



BOARD/COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION

Human Rights Commission

Recommendation Number: 20260323-007 Budget Proposal for Increased Funding for Austin Economic Development's Family Child Care Educator Network

WHEREAS, Access to affordable, high-quality child care is a foundational economic and social need for Austin families, particularly for low-income households and communities of color; and

WHEREAS, Families in Austin choose home-based child care because providers share their culture and speak their home language, offer the most affordable care option, provide care during non-traditional hours including evenings, overnight, and weekends, and are trusted members of the community—making home-based providers an irreplaceable part of the child care landscape for many Austin families; and

WHEREAS, the average cost of childcare in Austin is the highest in Texas at \$26,000 annually for two children.

WHEREAS, 85% of early childhood educators in Texas earn less than a living wage, with a median wage of \$12.00 per hour; and

WHEREAS, Early childhood educators employed by child care programs that accept subsidies earn less than their counterparts at programs that do not accept subsidies, creating a systemic penalty for providers who serve the City's most economically vulnerable children; and

WHEREAS, Hispanic early childhood educators in Texas earn significantly less than White early childhood educators regardless of education, experience, or location, reflecting persistent racial wage inequities within the field; and

WHEREAS, 7 in 10 full-time early childhood educators do not receive employer-provided health insurance, and half lack access to paid sick leave, leaving a workforce that cares for the City's youngest residents without basic economic protections; and

WHEREAS, The City of Austin, through Austin Economic Development, currently administers a Family Child Care Educator Network (FCCE Network) that supports home-based childcare providers. Which focuses on child care provider well-being, economic sustainability, child care quality, and the well-being of children and families; and

WHEREAS, the current operating budget of \$150,000, includes \$75K in funding from a Home Grown grant which will expire in FY2026-27 and \$75,000 in City of Austin match funding which expires at the end of FY2025-2026 and funds critical network activities including a Network Coordinator position, financial relief grants to providers, peer mentorship, professional development, a home-based provider conference, and essential interpretation and translation services; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED

The Human Rights Commission recommends that the Austin City Council consider the following actions:

- Increase funding for the Family Child Care Educator Network from \$75,000 to its current operating budget of \$150,000 through at least fiscal year 2026–2027, extending beyond the expiration of the current City match commitment in September 2026.
- Protect and fund the Network Coordinator position as a core component of the City’s child care infrastructure, recognizing the role as essential to coordinating services, outreach, and provider support for home-based child care providers across Austin.

Date of Approval: March 23, 2026

Motioned By: Chair Duhon

Seconded By: Vice Chair Zeidan

Vote: 8-0

For: Chair Duhon, Vice Chair Zeidan, Commissioners Aslam, Davis, Kirsh Pozen, Krueger, Morgan Avitia, Oliva-Martínez

Against: None

Abstain: None

Recuse: None

Off the dais: None

Absent: Commissioners Igram, Khawar

Attest: *Ryan Sperling*

(Ryan Sperling, Staff Liaison)