

Implementing a Public Daycare Center in Quanah, Texas – Policy Memorandum

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Quanah, Texas is a beautiful, promising community. However, the community lacks sufficient childcare opportunities for families. The town has a Head Start program and an in-home, private daycare, both filled to capacity with a waiting list. The town lacks a public daycare center for the families served by the community. The absence of a public daycare center holds massive economic and cultural implications for Quanah, stifling the growth and retention in tremendously. However, the implementation of a public daycare center by the Quanah City Council would address the many concerns in the community and cultivate the town's welfare.

Background

Childcare and early childhood education – especially accessibility of public daycare centers – has considerable advantages on a child's socioemotional development and educational success, especially for children of underprivileged environments (Archambault et al., 2019). Students' families also benefit from the establishment of public daycares, as they accommodate for parents' work schedules, increasing employment rates, and decreasing likelihood of utilizing public assistance ensuring a family's success in their community and personal lives (Ansari et al., 2019). However, rural communities like Quanah have limited access to childcare opportunities, perpetuating discrepancies especially in underserved communities (Coiter et al., 2012).

Opportunity for Change

The town of Quanah, Texas is struggling specifically with sustaining childcare in the community. The two available options – Head Start and an in-home, private daycare – are continually full and have waitlists. There are families, driving thirty to forty miles outside of

Quanah, for other childcare opportunities. This is effectively restricting economic development due to the outmigration of jobs accompanying the long travel (A. Savage, personal communication, September 22, 2021). Childcare, especially public daycare centers, are essential for adequate child development, encouraging economic development, and recognizing cultural disparities among the families served.

Updated Approach

The limited opportunities provided by Quanah create arduous circumstances for the community and its members. The following policy alternative could substantially enhance childcare accessibility in the community, therefore promoting economic and cultural development:

- Using block grants like the Childcare and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and state equivalents – along with state based child care centers – in establishing and funding a public daycare center in the town of Quanah and;
- Implement supplementary before- and after-school programs in the Quanah Independent School District (QISD), parks and recreation facilities, and the Quanah Public Library for additional educational and social development and;
- Provide education and training for students in Quanah Independent School District and workforce development programs to alleviate the stress of lack of staffing in these facilities and;
- Improve data collection and relationships among stakeholders and community members in understanding disparities and equity in access to early education and childcare in Quanah.

Benefits include enhanced socioemotional and academic development for children; increased economic opportunities for their families affecting those in poverty and relying on public assistance especially; and strengthening of Quanah's communal prosperity and integrity. The Childcare and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) and state equivalent subsidies could cover the costs of this undertaking in local policy (Office of Child Care, 2021).

