

Travis County Voter Approved Child Care and Out of School Time Fund

Update to Travis County, City of Austin, AISD Joint Subcommittee

March 3, 2025

Background

On November 5, 2024, Travis County Voters approved a 2.5 cent tax rate increase per \$100 valuation that will generate approximately \$75 million to increase access to affordable and high-quality child care and afterschool/summer programming and related services for low-income families and develop and administer related workforce and economic development programs.

Overview of Strategies

These four strategies will serve as a baseline for expanding and strengthening child care and afterschool and summer programming in Travis County.

- Strategy 1: Expand slots for infants/toddlers (ages 0-3) and for afterschool and summer programming (PreK-12th grade)
- Strategy 2: Expand non-traditional hour care
- Strategy 3: Build quality and capacity
- Strategy 4: Build a Business Government Alliance for leveraging business contributions and matching public funds to reduce employee child care costs

Transition Plan

- **Staffing:** Hiring staff at Health and Human Services and in other County Departments
- **Community Engagement Activities:** Sharing an update on where Travis County is with starting up the voter approved child care and out of school time fund and gathering community insight and feedback
- **Community Advisory Council:** Planning for a community advisory committee composed of community members and child care and out of school time stakeholders. Application process late Spring - Summer 2025.
- **Short term investments:** Exploring amending existing County contracts to serve more families while planning and procurement for services is underway.

Overview of Community Input Activities

- **Survey:** Survey will be live by early March. This will be on the Travis County website and we have an outreach plan to distribute. *Audience:* All Travis County community members and stakeholders, especially families with children and youth. The survey will be available in English/Spanish.
- **Stakeholder Groups** (about 10): Sharing an update and collecting input during regularly held meetings in February and March. *Audience:* people who work in child care, out of school time, and related organizations.
- **Community Listening Sessions:** Three in-person community listening sessions and one online zoom session. *Audience:* Families and people who are very close to the needs these strategies are seeking to address.

Next Steps in Procuring Services

- The process to plan and procure services within the four baseline strategies includes:
 - Refining initial strategy design by learning from other communities, analyzing community input, and aligning with County policies, procedures, and systems.
 - Seeking approval of program policies by Commissioner's Court.
 - Developing scopes of work for County services.
 - Releasing solicitations, evaluating proposals, and negotiating new contracts.
- A contracted third-party evaluator will evaluate all services and impact.
- Solicitations for services will be staggered and will begin in Fall 2025 and new service contracts will begin throughout 2026.

Emerging Timeline

