

## Section 3.5 Early Education and Care Quality

### Introduction

The Gulf Coast Workforce Board promotes early education and care by providing funding to improve the quality of early education and care in the 13-county region. Through its network of workforce services, the Gulf Coast Workforce Board is one of the largest single purchasers of direct child care, which supports parents who work or who are in school. The Board is committed to enhancing and raising the quality of service for our customers and future workforce. The Board supports providers who aspire to provide a quality experience for children in a safe and nurturing environment. Creative, stimulating and age-appropriate activities and experiences prepare children for success in school and eventually for work.

We are soliciting proposals from qualified organizations such as community colleges, lab schools and community-based organizations which have proven experience in providing services which result in enhancing the quality of early education and care for children across the 13-county region.

### Current Operations

As a part of its system, The Workforce Board provides funding for an Early Education and Care Quality contractor.

The Early Education and Care Quality contractor makes the following services available to parents and providers:

- Child care information and referrals, and consumer education to families across the 13-county region, including 2-1-1 Texas
- Telephone consultations and resources to registered and listed home providers
- Parenting sessions on site at child care centers
- Needs assessments and on-site consultation to providers
- Various levels of training for provider staff on site
- Training sessions at conferences for child care providers such as (Texas Association for Education of Young Children and Houston Association for Education of Young Children)
- Helping providers and staff develop and implement specialized inclusion plans for children who have disabilities

- Face-to-face early learning and literacy support, coaching and mentoring to provider staff
- Development and training on topics such as child growth development, math and science development, social and emotional development and responsive teaching techniques
- Outreach to recruit providers to join Texas Rising Star (TRS) System and management of TRS by:
  - ✓ Increasing and maintaining number of TRS providers
  - ✓ Providing quality improvement and TRS Assistance to area providers
  - ✓ Managing state enacted professional development for the board and child care providers
  - ✓ Assessing and mentoring providers using qualified assessors and mentors.
- Scholarships for provider staff to attain CDA assessments and early education and care training
- Assistance to “at risk” providers identified by Texas Department of Family and Protective Services on how to improve services to children
- Support for programs which provide school readiness, early learning, career awareness and literacy
- Work in neighborhoods to increase school readiness support and increase early learning and literacy by working with local providers and providing training resources for Child Development Associate assessments and training
- Contacting local match contributors to raise a minimum \$10.4 million in local match funds which increases the availability of early education and care resources and direct child care assistance for families in the area

## How it Works

The Early Education and Care Quality Contractor works with:

- Child care providers to promote training in early learning, language, literacy and numeracy development for young children
- Customers throughout the region who call into the 2-1-1 System requesting information about child care resources and providers in the area
- Customers at a Career Office to develop a child care inclusion plan for the provider’s staff or inform the parent of other child care resources

- Career Office or Support Center staff may refer a customer who has a child with a disability to the Early Education and Care Quality contractor for assistance in identifying a provider or other resources for the child
- Financial Aid Payment Office staff determine when a provider may be paid an enhanced rate when services to the child results in significant expenditures for the provider
- Financial Aid Payment Office staff as when we want to increase the number of available Workforce Solutions providers and when we want to connect parents and providers together to discuss child care options
- Board staff to report on production and delivery of services provided to providers and community as it relates to early education and quality of care for young children

## Performance and Production

We expect our contractor to (1) maintain and increase the number of early education/child care providers who are certified as Texas Rising Star providers, (2) increase the number of Texas Rising Star providers qualifying as 4-Star providers, (3) raise matching resources to bring federal Child Care and Development Block Grant funds to the region, (4) provide on-going training for early education/child care providers on a variety of topics, and (5) provide funds and paths for early education/child care provider staff to obtain the Child Development Associate credential and/or higher-level certifications in early education.

Following are current year performance and production targets:

<i>Activities Designed to Improve the Quality and Availability of Child Care</i>	
Number of providers receiving scholarships, equipment grants, training, etc. (unduplicated)	9,000
Number of providers receiving equipment grants	500
Number of providers receiving incentive grants	100
Number of providers receiving stipends for achievement for educational milestones	230
Number of trainings provided by contractor and subcontracted trainers (excluding online training)	140
Number of early childhood education conference scholarships awarded	600
Number of providers receiving CDA assessment scholarships	146
Number of providers trained through face-to-face training sessions (unduplicated)	1,825

Number of providers trained through online training (unduplicated)	6,000
Number of providers receiving college tuition and CDA course scholarships	230
<b><i>Activities Designed to Provide Comprehensive Consumer Education to Parents and the Public</i></b>	
Number of families requesting and receiving resource and referral information via phone, email and online. (unduplicated)	22,000
Number of parenting sessions on-site at child care programs	80
Number of child care centers receiving family-centered care support services (quarterly numbers indicate centers added in the quarter; centers continue to receive services throughout the contract period)	40
<b><i>Activities That Increase Parental Choice</i></b>	
Number of local match agreements secured and managed with matching level needed to secure additional funding	10,484,961
Number of inclusion plans written with child care providers for children with disabilities	50
Increase the number of Texas Rising Star Providers to 225 end of FY 2017 (numbers for quarters 2, 3 and 4 indicate net TRS program change in the quarter)	250
*Total number of providers receiving scholarships (unduplicated)	1,340
**Total number of providers trained (unduplicated)	9,000

## Successful Bidders

We expect successful bidders to serve the 13-county region by:

- Working closely with Gulf Coast Workforce Solutions system, child care providers and other community resources
- Working to coordinate services such as teacher training, when possible with public school districts, Head Start, Early Head Start and Early Childhood Intervention programs and others to expand the availability of quality training to teachers
- Identifying and securing local match funds for federal Child Care Development Funds
- Providing early education and care information and referral services to parents
- Improving services for children with disabilities by writing inclusion plans, training providers and helping providers select resources for children

- Providing technical assistance and training to 5 to 10 Workforce Solutions providers who have been identified as “At Risk” by the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services
- Writing and managing agreements for local match used for child care financial aid and quality improvement
- Expanding and improving care for infants and toddlers
- Promoting inclusion for children with disabilities
- Promoting early learning and literacy
- Arranging for provider training on children’s health and safety, child abuse prevention, early learning and child development for infants and toddlers
- Increasing the number of TRS providers in the area
- Assessing and mentoring TRS providers
- Completing and providing timely child care reports to contract liaison at H-GAC
- Increasing positive outcomes for children

## How to Submit a Proposal

Submit your proposal in the following order:

- 1.0 Proposal Cover Sheet
- 2.0 Information about your organization
- 3.0 Information about your bid
- 4.0 Budget and staffing summary
- 5.0 All Certifications
- 6.0 Copy of organization’s most recent audit and audited financial statements

### Information about Your Organization

Provide the following information for us in a narrative that is no more than 11 pages:

1. A description of the organizational structure and why it is structured this way. Is the organization for-profit or non-profit? (no more than one page)
2. An organization chart that shows graphically how your organization operates. (no more than one page)
3. Information about any governing boards such as a board of directors or advisory boards. Provide the names and terms of Board members. Include information about affiliated organizations such as subsidiaries or parent companies, and specifically describe relationships. (no more than one page)
4. A description of your organization’s mission, vision and values, if you have them. Describe your who developed them and how they were developed. How does your

organization communicate the vision, mission and core values? How are they expressed in the organization? (no more than 2 pages)

5. How does your organization's mission, vision and values align with the mission of the Gulf Coast Workforce Board?
6. A list of the key staff for your organization. Identify the principals and leadership and describe their responsibilities, experience and length of service with your organization. Who controls the management of your organization? Tell us how you intend to ensure that staff are readily available and trained to assume managing important tasks if leadership changes. (no more than two pages)
7. A description of your financial stability and any comments you wish to make about your credit rating, your payment policies, and any recognition you may have received from accrediting or other bodies for organization or financial excellence. Has your organization experienced any financial difficulty in the past five years? (no more than one page)
8. Include references from at least three organizations that have contracted with your organization to provide services similar to those proposed. Include the name of the organization, a contact person, telephone number and email address of the contact person, the amount and term of the contract(s), and the service your organization provided through the contract(s). (no more than two pages)

## **Information About Your Proposal**

Please provide the following information in a narrative that is no more than 15 pages:

1. Tell us why you think the service you propose is necessary.
2. Explain how your project will improve early education and care quality. Describe in detail the different components of the service you propose to provide. What outcomes will you achieve? Please quantify your activities.
3. Describe how your project will serve:
  - a. Early education/child care providers
  - b. Parents and caretakers
4. What is your organization's experience in assessing and mentoring early education providers so that they can achieve certification in state or national quality rating systems?
5. Please describe in detail your experience with fund raising. Have you ever raised funds as match for a state or federal grant? How much did you raise?
6. Please describe the amount and kind of matching resources your organization brings to this project. Please describe non-cash or in-kind matching resources thoroughly.
7. Describe your staffing plan for the project, including the number of staff, job titles for staff, and job descriptions. (Job descriptions can be included as an attachment to the narrative and not as a part of the 15-page project description.)
8. If your proposal includes a consortium, tell us who all the member organizations are and clearly describe the role each will play. Who is the lead contractor?

9. What steps will you take to ensure that any facilities where customers are served, provide physical accessibility in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Texas Accessibility Survey (TAS) guidelines?
10. How will ensure that your services are delivered in a way that makes them equally accessible to individuals with all types of disabilities?

## **Budget and Staffing**

Use the Proposal Budget Personnel forms provided for in the Resources section of this request and provide a narrative back-up which describes in detail your budget line items. Read the General Budget Instructions page in the Resources section before preparing a budget.

## **Assurances and Certifications**

Use the forms provided in this request. Be sure to include all required forms (certifications for debarment, lobbying, and drug-free workplace; Texas franchise tax; Texas state assessments; the general assurances and certifications; and the conflict of interest questionnaire), and be sure that all are properly signed by an authorized representative of your organization.

## **Audit and Financial Statements**

Attach a copy of your organization's most recent audit as well as audited financial statements.