A photograph of the Texas State Capitol building in Austin, Texas. The building is a large, ornate structure with a prominent dome and classical architectural features. It is surrounded by green trees and a paved walkway. The sky is blue with some clouds. The text "The Quest for Equity and Quality Early Childhood Education in Texas" is overlaid on the left side of the image.

The Quest for Equity and Quality Early Childhood Education in Texas

April 2022

children
atRisk

CHILDREN AT RISK – ECE Team



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Agenda

The Quest for Equity and Quality

Child Care Closures in Texas

Preparing for the 88th Legislative Session

How to Get Involved

The Quest for Equity and Quality

Examining Providers Experience and Participation
in Texas Rising Star

Why Explore ECE in Texas?

HB 2607 (87R)

Requires all providers who accept child care subsidies to participate in TRS

Historically Low TRS Participation

Statewide, only 40% of providers accept subsidies and of those providers, 34% participate in TRS

Uncovering Barriers

Research has shown that QRIS systems can enforce racial inequities. Are there race equity barriers within TRS?

Why Explore ECE in Texas Through a Race Equity Lens?

In 2021, **14%** of eligible children under six in Texas received child care subsidies

Only **34%** percent of subsidy providers are TRS-certified, as of September 2021

Research Questions

- Why are Early Childhood Education providers choosing not to participate in TRS?
 - Why are providers of color not participating?
 - Why are White providers not participating?
- Why are Early Childhood Education providers choosing to participate in TRS?
 - Why are providers of color participating?
 - Why are White providers participating?

TRS Participation By Local Workforce Board

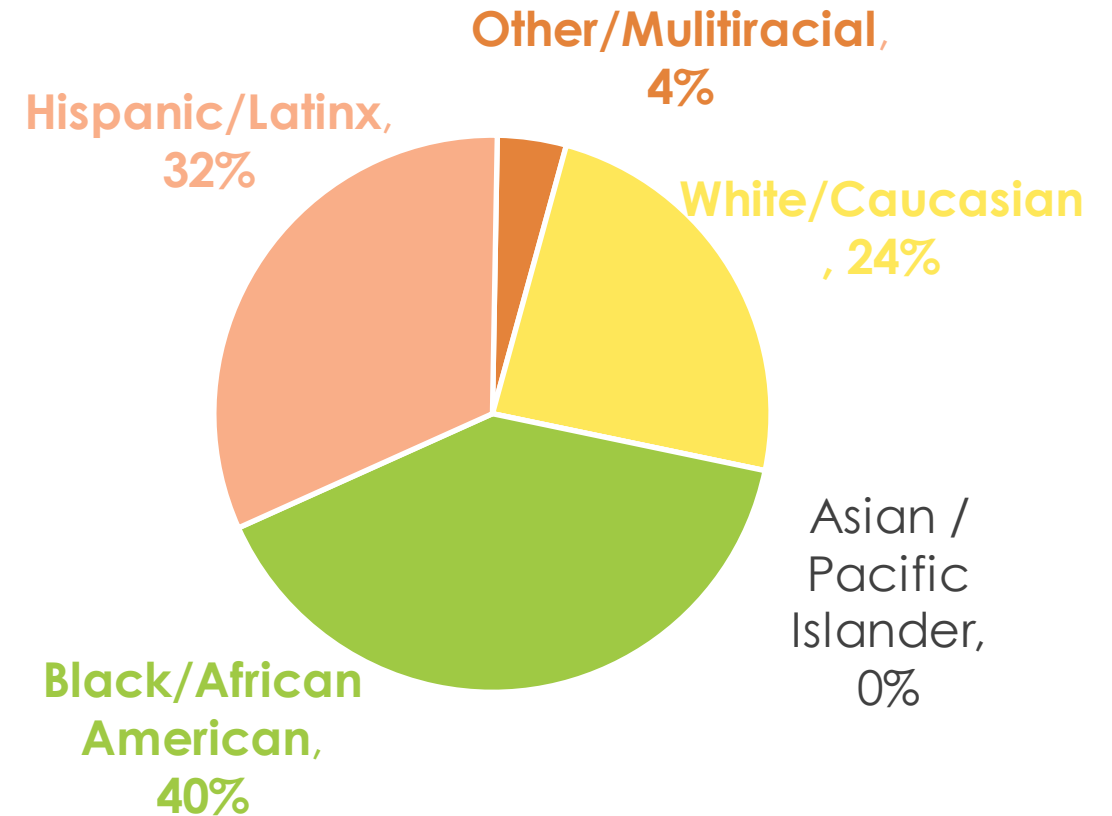
City (LWDB)	Total Subsidy Providers	Total TRS Providers	Percent of Subsidy Providers in TRS
Statewide	6084	2047	34%
Amarillo (Panhandle)	100	38	38%
Austin (Capital Area)	271	150	55%
Dallas (Dallas County)	619	177	29%
El Paso (Borderplex)	233	86	37%
Fort Worth (Tarrant County)	447	190	43%
Houston (Gulf Coast)	1387	440	32%
Lubbock (South Plains)	110	33	30%
Midland (Permian Basin)	88	10	11%
Rio Grande Valley (Lower Rio Grande)	392	72	18%
San Antonio (Alamo)	460	136	30%

TWC. Child Care by the Numbers for September 2021. Retrieved March 24, 2022 [\(Link\)](#)

Research Methods

Conducted **seven focus groups** with providers in partnership with Prairie View A&M and the University of Houston

- **60%** of providers that participated in focus groups are currently enrolled in TRS
- Most focus group participants were providers of color
- Roughly **24%** of participating directors or owners identified as White



Why Are Providers **NOT** Participating In TRS?



Paperwork

- “People I’ve talked to that have gone through the process have offered to help and have said it takes a long time and it’s very time consuming and a lot of paperwork.” – Child Care Center



Staff Shortage

- “They may love what they do but they’re not being compensated for the work that they are putting in. So they are looking elsewhere and what can I say to that, you know.” - Child Care Center



Lack of funds

- “[TRS] is more of a headache, and for how much more money. Plus, you have to spend money to become certified before you get any money for participating.” -Family Child Care



Assessment Anxiety

- “It was just a comfort thing. I was nervous about a whole other group of people coming in and watching me and checking up on me.” -Family Child Care



Staff Buy In

- “You got to get everybody on board so they know that we’re all working towards this thing or trying to earn this certification. I could not start it until my team was complete.” -Child Care Center

Why **ARE** Providers Participating In TRS?

All Providers



Resources

- “Not only did we get brand new furniture, [our mentors] were there to talk to our families. They organized family events where they distributed resources and just encourage the families.” -Child Care Center



Mentoring

- “I call my mentor and say, ‘hey I need more time, what resources, ideas, and suggestions can you give me.’ It’s more like teamwork.” -Child Care Center

Providers of Color



Networking

- “I really miss being in the room with other providers [due to COVID]. We learn so much from each other.” -Family Child Care



Support

- “Mentors go into classrooms and make sure every room is prepared and up to standard for children...They just help so much help and it helps ease your mind.” -Child Care Center

Providing Equitable Supports & Mitigating Misconceptions

Issue: Many non-TRS providers feel there is too much paperwork.

- Providers are unclear as to what the full TRS process entails (paperwork, assessments, etc.) partly because it varies by LWDB.
- The support a provider will receive depends partially on their LWDB and its capacity.

Recommendation: TRS-Providers highlighted the value of their mentors in getting through paperwork. Standardizing the experience across LWDB ensures all providers can rely on the same amount of support in registration.

Allocating Additional Funding to Improve Sustainability

Issue: Providers lose money on subsidy students because of the market rate determination. Additionally, they have to spend money to meet TRS standards before joining and getting the increase reimbursement.

- Providers set their rates to keep their care affordable to their community vs what it actually costs to provide care which lowers the market rate
- TRS requires certain equipment for classrooms and outdoor spaces which providers cannot afford with the base rate reimbursement.

Recommendation: Base the reimbursement rate on the cost of quality and make funds available to providers to improve before they are TRS certified.

Increasing Networking Opportunities

Issue: Providers, especially Family Child Care, miss out on valuable opportunities to learn from each other because they work in their silo.

- Providers value the experiences of their peers when making decisions on things like TRS and understanding the requirements/demands.
- In focus groups, many providers took the opportunity to share their expertise and knowledge with one another and exchange contact information.

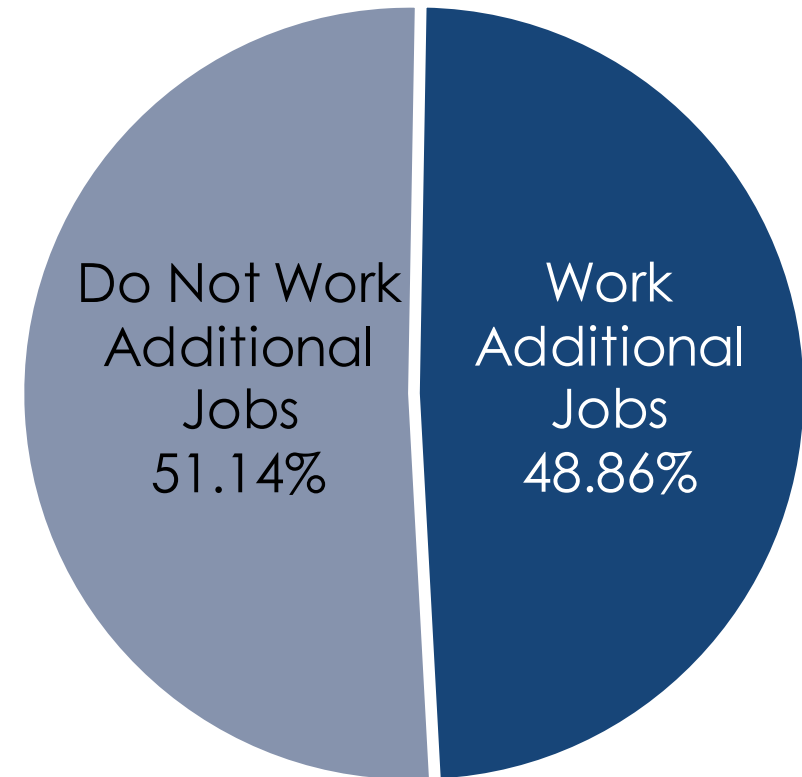
Recommendation: LWDBs create regional spaces for providers to share experiences, best practices, and get feedback.

Increasing Investments In The ECE Workforce

Issue: Child care educators receive wages that are below the federal poverty line, but directors don't have money to increase salary and benefits.

Recommendation: Build a pipeline of qualified, ECE professionals and give programs the funding to compensate them appropriately.

Percent of ECE Educators Who Work an Additional Job



Incorporating a Holistic Assessment Approach within TRS

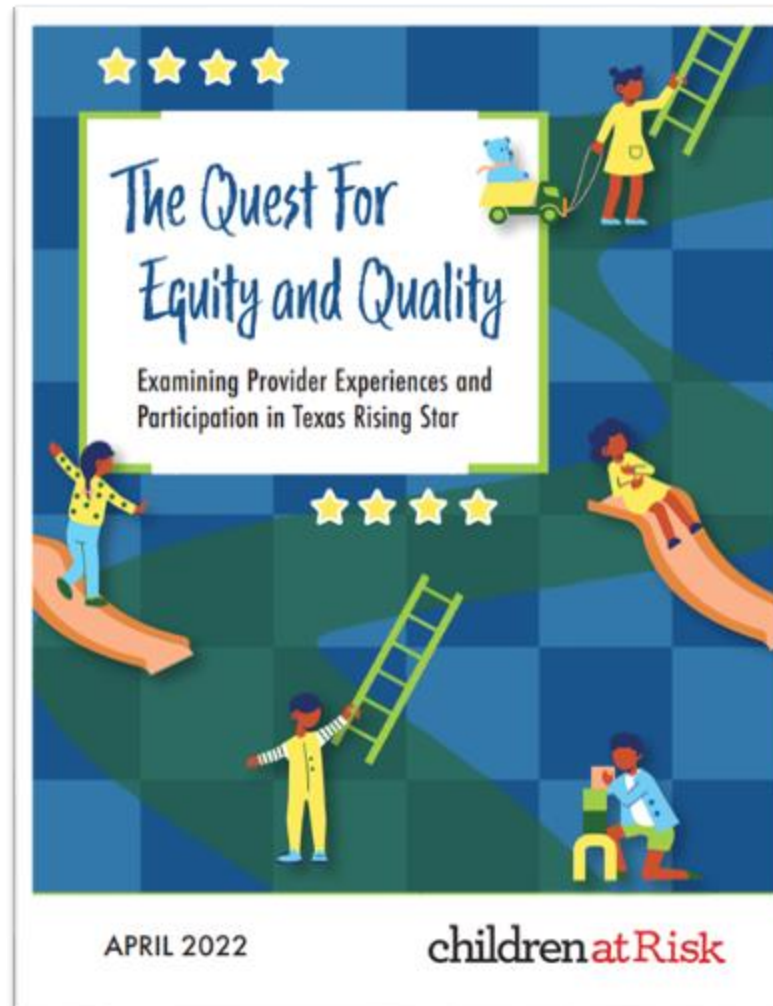
Issue: TRS visits, especially when unannounced, are stressful to providers who often can't predict their daily schedule.

- Including a holistic assessment approach during the certification process would help increase transparency between the assessor and director.
- Providers expressed their preference for their assessor having experience in child care if not their specific type of program.

Recommendation: Develop a more holistic framework that prioritizes improvement instead of checking boxes and ensure that assessors have a good grasp on the provider experience.

The Quest for Equity and Quality

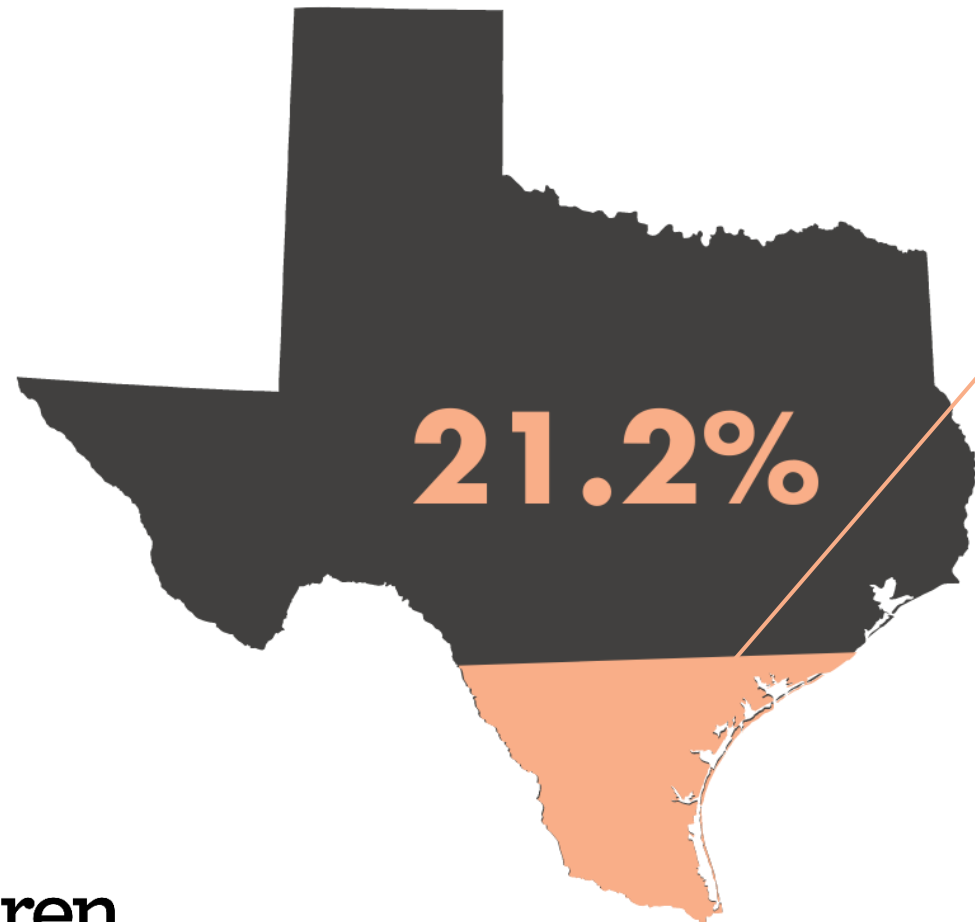
Read the Report!



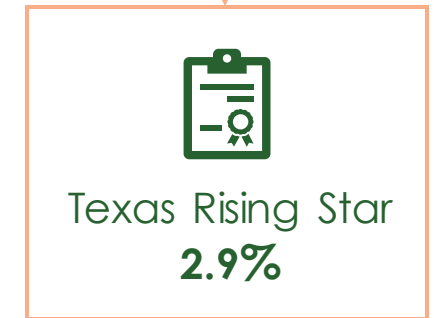
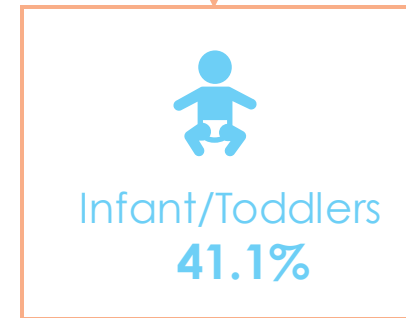
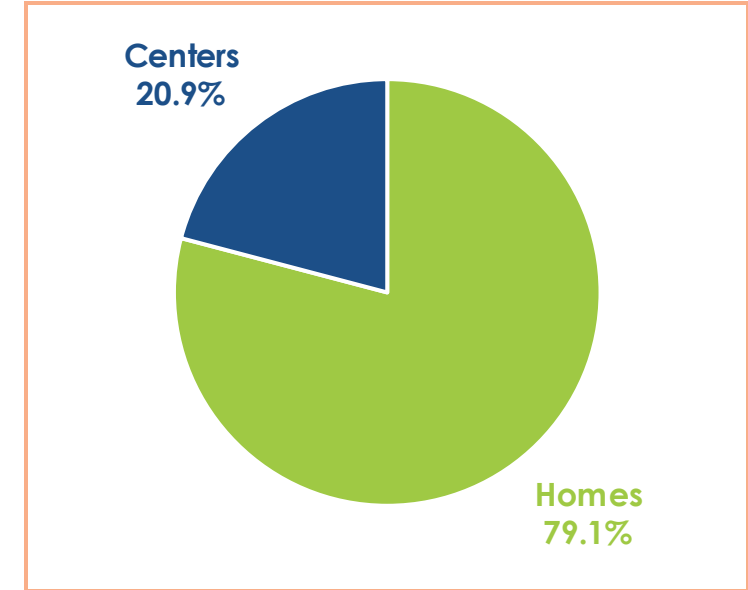
COVID-19 & Child Care Closures

Updated Data

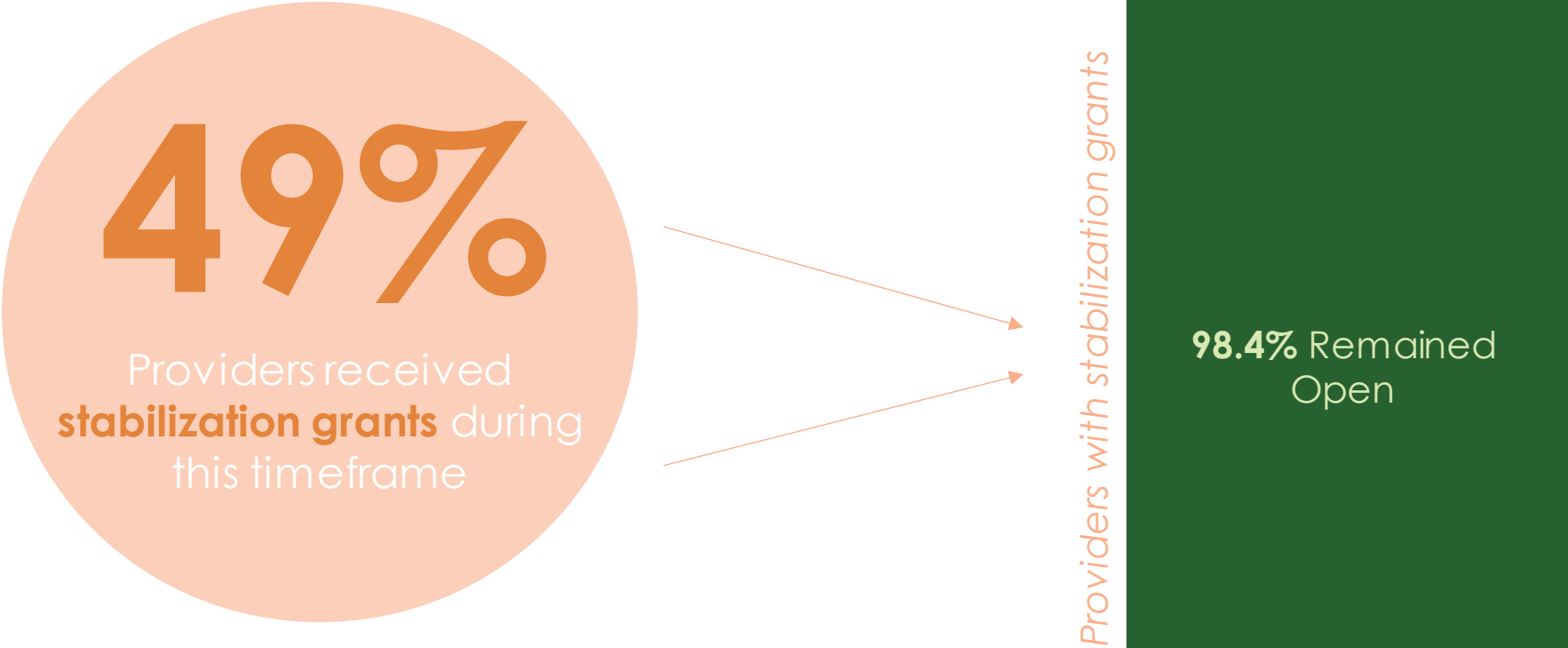
Texas Provider Closures as of September 2021



CLOSURES BY PROVIDER TYPE



Stabilization Grants Having a Positive Effect on Operation Status



* While our methodology time frame ends September 2021, TWC has reported that as of January 26, 2022, a total of **72%** of providers have received stabilization grants. ([Child Care Stimulus Resources](#) | [Texas Workforce Commission](#))*

Preparing for the 88th Legislative Session

Reviewing our Workgroup Strategic Plan

Interim Charges

The International Relations and Economic Development (IRED) Committee has been tasked with:

Monitoring the agencies and programs under the Committee's jurisdiction and oversee the implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 87th Legislature. Conduct active oversight of all associated rulemaking and other governmental actions taken to ensure the intended legislative outcome of all legislation, including the following:

HB 619, relating to developing a strategic plan to support the child-care workforce

HB 1792, relating to the evaluation of child-care providers participating in the Texas Rising Star Program

HB 2607, relating to the powers and duties of the Texas Workforce Commission and local workforce development boards regarding the provision of childcare and the subsidized childcare program

HB 3767, relating to measures to support the alignment of education and workforce development with state workforce needs, including the establishment of the Tri-Agency Workforce Initiative

SB 1555, relating to establishing reimbursement rates for certain child-care providers participating in the subsidized childcare program

Contact the House IRED Committee

Representative	District	County	Email
Angie Chen Button	112	Dallas	Contact
Christina Morales	145	Harris	Contact
Michelle Beckley	65	Denton	Contact
Cecil Bell	3	Montgomery/ Waller	Contact
Terry Canales	40	Hidalgo	Contact
Erin Elizabeth Gamez	38	Cameron	Contact
Todd Hunter	32	Nueces	Contact
Lyle Larson	122	Bexar	Contact
Will Metcalf	16	Montgomery	Contact
Claudia Ordaz Perez	76	El Paso	Contact

C@R ECE Work Groups

C@R restructured 6 workgroups on the following issue areas with the intention to create a detailed, intentional plan for Texas ECE in the 88th Legislative Session. The group topics are:

Child Care
Finance

Quality
Improvement

Business
Sustainability

ECE
Workforce

Family Child
Care

Mixed
Delivery

Thank You!

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