THE DIRECTOR'S

WEEKLY BRIEF

Texas Early Childhood, TEFA & CCS Updates

SEPTEMBER 7, 2026 • WHAT CHANGED • WHY IT MATTERS • WHAT TO DO NEXT

A QUICK NOTE FOR DIRECTORS

You do not have to sort through every update alone. This weekly brief highlights the Texas changes that may affect your program, your payments, your personnel files, and your next planning decisions.

THIS WEEK'S 4 PRIORITIES

1. TWC Issues New Provider-Payment Guidance

CONFIRMED AND ACTIVE

On September 1, the Texas Workforce Commission published WD 13-26, Payment Adjustments for Child Care Service Providers. The guidance and its FAQ explain how providers should report students who are no longer receiving care through Texas Child Care Connection (TX3C).

Why this matters: CCS providers face a greater risk of payment corrections or recoupments when enrollment and attendance records do not accurately show when services ended.

Director action steps

- Review WD 13-26 and the accompanying FAQ immediately.
- Document withdrawal dates and final attendance, and report changes promptly in TX3C.
- Add record-retention expectations to your written withdrawal process.
- Confirm who is responsible for removing students who are no longer receiving care.

Official source: TWC Workforce Policy Letters

2. New CCS Provider Payment Rates Begin October 1

CONFIRMED; EFFECTIVE OCTOBER 1, 2026

TWC has published Board Contract Year 2027 provider-payment rates. The rate period runs October 1, 2026, through September 30, 2027. Updated CCS income limits and parent-share-of-cost charts will follow the same period.

Why this matters: Programs accepting CCS scholarships need the new local rates for accurate enrollment projections, budgets, staffing plans, and parent communication.

Director action steps

- Download the rate schedule for your local Workforce Development Board and care categories.
- Compare reimbursement rates with your private-pay tuition and actual cost per student.
- Update October budgets and parent-share communication before September 30.
- Remember: rates vary by board, care type, age, and provider status. There is no single statewide reimbursement amount.

Official source: TWC Child Care Data, Reports and Plans

3. New Child-Care Background-Check Requirement Is in Effect

CONFIRMED; EFFECTIVE SEPTEMBER 1, 2026

HHSC Child Care Regulation Provider Guidance Letter PGL-26-11003 establishes a new background-check type for individuals affiliated with regulated child-care operations. It applies across permit types.

Why this matters: This is an immediate compliance issue that may affect current personnel, new hires, substitutes, volunteers, and other affiliated individuals covered by the guidance.

Director action steps

- Review PGL-26-11003 instead of relying on an older hiring checklist.
- Audit every affiliated person against the new requirement.
- Update onboarding and personnel-file checklists.
- Maintain a background-check tracking and renewal system aligned with CCR instructions.

Official source: HHSC CCR Background Check Provider News

4. TEA Designates Pre-K Partnership Intermediaries

CONFIRMED AND EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY; ADDITIONAL RULES PENDING

TEA has designated five intermediaries to support public-private Pre-K partnerships. In Regions 10 and 11, the listed intermediaries include Child Care Associates, Educational First Steps, and the statewide Texas A&M University System. HB 2 also requires qualifying partnership agreements to pass at least 85% of applicable funding to the private Pre-K provider.

Why this matters: This creates an opportunity for child-care programs to examine partnership readiness, quality expectations, documentation, and negotiations with public school systems.

Director action steps

- Assess readiness across eligibility, Texas Rising Star status, staffing, curriculum alignment, facilities, enrollment capacity, and financial records.
- Review the 85% funding pass-through requirement before entering negotiations.
- If applicable, prepare waiver materials before the October 30, 2026 deadline for the 2025-26 and/or 2026-27 school years.

- Consider attending TEA's intermediary webinar on September 15 from 11:30 AM-12:30 PM or September 28 from 10:30-11:30 AM.

Official source: TEA Prekindergarten Partnerships

WATCH ITEM • CHAPTER 746 MINIMUM STANDARDS

No final Chapter 746 minimum-standards revision was verified for September 1-7. No consequential new K-3 literacy standard or statewide early-literacy grant award was verified during the same period. Continue following current requirements and avoid revising compliance training as though proposed changes are final.

Review the pending Texas Register proposal

YOUR DIRECTOR CHECKLIST FOR THIS WEEK

- Read WD 13-26 and verify your withdrawal and TX3C reporting process.
- Download your local Board Contract Year 2027 CCS rate schedule.
- Audit affiliated individuals under PGL-26-11003.
- Decide whether a public-private Pre-K partnership should be explored.
- Keep proposed Chapter 746 changes separate from current requirements.

READY TO TURN THESE UPDATES INTO ACTION?

Bright Idea Education & Services supports directors with clear guidance, practical tools, and next steps that can be used right away.

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