



A SIDE-BY-SIDE COMPARISON OF SELECT EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS IN TEXAS

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INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The Texas Early Childhood Education Coalition (TECEC) conducted a side-by-side overview of select early childhood education programs in Texas across several standard categories. The purpose of this overview is not to provide an in-depth analysis of various early childhood education programs but instead to provide the reader with a strong, preliminary understanding of how select programs in Texas are both similar and different. The programs that were selected (see Table 1) for comparison include: (1) Texas' public school prekindergarten (Pre-K) program administered by Texas public school districts and the Texas Education Agency (TEA); (2) licensed child care centers (that serve 13 children or more) administered by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS); (3) Pre-K programs based on a school readiness integration project known as the Texas Early Education Model (TEEM), administered by the State Center for Early Childhood Development (SCECD) at the University of Texas at Houston Health Science Center; (4) federal Head Start programs administered by the Office of Head Start in the U.S. Administration for Children and Families; (5) Texas Rising Star (TRS) child care programs administered by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC); and (6) child care programs nationally accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC).

It should be noted that this side-by-side overview compares and contrasts the three major early childhood delivery systems in Texas, namely public school Pre-K, child care, and Head Start, with three distinct quality overlay options. Accordingly, TEEM, Texas Rising Star, and NAEYC are quality enhancements that early childhood education service providers voluntarily elect to implement. For comparative purposes, all of the programs presented here were analyzed based on their requirements for four-year-old children.

Table 1

A 2006 SNAPSHOT OF SELECT TEXAS EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS

PROGRAM TYPE	NUMBER OF PROGRAMS	ENROLLMENT OR CAPACITY
Public School Pre-K	2,880	182,293
Licensed Child Care Centers	8,889	820,360
TEEM Classrooms	1,842	36,840
Head Start Programs	118	42,202
Texas Rising Star Programs	1,372	--
NAEYC Accredited Child Care Centers	534	--

PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS

TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOL PRE-K PROGRAMS

Texas' publicly funded Pre-K initiative maintains the largest total enrollment of any state-funded Pre-K initiative in the country. Established in 1984 as a result of Texas House Bill 72, the Texas Public School Prekindergarten Initiative requires school districts to provide a half-day education-based program to four-year-old children who are either homeless or unable to speak and comprehend English and who qualify for free or reduced-price lunches. In addition, the Texas law allows school districts the option of also providing prekindergarten services to eligible three-year-olds.

The Public School Prekindergarten Initiative requires school districts to offer services, and the state provides foundation program funding for students in average daily attendance (ADA) if there are 15 or more eligible children in the district. An amendment to Texas House Bill 1 in 2006 expanded public school Pre-K eligibility to three- and four-year-old children whose parents are either on active military duty, in an activated reserve unit, or who were killed or wounded in military action. Texas was one of the first states in the country to expand Pre-K eligibility to its military families. During the 80th legislative session, Senate Bill 758 further expanded eligibility to include children under court conservatorships in the Texas foster care system.¹

In 1999, the 76th Texas Legislature established the Prekindergarten Early Start Grant program that allowed school districts to request additional funding to expand their Pre-K programs from half- to full-day programs.

DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY AND PROTECTIVE SERVICES (DFPS) LICENSED CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services Child-Care Licensing Division “is responsible for protecting the health, safety, and well-being of children who attend or reside in regulated child-care operations and homes. Through a process mandated by Chapter 42 of the Human Resources Code, the Division develops minimum standards for regulated operations and homes as well as policies and procedures for enforcing those minimum standards. The Division has the additional role of providing consultation, technical assistance, and training for child-care providers and educating the public in the selection and improvement of child-care services.”²

TEXAS EARLY EDUCATION MODEL (TEEM) PROGRAMS

Based on the bipartisan, legislative success of Texas Senate Bill 76 during the 78th legislative session, the Texas Early Education Model was piloted in local communities to share resources and collaborate around the needs of at-risk children. The model, which can be described as a school readiness integration model, provides a high-quality, cost-effective approach to integrate school districts, child care providers, and Head Start programs to serve young children in reading, math, and social development.³

According to TEA, the “two key principles driving school readiness integration are: (1) the preparedness of all children to enter kindergarten on or above grade level and ready to benefit from the full array of public education services to keep them on grade level in kindergarten and beyond; and (2) the development and implementation of a school readiness integration model that is community-based and individualized in ways that best serve each community.”⁴

¹ Texas Education Code, Section 29.153.

² Available online: http://www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/About_Child_Care_Licensing/what_we_do.asp.

³ Available online: http://www.tea.state.tx.us/opge/disc/teem/TEEM_faqs.doc, p.2.

⁴ Ibid., p.6.

The Texas Legislature expanded the TEEM model in 2005 by passing Senate Bill 23. In addition, the bill promoted the development of the School Readiness Certification System, a voluntary initiative developed and implemented by the State Center for Early Childhood Development (SCECD) to assess early childhood classrooms in terms of success in preparing children for kindergarten.

HEAD START PROGRAMS

Head Start, a program of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, provides services to economically disadvantaged children with the goal of promoting school readiness. Local public and private nonprofit and for-profit agencies can apply for grants through the Head Start program to provide comprehensive services for children and their families, including educational, health, nutritional, social, and other services. The program focuses on parental involvement as a critical element in a child's education and integrates parents and families into program structure at the local level.

Head Start program grantees and delegate agencies must abide by mandatory Head Start Performance Standards. The standards provide programs with a uniform set of standards to ensure that programs are providing quality care and education.⁵

TEXAS RISING STAR (TRS) PROGRAMS

Texas Rising Star functions as a Texas-specific voluntary certification system for licensed centers, group day homes, and registered family home providers who serve Texas Workforce Commission subsidized children and offer care that exceeds the state's Minimum Licensing Standards for health and safety, group size, child-to-staff ratios, caregiver training, and age-appropriate curriculum. Programs wishing to obtain TRS certification must initially undergo a period of self-assessment through a Service Improvement Agreement (SIA), in which programs evaluate current practices and set desired certification goals. The TRS certification allows providers with the opportunity to obtain either a Two-Star, Three-Star, or Four-Star rating based on the number of certification requirements met.⁶

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR THE EDUCATION OF YOUNG CHILDREN ACCREDITED (NAEYC) PROGRAMS

The National Association for the Education of Young Children has developed a voluntary accreditation program that seeks to promote standards of high-quality education to benefit young children and to provide support for providers and professionals.

A program's achievement of NAEYC accreditation is dependent upon the attainment of criteria in each of the association's 10 standards. The accreditation process is composed of four steps: enrollment, application, candidacy, and meeting standards. During enrollment, a program completes a self-study to assess its compliance with NAEYC standards and criteria. A program then moves into the next stage of accreditation—application—in which the program officially begins the accreditation process by submitting an application and committing to completion of candidacy materials. After application, the program moves to the candidacy process, where the program submits its completed self-assessment report. In the last step, NAEYC conducts an on-site visit to verify that the program meets necessary standards.

⁵ Available online: <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/>.

⁶ Available online: <http://www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/childcare/provcert.html>.

FUNDING

PRE-K	CHILD CARE	TEEM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Through the Foundation Schools Program (FSP), districts with 15 or more four-year-old Pre-K eligible children qualify for half-day program funding based on average daily attendance (ADA) formulas. ◆ Districts may apply for a Pre-K Early Start Grant to support expansion to a full-day Pre-K program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Organizations and facilities seeking licensure typically receive funding via two streams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fees and tuition charged directly to parents and guardians • child care subsidies from the federal Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) administered by the Texas Workforce Commission (TWC) ◆ Organizations and facilities seeking licensure incur three primary fees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • initial application fee • annual renewal fee • criminal background check fee per employee/volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The State Center for Early Childhood Development (SCECD) receives funding from several streams: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Texas Education Agency (TEA) Early Childhood School Readiness Program Grant • TWC matching funds • private foundation grants • community funds through Local Workforce Development Boards (LWDB) ◆ Funding per child is based on an existing overlay to ADA funding and, if applicable, Pre-K Early Start Grant funding. After initial funding per child has been established, TEEM incurs the following fees per child: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Year one: \$400-\$450 • Year two: \$265 • Years three and four: <\$265 ◆ Programs apply to participate in TEEM projects through a competitive application process administered by the TEA in conjunction with the SCECD.

HEAD START	TEXAS RISING STAR	NAEYC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Funding is obtained through the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Title V of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, as amended. Funding source includes an approved nonfederal share, Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG), and Title IV of the Food Stamp Act. Funding is administered and transferred through regional program offices. ◆ Programs apply through a competitive application process for funding. Federal assistance accounts for no more than 80 percent of total program cost. ◆ Families are not charged fees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Funding is provided through the TWC-administered Child Care Development Fund (CCDF) subsidy system, which are federal monies. States have the option to match federal funds. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Programs must pay fees throughout the accreditation process to become NAEYC accredited. Fees for accreditation process range from \$1,275 to \$2,375. ◆ Programs pay an Annual Report fee on first, second, third, and fourth accreditation anniversaries based on the number of children enrolled in the program. Fees for Annual Report range from \$300 to \$450 per year. ◆ Fees may be absorbed by the program or passed on to families through enrollment costs.

FACILITIES AND ENVIRONMENT

PRE-K	CHILD CARE	TEEM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Public school Pre-K classrooms are housed in public school buildings unless these services are contracted out to other programs (such as Head Start or a community-based child care program). Accordingly, facilities are governed and monitored by local campuses as set forth by district policy and mandated in Chapter 46 of the Texas Education Code. ◆ Public school Pre-K programs are not required to meet licensing requirements as set forth by the Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS). ◆ There are no state guidelines that describe what a Pre-K classroom environment should look like. Such policies are made at the local level primarily and are based on the discretion of local educators. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Indoor space requirement: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 square feet per child ◆ Outdoor space requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 80 square feet per child • outdoor square footage equal to at least 25 percent of licensed indoor capacity • a fence or wall (at least four feet high) surrounding the outdoor space ◆ Toilet and sink requirements (if licensed to serve more than 13 children): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • one toilet for every 17 children • one sink for every 17 children ◆ Furniture and equipment requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • age-appropriate tables and chairs • appropriate bedding • storage for each child's belongings ◆ Outdoor equipment requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all outdoor equipment (e.g., playgrounds and swimming/wading pools) must adhere to requirements set forth in Sec. 746.4601 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All organizations and programs that apply to participate in a TEEM project must provide a current DFPS licensing number and be in good standing. ◆ Classrooms must display evidence of appropriate mathematics and literacy activity centers. ◆ Classrooms must adhere to an environmental checklist that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • posted alphabet • letter wall • book library ◆ Annually, classroom environments are documented through photographs and evaluated for appropriateness by the SCECD.

HEAD START	TEXAS RISING STAR	NAEYC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The program must have a minimum of 35 square feet of usable indoor space per child and 75 square feet of usable outdoor play space per child. ◆ Furnishings and equipment must: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • be safe, durable, and kept in good condition • support program’s educational objectives • support children’s cultural and ethnic backgrounds • be age-appropriate, safe, and supportive of children’s developmental level and abilities with adaptations, if necessary, for children with disabilities • be accessible, attractive, and inviting to children • be designed to encourage experimentation and exploration • be stored in safe and orderly fashion when not in use ◆ Outdoor play areas at center-based programs are arranged to prevent children from leaving the premises and from entering unsafe and unsupervised areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The provider must have a minimum of 30 square feet of classroom space per child. ◆ Indoor and outdoor equipment and materials must be: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • complete • clean • in good repair • appropriately sized for children • sufficient to sustain play • culturally diverse • appropriate for individual abilities ◆ Developmentally appropriate equipment and materials must be used in the areas of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • blocks • dramatic play • manipulatives • stories/language • music • art • discovery/science ◆ Outdoor play areas must have at least five of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • variety of surfaces • arrangement for appropriate flow of activities • climbing and other active play items and structures • open areas for running and games • opportunities for dramatic play • adequate storage for equipment and materials • partial shade • quiet, private spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ NAEYC accreditation is a quality overlay above and beyond basic DFPS licensing requirements. ◆ The program must have a minimum of 35 square feet of usable indoor space per child and 75 square feet of usable outdoor play space per child, based on a maximum of one-third of the total center enrollment being outside at one time. ◆ Indoor space is designed for children to work individually, in small groups, and in a large group. ◆ Age- and developmentally appropriate materials and equipment are available indoors and outdoors, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dramatic play equipment • sensory materials (e.g., water, sand, etc.) • materials that support curriculum goals and objectives in literacy, math, science, social studies, and other content areas • gross-motor equipment (for walking, pulling up, etc.) ◆ Environment contains elements such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • multicultural materials that promote appreciation for diversity • clearly defined places where families can gather information regarding the daily schedule and upcoming events • places for displaying children’s work • features that moderate visual and auditory stimulation

TEACHER AND STAFF QUALIFICATIONS

PRE-K	CHILD CARE	TEEM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Teachers must have a BA. ◆ Generalist teaching certificate is required, EC-4. ◆ All teachers holding a standard certificate after September 1, 1999, are required to complete 150 clock hours of in-service training over the course of five years. ◆ Teacher assistants must have a high school diploma or a GED. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Child care directors must be at least 21 years old and meet one of the following combinations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bachelor’s degree plus one year of experience in a licensed center • associate’s degree plus one year of experience in a licensed center • 60 college hours plus one year of experience in a licensed center • child care administrator’s certificate plus one year of experience in a licensed center • Child Development Associate (CDA) or certified Child Care Professional (CCP) credential plus two years of experience in a licensed center • a day-care administrator’s credential plus two years of experience in a licensed center • nine college credit hours plus three years of experience in a licensed center ◆ Caregivers (lead teachers and assistants) must meet the following requirements: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • must be at least 18 years old • have a high school diploma or GED • complete eight hours of pre-service training • complete 15 hours of annual training • receive first aid and CPR training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Since TEEM is a partnership model that includes education professionals from various settings, all standards according to respective programs apply. For example, public school teachers must meet standard requirements as outlined by the Texas Education Agency and the State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC). In addition, child care and Head Start teachers must also meet their prescribed requirements. ◆ All teachers participating in a TEEM partnership project must attend: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an eCIRCLE on-line course through the SCECD • two-day CIRCLE Framework training through the SCECD

HEAD START	TEXAS RISING STAR	NAEYC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Staff providing program oversight must have a broad educational and experiential background and possess specified licenses or certification. ◆ Teachers must have a minimum of a CDA credential or equivalent. At least 50 percent of all Head Start teachers must have an associate, baccalaureate, or advanced degree in early childhood education or a degree in a related field with experience in teaching preschool children. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The center director must meet DFPS minimum licensing qualifications for on-site directors. ◆ Other than the center director, at least 30 percent of full-time caregiver staff (no less than one caregiver at a child care facility) must have one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CDA credential, CCP credential, or other TWC-approved child development credential, and associate or higher degree in child development or early childhood education • 12 semester hours in child development or early childhood education and one year full-time paid experience in licensed/registered facility while working toward CDA, CCP, or TWC-approved credential • two years full-time paid experience in a licensed/registered facility while under supervision of staff with CDA, CCP, TWC-approved credential, associate or higher degree in child development, degree in early childhood education or related field ◆ Providers must sign an assurance that they will work toward the goal of 75 percent of staff obtaining these requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The program administrator must have a minimum of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • baccalaureate degree • nine hours of college-level coursework in administration, leadership, and management • 24 hours of credit-bearing hours of specialized college-bearing coursework in relevant field (child development, elementary education, etc.) ◆ Teachers must have a minimum of an associate's degree or equivalent. At least 75 percent of teachers have minimum of baccalaureate degree in relevant field (child development, elementary education, etc.). ◆ All assistant teachers and teacher aides must have a minimum of a high school diploma or GED. At least 50 percent of assistant teachers and teacher aides have a CDA credential or equivalent; 100 percent of those without at least a CDA enrolled demonstrating progress toward obtaining a CDA.

MAXIMUM GROUP SIZE

PRE-K	CHILD CARE	TEEM
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ There is no limit for four-year-old children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Group size is limited to 35 four-year-old children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Group size varies based upon the type of program. Generally, group size limits are based on child care licensing and Head Start requirements.

How Many Children per Classroom?

HEAD START	TEXAS RISING STAR	NAEYC
<p>◆ Group size is limited to 20 four-year-old children.</p>	<p>◆ Group size is limited to 21 four-year-old children.</p>	<p>◆ Group size is limited to 20 four-year-old children.</p>

CAREGIVER-TO-CHILD RATIOS

PRE-K	CHILD CARE	TEEM
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ No ratios are prescribed in law for Pre-K.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ The provider must maintain a 1:18 caregiver-to-child ratio for four-year-old children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Varies based on the type of program. Each program is expected to abide by its own regulatory standards regarding caregiver-to-child ratios.

How Many Children per Adult?

HEAD START	TEXAS RISING STAR	NAEYC
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ The program must maintain a 1:10 caregiver-to-child ratio for four-year-old children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ The program must maintain a 1:10 caregiver-to-child ratio for four-year-old children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ The program must maintain a 1:8 caregiver-to-child ratio for class sizes of 16 or less; 1:9 for class sizes of 18; and 1:10 for class sizes of 20. All of these ratios apply to four-year-old children.

CURRICULUM

PRE-K	CHILD CARE	TEEM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Public school Pre-K programs are encouraged to follow established curriculum guidelines that encompass the following content areas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • language and early literacy development • mathematics • science • social studies • fine arts • health and safety • personal and social development • physical development • technology applications ◆ All local curriculums must be chosen based on the statewide list adopted by the Texas State Board of Education (SBOE). Examples of currently adopted curriculum packages include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DLM Early Childhood Express Texas Package • Scholastic Early Childhood Program • Pebble Soup Explorations • Saxon Early Learning • We Can! • Get Ready, Set, Leap! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Each director or caregiver must develop and post a daily activity plan inclusive of the needs of all children. ◆ Activities must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outdoor play • opportunities for thinking skills and sensory development • opportunities for small muscle development • opportunities for large muscle development • language development • socio-emotional development • self-help skills • regular meal and snack times • supervised naptimes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Requires research-based curriculum and instructional practices. ◆ TEEM projects have local choice in deciding on which state-adopted curriculum to use.

What Are Children Required to Learn?

HEAD START	TEXAS RISING STAR	NAEYC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The curriculum addresses the following domains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • approaches to learning • creative arts • language development and communication • literacy • mathematics • physical health and development • science • social and emotional development ◆ The curriculum should do the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • promote interactive learning • help children achieve social, emotional, linguistic, cognitive, and physical goals • encourage development of positive feelings about learning • have realistic and attainable expectations • include children with disabilities • build and elaborate on child's current knowledge and abilities • lead to conceptual understanding by helping children construct own meaning in their own contexts • facilitate concept learning and skills development in integrated/natural way • challenge children with disabilities to attain goals beyond those in IEP/IFSP • encourage active learning and allow children to make meaningful choices • promote feelings of safety, security, and belonging • promote positive relationships with families 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The curriculum should include goals and objectives related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • creative expression • positive self-esteem • social skills • cognitive skills • communication skills • health/safety habits • physical development • acceptance of diverse families, ethnicities, genders, and levels of ability ◆ Daily schedules include a consistent routine and have a balance of the following activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • indoor/outdoor • quiet/active • individual/small group/ large group • large muscle/small muscle • child-initiated/caregiver-initiated 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The curriculum fosters social, emotional, physical, language, and cognitive development and integrates key content areas including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • literacy • mathematics • science • technology • creative expression and the arts • health and safety • social studies ◆ Children have learning opportunities, experiences, and projects that extend over several days and include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • play • self-initiated learning • creative expression • large-group, small-group, and child-initiated activity ◆ The materials and equipment used to support the curriculum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • reflect lives of children and families • reflect diversity represented in society (e.g., age, ability, gender, etc.) • provide for safety while being appropriately challenging • encourage exploration, experimentation, and discovery • promote action and interaction • are organized to support independent use • are rotated to reflect changing curriculum and accommodate new interests and skill levels • are rich in variety • accommodate children's special needs

PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

PRE-K	CHILD CARE	TEEM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Varies based on local district and campus policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Parents are required to be notified of all and any health and safety issues affecting the child and/or facility. ◆ All licensed facilities are required to publicly display various information including, but not limited to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the center’s license • daily activity plan for each age group of children • daily menu • “current employees” list • emergency and evacuation plans ◆ Parents must be granted access to the facility at all times. ◆ Compliance history of the facility is available through the DFPS online system. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Each TEEM project must develop and implement its own parental involvement plan. However, each program’s guiding philosophy and standards of practice must be accommodated.

HEAD START	TEXAS RISING STAR	NAEYC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The program’s experiences and activities promote and enhance parental role as the primary influence in children’s education and development. ◆ Programs must provide a family services program for all families with children enrolled in the Head Start program. The program must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • family goal setting • access to community services and resources • parent involvement in all aspects of Head Start program ◆ Parents should participate in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • decision making • program planning and operations • classroom and other program activities as paid employees, volunteers, and observers • activities for parents they have helped to develop ◆ Parent education is provided, including instruction on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • child observation skills • food preparation and nutritional skills • nurturing, supportive environments, and relationships • family goals and responsibilities • parenting skills, knowledge and understanding of children’s educational, developmental needs, and activities of child • advocacy for children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • supports appropriate staff communication with parents • maintains designated area where daily schedules, menus, and other important notices are available to parents • invites parents to visit program and participate in periodic invitations to special occasions/ events, parent meeting/support groups, or parent work groups; invites parents to share own culture-specific information and objects; or other parent involvement • establishes and maintains parent advisory group that meets at minimum twice a year • has method for communication with parents with special needs (e.g., limited ability to understand English, hearing/ visual impairments, etc.) ◆ Caregiver: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shares each child’s development with parent on ongoing basis and documents child’s progress semiannually • has method for communication with parents with special needs (e.g., limited ability to understand English, hearing/ visual impairments, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The program: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • allows families to visit any area of the facility during the program’s regular business hours • facilitates opportunities for families to meet one another formally and informally, work together on projects to support the program, and provide support for one another • includes parents as active participants of governing or advisory groups • works with families to plan events ◆ Program staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ensures that all families— regardless of family structure, socioeconomic, religious, racial, and cultural backgrounds, gender, abilities, or preferred language— are involved in all aspects of program • encourages families to contribute regularly to decisions about child’s goals • encourages families to share concerns and to help find mutually satisfying solutions • encourages families to make decisions about what services their child needs • uses a variety of techniques to negotiate difficulties in communicating with families, including using a language the families can understand • provides families with information about other programs and services • uses linkages with other programs and schools to help families prepare and manage child’s transitions

GOVERNANCE

PRE-K	CHILD CARE	TEEM
<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ All public school Pre-K programs are subject to the statutes set forth by the Texas Education Code and the requirements of local district policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ Licensed child care centers are subject to the rules and regulations set forth by the DFPS and must be in compliance with the “Minimum Standard Rules.”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">◆ TEEM partnership projects are subject to the statutes, rules, and regulations of their respective programs (e.g., TEA, DFPS, and Head Start), and must also satisfy expectations and performance standards set forth by the SCECD.

HEAD START	TEXAS RISING STAR	NAEYC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Governance is provided by federal Head Start Act, Sec. 635 of Public Law 97-35, and subject to the requirements of the Office of Head Start, which is housed in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Children and Families (ACF) division. In addition, states are broken down into regions, each of which is managed by local administrators. ◆ Providers must comply with state and local requirements or with federal Head Start Performance Standards (whichever are more rigorous). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Providers that are licensed centers with DFPS must meet and maintain compliance with acceptable child care licensing by one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provider has current permanent license • provider corrects any non-compliance cited by licensing • provider complies with conditions placed on facility during probationary period ◆ Providers who are not licensed with DFPS can qualify for Texas Rising Star Provider status if they meet and maintain all licensing standards except for governance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Programs must comply with legal requirements for the health and safety of children in licensed settings or must be accredited to operate by state and local agencies. ◆ The program also is subject to random, unannounced NAEYC visits that include classroom observations, classroom tours, and review of program compliance with 2005 NAEYC Program Standards and Criteria.

EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT

PRE-K	CHILD CARE	TEEM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All Pre-K programs are evaluated and assessed according to local district policy. ◆ Any program that receives a Pre-K Early Start Grant must submit an annual report to TEA. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All centers must satisfy initial licensing and compliance requirements. ◆ All centers must conduct monthly playground safety reviews. ◆ All centers must meet sanitation, food preparation, fire and safety requirements. ◆ Licensed centers are subject to one unannounced annual inspection. ◆ Licensed centers are subject to inspections and various levels of monitoring based on any complaint or child abuse allegations, and pending follow-up investigations and evidence of compliance. ◆ Any licensed center found to be noncompliant is subject to more frequent inspections. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ All TEEM projects must meet defined school readiness criteria as set forth by the SCECD. ◆ All individual children that participate in a TEEM project are assessed three times per year using hand-held (PDA) progress monitoring tools. Children are assessed based on the following domains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • literacy skills • socio-emotional development ◆ After children leave their respective Pre-K programs and enter kindergarten, scores for every child on the TPRI or Tejas Lee and a socio-emotional development screener are taken at the first appropriate assessment point. These scores, in addition to other criteria, are used to assess previous early childhood program effectiveness. ◆ All TEEM partnership communities may volunteer to participate in the School Readiness Certification System, an online quality monitoring system. ◆ TEEM communities that demonstrate inadequate quality or progress receive support and appropriate interventions from the SCECD.

HEAD START	TEXAS RISING STAR	NAEYC
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Annually, all programs must conduct a self-assessment with the consultation of policy group and community members to evaluate program effectiveness. ◆ Programs are also evaluated through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • monitoring visits every three years using Head Start Program Performance Standards • annual self-assessment • annual staff performance appraisals • ongoing assessment of staff and consultants' knowledge and skills in areas of responsibilities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Providers who are not nationally accredited must be reviewed every six months for continued compliance. In intervening quarters, providers either submit self-reports or vendor management staff conduct monitoring visits. ◆ Providers who are nationally accredited have accreditation reviewed quarterly or are monitored every six months. Texas Rising Star certification is reviewed quarterly. ◆ Monitoring includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • observation of group size • evaluation of the availability and condition of supplies, equipment, and materials • assessment of new provider staff's qualifications • appraisal of changes in scheduling, curriculum, or program activities • review of training documentation • observation of caregiver-child interactions and caregiver supervision of children 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The program must maintain at least 80 percent compliance with NAEYC Program Standards and Criteria to maintain accreditation with no classroom meeting less than 70 percent of criteria. ◆ The program must undergo an annual self-assessment on the first, second, third, and fourth anniversaries of accreditation through completion of NAEYC Annual Reports. The program must be reaccredited every five years.

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FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT TEXAS PUBLIC SCHOOL PRE-K PROGRAMS, CONTACT:

Texas Education Agency Early Childhood Education Unit

Cami Jones, *Director of Early Childhood Education*

Cami.Jones@tea.state.tx.us

512.463.9581

www.tea.state.tx.us/curriculum/early

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT CHILD CARE PROGRAMS OR LICENSING, CONTACT:

Texas Department of Family and Protective Services

Sasha Rasco, *Director of Child Care Licensing*

Sasha.Rasco@dfps.state.tx.us

512.438.3264

www.dfps.state.tx.us/Child_Care/About_Child_Care_Licensing

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TEXAS EARLY EDUCATION MODEL (TEEM), CONTACT:

State Center for Early Childhood Development (SCECD) at the Center for Improving the Readiness of Children for Learning and Education (CIRCLE)

Susan Gunnewig, *Assistant Director*

Susan.Gunnewig@uth.tmc.edu

713.500.3575

www.uth.tmc.edu/circle

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT THE TEXAS HEAD START PROGRAM, CONTACT:

Texas Head Start-State Collaboration Office

Dr. Dorothy Calhoun, *Director*

Dorothy.J.Calhoun@uth.tmc.edu

713.500.3835

cli.uth.tmc.edu/our-programs/program-overview/TX-head-start/default.html

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT TEXAS RISING STAR PROGRAMS, CONTACT:

WorkSource

512.597.7191

www.worksourceaustin.com/childcare/information_for_providers/rising_star.htm

www.twc.state.tx.us/svcs/childcare/provcert.html

FOR QUESTIONS ABOUT NAEYC PROGRAMS, CONTACT:

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