

City of Austin Early Childhood Council

August 13, 2022



Purpose of the Early Childhood Council*

- make recommendations to the city council for the creation, development, and implementation of **programs that promote optimal development for young children**;
- develop, for recommendation to city council, **programs and activities that contribute to the continued development of a system of high-quality early care and education** and afterschool programs for Austin's children;
- explore and develop, for recommendation to city council, **cooperative arrangements with area governments in the metropolitan region to support a system of quality early care and education**;

** as stated in City Code § 2-1-123 (B)*

Purpose of the Early Childhood Council*

- **encourage volunteerism and philanthropic efforts** in order to **generate broad-based community involvement and support** for quality early care and education and promote the well being of families of young children; and
- develop, for recommendation to city council, **strategies encouraging individuals and agencies to continually improve the quality of their services** for young children; and
- support **innovative approaches to quality early care and education and leadership development** in fields relating to the optimal development of young children.

** as stated in City Code § 2-1-123 (B)*

Alignment

- The Early Childhood Council is a member of the Austin/Travis County Success by 6 Strategic Plan, and has representation at the Leadership Team.
 - City of Austin & Travis County align early childhood investments with the goals, strategies and recommendations of the ATX SX6 Strategic Plan
- The Early Childhood Council is a member of the City of Austin Joint Inclusion Committee.
 - The purpose of the JIC is to to advise the council on issues pertaining to diversity and inclusion

32,000
children under six in Travis County
**live in households
with low income.**

More than **one in three**
children under six living in Travis County
**live in households with
low income.**



90% of children under six from households experiencing poverty are children of color.

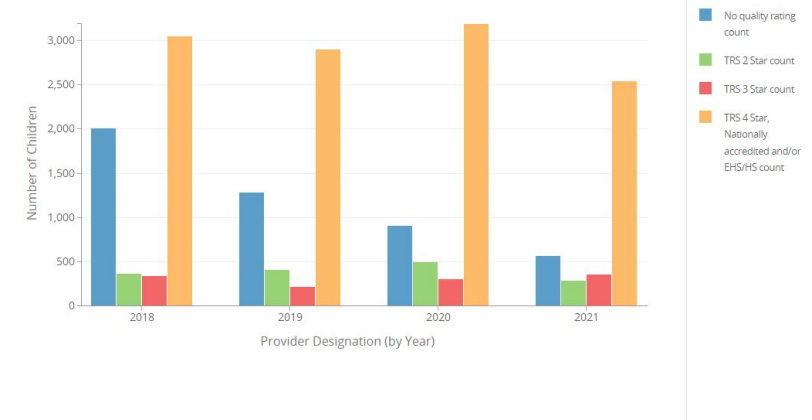
Early Childhood & COA Strategic Direction 2023

Economic Opportunity & Affordability:

- **Strategy 10:** Create equitable access to quality Early Childhood Education (ECE) by supporting families who do not qualify for existing free programs and cannot afford quality programs on their own, increasing availability of quality ECE programs, and encouraging living wages for ECE providers.
- **Metrics/Community Indicators:**
/ % of children enrolled in quality Early Childhood Education programs (as evidenced by meeting Texas Rising Star criteria).

Percentage of households that are considered cost-burdened based on calculation of housing and transportation costs relative to income (utilities, child care, property tax, and health care costs to be added as data becomes available)

Number of children enrolled in quality Early Education programs as evidenced by meeting Texas Rising Star...
This data set shows the number of children enrolled in quality early childhood education programs in the City of Austin as evidenced by meeting Texas Rising Star (TRS) criteria. ...



Primary Monthly Expenses Impacting Families in Travis County with 1 Adult and 1 Infant						Year
						<input type="checkbox"/> 2018 <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 2020
\$1,393	\$874	\$458	\$405	\$346	\$653	= \$50,951 Annual Self-Sufficiency Wage
Housing	Child Care	Transportation	Food	Miscellaneous	Taxes	

2020-2021 ECC Actions & Outcomes

November 2021

Encouraged the Austin City Council to explore mechanisms for tracking concerns raised by community members about access to child care subsidies, challenges navigating the child care subsidy system, and customer services provided by the Workforce Solutions Capital Area

Outcome: The City of Austin included metrics related to this request in social service contracts with Workforce Solutions Capital Area for COVID relief funded projects

Outcome: Workforce Solutions Capital Area selected Start Early Consulting through a public procurement process to partner with Workforce Solutions Capital Area to identify key themes about families' and providers' experiences with the local child care system and to develop recommendations for a comprehensive stakeholder engagement system

Voted to convene 2 ECC regular meetings in 2022 at more convenient times for families, child care providers, and other stakeholders to attend, to increase access to community members and increase the opportunity to provide public comment to the ECC

One meeting was scheduled for the evening of Tuesday, April 12, 2022, and the other for the morning of Saturday, August 13, 2022.

2020-2021 ECC Actions & Outcomes

January 2022

Requested that the Austin City Council pass a resolution acknowledging that workers in the child care field in Austin are essential workers who have experienced serious burdens and stress over the past few years, and are deserving of admiration and gratitude for their service to our community

Encouraged the Austin City Council to identify ways to alleviate the financial burden that is leading to increasing displacement of these essential workers out of Austin, such as property-tax relief, assistance for child care and work-related expenses, transportation subsidies, housing subsidies, etc.

Encouraged the Austin City Council to establish a task force to address workforce issues in the child care sector.

March 2022

Recommended that the City of Austin maintain all current investments in early childhood programs and infrastructure including but not limited to:

- Social Service Contracts ([FY 2023 Budget Recommendations*](#))
- Staffing (2 FTE) positions specifically for early childhood through Austin Public Health
- Leases for city-funded early childhood facilities
- Essential infrastructure such as Family Connects and WIC programs that specifically serve families with young children prenatal to age 5.

**Proposed budget by City Manager indicates these investments are being maintained*

2020-2021 ECC Actions & Outcomes

April 2022

Encouraged the Austin City Council to increase funding for child care services under the Community Development Block Grant for a) Early Head Start and b) expansion of the Teen Parent Child Care Program to provide child care for teen parents who are enrolled in districts other than Austin Independent School District (AISD).

Outcome: The City anticipates the Early Head Start and Teen Parent Child Care Program Community Development Block Grant agreements will be increased in FY 2022-23. *However, the increase is not guaranteed and may be subject to change until the grant is received from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development in September 2022.*

Encouraged the Austin City Council to consider requirements in City-funded social service contracts* that:

- Include opportunity for community and client voice and input by requiring community and client engagement and feedback in the development and implementation of programs and services; and
- Provide a stipend to compensate for community member and client participation in planning and implementation of programs; and
- Include Cost of Living increases for social service contracts for staff; and
- Allow agencies to request funding to cover the cost of increased community and client engagement and that the City increase funding to accommodate community and client engagement, when possible

Encouraged the Austin City Council to prioritize the needs of families with low incomes for affordable housing, including increasing the availability of 3 (and 4) bedroom units.

Progress on Prior ECC Actions (Past Years)

Implementation of the [recommendation](#) to include child care facilities in City projects ([Resolution No. 20210826-108](#)) was finalized with the development of policy and criteria for implementation.

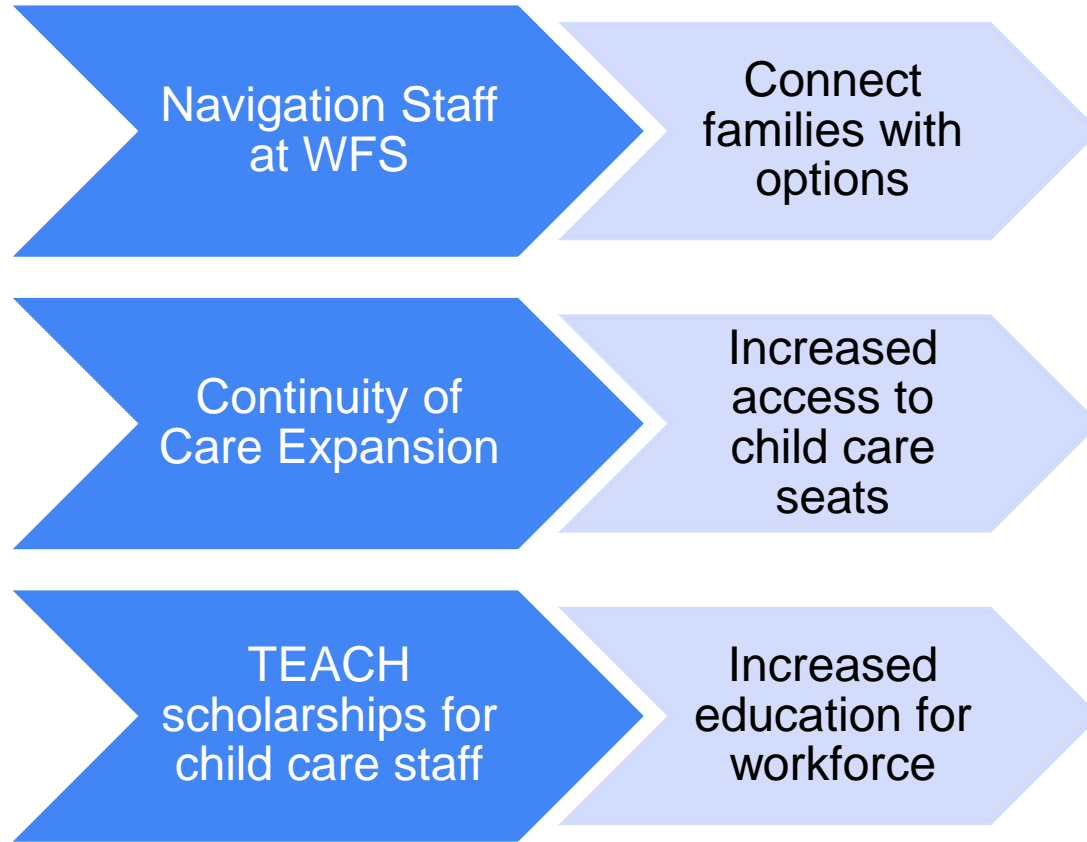
Potential result - additional supply of child care facilities with reduced costs for operating for selected child care programs

- The opening of the child care facility at the City of Austin Bergstrom Tech location that the ECC [recommended](#) the City fund the lease of.

Result - additional child care seats including a % of subsidized care

- The City of Austin executing [contracts to implement funded recommendations from the “Recommendations for Transforming the ATX Early Childhood System”](#) that were submitted by the Austin/Travis County Success By 6 Coalition in the spending framework for COVID-19 relief and recovery and American Rescue Plan Funding.

COVID RELIEF FUNDING



COVID RELIEF FUNDING

Jeanette Watson
& other pay
stipends

\$\$\$ for staff
retention

PreK
Partnerships Hub

Leverage state \$
for child
care/Increase
access to PreK

Shared Services
Alliance for child
care

Reduced costs
and increase time
for child care
admin

COVID RELIEF FUNDING

Family Child
Care Supports

Increased access
to
support/resources

PreK Expansion
DVISD & AISD

Expand access to
PreK4/full day
PreK3

Family Connects

Expand &
evaluation
newborn home
visiting