOMMENDED REVISIONS TO STANDARDS

TRSW recommends changes in terminology for screening forms and standards for director training and certification. Additionally, limiting the impact of licensing deficiencies and increasing technical assistance for programs at risk of losing or dropping their TRS certification in order to limit the monetary impact. *We support these recommendations. We seek clarification on the specific measures TWC will implement to ensure that providers have continued access to resources and mentors, do not drop in star level, or lose reimbursement funding during the process of rectifying licensing deficiencies.*

CONSIDERATION OF PROGRAMS WITH NATIONAL ACCREDITATION

TRSW recommends allowing Early Head Start (EHS) and Head Start (HS) programs to automatically participate in TRS. All other nationally accredited programs will undergo a modified initial and recertification assessment that is specific to Categories 2 and 4 only. *We support these recommendations and believe they will provide insight into the quality of government funded programs.*

CATEGORY-SPECIFIC REVISIONS

TRSW recommends removing and revising clauses relating to director and staff qualifications. *We support the streamlining of standards in order to avoid redundancy and eliminate duplication. We still need additional clarification*

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about how the changes in standards impact providers' current and future ratings.

For teacher-child interactions, TRSW recommends splitting group size and ratio into two separate point-based measures. Also, to reword language in quantitative measures to focus on caregiver consistency and to place a restructured point-based nutrition measure focused on self-help skill building. *We support these changes. We still need additional clarification about how the new measures impact providers' current and future ratings.*

TRSW recommends renaming the lesson plans and curriculum category, reorganizing sections, and adding new measures related to curriculum and lesson plans. *We support these changes. We still need additional clarification about how the new measures impact providers' current and future ratings.*

TRSW recommends a new category "Health and Nutrition Practices" and suggest removing, condensing, or placing health and nutrition measures within this category or Category 2. Additionally, removing indoor structural measures that duplicate Child Care Licensing standards. *We support the streamlining of measures in order to avoid redundancy and eliminate duplication. We still need additional clarification about how the removal of these measures impact providers'*

current and future ratings.

TRSW recommends renaming the Parent Education Involvement category as Category 3: Program Administration and to add compensatory supports, new curriculum measures and a nutrition measure under this category. *We support these changes and acknowledge the connection between workforce compensation and benefits and its relationship to quality. We still need additional clarification about how these measures impact providers' current and future ratings.*

CHANGES TO THE TRS PROCESSES

TRSW recommends a two-week window for program assessments. TRS assessment categories will have different weights, placing more emphasis on teacher-child interactions. Additionally, programs will no longer be obligated to report major staff changes and all providers must participate in an online-generated Continuous Quality Improvement Plan. *We support the intent of these changes and believe teacher-child interactions are paramount. We still need additional clarification about how these changes impact providers' current and future ratings.*



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CHILDREN AT RISK is a Texas based research and advocacy organization. Our mission is to serve as a catalyst for change to improve the quality of life for children through strategic research, public policy analysis, education, collaboration, and advocacy.

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