

Summary of Recommendations

Background

A Statewide Initiative is a funding request or mandate that results in a competitive Request for Application (RFA) or in some cases, a distribution to defined entities based on specific criteria. The Commission approves ongoing statewide initiatives as part of the operating budget process annually and may also approve new initiatives throughout the year, during public meetings. Once the Commission approves the initiatives, the RFA development or distribution process begins in earnest.

Issue

Many of the statewide initiatives are reoccurring, and interest is monitored by reviewing the number of applications received in response to individual RFAs. Statewide initiatives may be pilot programs or long-standing programs that have seen an increasing number of applicants over time. Conversely, new initiatives build interest and continue providing value in subsequent years.

When implementing an initiative, staff fund as many eligible, quality proposals as possible, with the funds available. In some cases, there is more interest and demand for funds than funds available, and vice versa. For some of the previously approved 2022 SWI statewide initiatives and based on what we know of project value, demand and interest, staff made recommendations for increases and decreases to certain initiatives, for consideration by the Commission. In addition, the Legislature has made changes to some initiative amounts via rider, and those changes are reflected. Any funding recommendations proposed by staff for the 2022 statewide initiatives previously approved by the Commission do not exceed the amount available in the Commission reserve.

The following charts reflect staff recommendations for increase, decrease, and carry forward amounts for decision and approval by the Commissioners.

Childcare (Reserve Balance \$60,526,255)		
Track Number & Initiative	Rationale	Increase/Decrease/Carry Forward Request
76007 TRS Staff Support	Estimate to increase number of TRS Mentors to support increasing CQIP and program expansion.	+\$6,483,125
76037 Child Care Business Forums	Request to extend current project/grant; child care providers continue to need additional assistance to support improvements to and strengthening their business practices. This project was delayed due to COVID. Additional child care programs will be served with a contract extension.	+\$3,000,000
76038A Family Child Care Network	Request to extend current projects/grants; when these funds were procured, only 2 entities responded. We had hoped to restructure this initiative for more broad-based statewide coverage; however, we have not had staff capacity to work on this in light of other COVID priorities. While these 2 grantees don't provide statewide coverage, we would like to extend them, as they can continue to support home-based providers in their service areas.	+\$371,091
76038C Addressing Challenging Behavior in Child Care	Request to extend current projects/ grants. With the increases to the base CCDBG grant, we believe that there are funds available to continue this initiative and reach more providers. (FY21 Texas regular allocation \$866,502,534 vs. FY20 \$822,121,643 vs. FY19 \$776,568,285). A prior statewide needs assessment developed with the state PDG grant identified this as the second most needed area for Professional Development.	+\$992,311
76042 Market Rate Survey	General increase we see on an annual basis	+\$2,804
76048 Child Care Availability Platform	Will re-procure and expand to include additional early learning programs	+\$200,000

76051 TRS Ongoing Certification/MC's	Ongoing cost was not correctly reflected.	-\$300,000
76053 TRS Centralized Assessors	Preparation and startup costs for new Centralized TRS Assessor entity, prior to full transition in FY2023.	+\$850,000
76CAA Automated Attendance Init-Grants	CAA is being re-procured in conjunction with the TWIST CC replacement, not as a stand-alone contract.	-\$4,887,850

TANF
(Reserve Balance \$6,620,119)

Track Number & Initiative	Rationale	Increase/Decrease/Carry Forward Request
75006 Foster Youth Workforce Transition Centers	Transition Centers and Boards need additional funding for travel to the foster youth conference hosted by TWC and multiple agency partners. All Boards are invited to attend this event for the staff education opportunities and for strengthening and reestablishing local networks and connections that ultimately benefit the area foster youth	+\$50,000
75011 Governor’s Summer Merit Program	This initiative provides camp scholarships to more than 1,200 students each year. The additional funds will allow more youth to participate, as they were unable last year due to COVID-related cancellations.	+\$300,000
75016 Youth Robotics	While this initiative serves more than 6,000 students each year, TWC historically receives more strong applications than the funds will support. An additional award would bring	+\$700,000

	robotics to more schools and support after-school robotics more broadly in Texas.	
75024 Camp Code	These camps teach coding skills to an average of 948 students each year, however all camps were cancelled in 2020 due to COVID-related concerns. Additional funding will allow applicants to serve more students in 2022 as camps reopen.	+\$400,000
75025 Careers in Texas Industries	This funding supports events in each of the 28 Workforce areas, providing students with a day of career exploration. Events were cancelled due to COVID-related concerns and the amount of funding requested restores the initiative to closer to the previous level of funding for in-person career exploration events.	+\$280,000
75027 Texas Internship Initiative	This initiative was cancelled due to COVID-related concerns and additional interest is anticipated as employers have reopened and have need of workers. Work based learning continues	+\$60,000

	to have value in preparing students for STEM -related employment, and with additional funds, more employers may be identified for internship opportunities.	
75028 Entrepreneurship Bootcamp	Staff recommends funding this initiative with TANF funds, which is allowable and more attractive for entrepreneur participation, given data gathering requirements.	+\$150,000

WIOA (Reserve Balance \$9,350,178)		
Track Number & Initiative	Rationale	Increase/Decrease/Carry Forward Request
74058 Building Construction Trades	Removing \$300,000 for Independent Evaluator, which was a onetime cost.	-\$300,000
74061 Entrepreneurship Bootcamp	Staff recommends funding this initiative with TANF funds, which is allowable and more attractive for entrepreneur participation, given data gathering requirements.	-\$150,000

AEL (Reserve Balance \$3,761,687)		
Track Number & Initiative	Rationale	Increase/Decrease/Carry Forward Request*
77001 SW Professional Development Center	<p>Request to continue current grant. This will allow for renewal in May 2022. Renews annually, up to 5 years. The statewide PD center:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides required PD services for over 4,000 AEL staff, • hosts a minimum of 7 regional or statewide PD events each year, and • develops/maintains the statewide AEL website, which includes the program directory of all 37 grants. <p>Continuous support for AEL grantees ensures expansion and improvement in services to AEL participants and is a required use of SL funds.</p>	\$2,500,000
77002 Learning Management System	<p>Funds will continue current project. Provides 7,000 licenses for PD facilitation and tracking. Renews annually. The LMS</p>	\$158,500

	<p>supports grantees and workforce partners with access as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • houses the 181 AEL PD courses content (including videos) available to AEL staff and workforce partners, • provides transcripts and tracks time for 3,566 AEL staff completing required PD, and • acts as a historical repository for earned PD hours. <p>Use of an LMS ensures grantees stay current on training requirements and increase knowledge and skills in providing AEL services.</p>	
<p>77004 Community Based Professional Development</p>	<p>Request to continue current grant. The grantee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provides PD to support nonprofits/CBO adult literacy providers, • hosts 8 regional symposiums, and 	<p>\$300,000</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • hosts 1 annual conference that supports over 800 non-profit literacy staff statewide. <p>Collaboration with community-based partners ensures alignment and understanding of services provided by the various Texas entities focused on adult education. This collaboration ensures adults learners are referred to programs that best meet their circumstances and needs.</p>	
77013 Career Pathway PDC	<p>Renews current grant in July 2022, which was procured to allow for annual renewals.</p> <p>Grantee will provide</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evidence-based PD to workforce stakeholders on building quality career pathways, and • a statewide needs assessment of AEL career pathway implementation in first year of contract. 	\$750,000

	Over 86 different workforce training programs were offered statewide in PY 19-20, and over 11,318 participants received various career pathway program services. This PD center will support improved outcomes for all career pathways students.	
77016 Math Assistance Call Center	Request to continue current grant in March 2022. The MACC provides at least 1,800 math tutoring sessions per month and is available in multiple languages. Use of the call center ensures AEL participants have additional support needed to prepare for high school equivalency exams (for example, the GED Math Test).	\$500,000

*AEL anticipated changes to what was included in the LAR due to the AEL Long Term Plan being under development. Because of this all entries are increases to the AEL LAR because the LAR was not developed, and all rows were left at \$0. All AEL programs included in the Statewide Initiative budget are proposed to be funded at their historical level (either the 2021 or 2020 level, depending on last award).