BEST IN CLASS EARLY EXPERIENCES
GRANT PROGRAM: Q & A SESSION 1
April 12 & 13, 2022
INTRODUCTION

- Competitive grant award established by the 2021 67th Legislative Assembly

- Represents a targeted state investment in North Dakota programs whose actions can demonstrate the return on investment that is possible with intentional, research-supported investments in early childhood

- Programs will be monitored, evaluated, and supported to help ensure the program investment has an impact

APPLICATION PROCESS

- April 22, 2022 Applications due to DHS submit via email to dhsec@nd.gov

- May 9-13th Announcement of programs selected to participate in the 2022-2023 BIC cohort will be posted on the ND DHS Best in Class website. Best in Class (nd.gov) nd.gov/dhs/services/childfamily/besticlass.html
BEST IN CLASS PROGRAM
QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES FOR CHILDREN IN THE YEAR BEFORE THEY ENTER KINDERGARTEN

PROGRAM TYPES ELIGIBLE TO APPLY
- Serve children who have reached age four before August 1st, 2022
- Operated a four-year old program for a year or more
- Programs that are operated by educational facilities
- Head Start programs
- Licensed child care settings inclusive of those operated in connection with a church, business, or organization

PROGRAM CHARACTERISTICS
- Operate for at least 400 hours over a period of at least 32 consecutive weeks. Programs operating at least 832 hours over 32 consecutive weeks are desired.
- Incorporate at least 10 hours of family engagement
- Meet the standards and expectations of quality improvements systems
- Admit children of all learning abilities into their program
- Complete and submit the SFN 1304 “Four-Year Old Program Approval Process” if operating in an educational facility or an unlicensed Head Start
GRANT AMOUNTS

- Program group size of 18, (17-20) and operating at least 832 hours are eligible for an award of $120,000
  - A required minimum 1 teacher : 10 children ratio, with a maximum of 20 children : 2 teaching staff ratio. Staffing must include two adults – lead teacher and auxiliary teacher – required to be present at all times

- Program group size of 9, (8-10) and operating at least 832 hours are eligible for an award of $60,000
  - A required minimum 1 teacher : 10 children ratio. Staffing must include one adult – lead teacher, auxiliary teacher, and/or substitute – required to be present at all times

- Based on group size, programs operating less than 832 hours and more than 400 hours in at least 32 consecutive weeks will receive half the grant amount.

- Each grant award must be matched with cash match or in-kind match contributions equal to 16.6666% of total grant reimbursement.

- In-kind match can include donated dollars, parent tuition fees and/or provider funds, general funds
# Allowable Uses of Funds

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Items</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personnel Costs</strong></td>
<td>• Salary and benefits for classroom teacher and assistant teacher/para</td>
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<td>• Qualified substitute teachers</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Cost of background checks for new teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Health/Screening/Referral</strong></td>
<td>• Cost of vision, hearing, dental, &amp; physical screenings</td>
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<td>• Gas cards for families to attend referral appointments</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Professional Development</strong></td>
<td>• Registration and Fees</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Education Equipment &amp; Supplies</strong></td>
<td>• Best in Class required instructional materials and supplies</td>
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<td>• Playground equipment and supplies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Classroom furnishings</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Curriculum Costs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Classroom electronic/technology equipment (not to exceed 5% of the grant awarded)</td>
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<td><strong>Other Operating Expenses</strong></td>
<td>• Classroom maintenance and cleaning supplies</td>
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<td>• Computer support for classroom</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Family engagement activities</td>
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<td>• Safety equipment and supplies</td>
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<td>• Administrative supplies</td>
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<td>• Advertising and Outreach</td>
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<td>• Indirect Cost (not to exceed 10% of the total of all other expenses per reimbursement)</td>
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PROGRAM DESIGN: ENROLLMENT SET-ASIDE REQUIREMENT

- 50% of a program’s classroom slots set-aside for children whose household income is less than 60% of state median income; or children who have an identified developmental delay or disability
  - Income could be determined utilizing categorical eligibility established via other federal programs (ex. SNAP, CCAP, Free/Reduced Meals) or via documentation provided by the family
  - Developmental delay or disability will be determined by utilizing existing eligibility for other federal programs, including receipt of services through an IEP under early childhood special education, eligibility for DD services, or other documentation deemed appropriate by DHS.
  - If a program has more applicants in the set-aside pool than it has set-aside slots available, students will be selected through a randomized selection process within the set-aside pool
- Any students not selected in the set-aside pool will then be included in the non-set-aside pool
- Students in the non-set-aside pool will then be selected for enrollment based on a randomized selection protocol
PROGRAM DESIGN: TUITION

- Programs are not required to charge tuition
- May charge tuition to families who participate – must follow the Sliding Fee Scale
  - Licensed child care program's enrolling families with household income at or below 85% of State Median Income will be asked to apply for Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) support
  - Families earning less than 60% of state median income, the maximum tuition charge per child is capped at 1% of household income
  - Families with household income of 61% to 100% of state median income will be subject to a maximum tuition charge per child of 3% of household income
  - Families with household income of 100% to 150% of state median income will be subject to a maximum tuition charge per child of 5% of household income
  - Families with household income greater than 150% of state median income will be subject to a maximum tuition charge of 7% of household income, not to exceed the maximum CCAP rate for preschool
PROGRAM SUPPORTS: COACHING, MONITORING

- A Best in Class Coach & Monitor will be assigned to each grantee

- The Best in Class Coach will work in alignment with other coaching programs currently being implemented in the program, in addition to the Health Consultants

- Coaches & Monitors will be engaged through all steps of the program through onsite and virtual communication

- Coaches will support teaching staff throughout their participation in Best in Class.
  - Environment
  - Interactions
  - Curriculum – Developmentally appropriate practices
  - Gold Assessment
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MATERIALS & EQUIPMENT
Best in Class coaches will review the program site and in partnership with the teacher develop a plan related to equipment and materials to assure grantees can meet environment expectations.
PROGRAM DESIGN

Curriculum & Assessment Tool: Teaching Strategies

- Teaching Strategies is the publisher of tools the state is providing: curriculum, professional development, family engagement, and GOLD-child assessment tool. DHS requires program grantees to use Teaching Strategies GOLD under the state's license.

- Best in Class teachers will be trained to support programs with implementation of the Teaching Strategies tools to grow and become confident in the use of the assessment tool and the overall usage of assessments to intentionally plan holistic teaching and learning opportunities.

FAMILY PARTICIPATION

- Minimum 10 hours of research-based family engagement per enrolled child.
- Families will also be provided access to at-home tools for their children.
  - Waterford Upstart kindergarten readiness program
  - Ready Rosie at-home strategies tool, through the program’s participation in Teaching Strategies.
SCREENINGS & REFERRALS

- Health screenings (physical, dental, vision & hearing, developmental) completed within 90 days of start day
Overview of Application: Key highlights

- Description of current programming
  - Include details in application
  - How do you describe quality
  - What quality measures are currently in use; is it continuous; stakeholders and partners; & future initiatives

- Experience offering inclusive environment
  - Special Education Units; Inclusion Specialists and Grant; future plans going forward; innovative collaborations

- Outreach and recruitment
  - One of the primary goals of grant is to assure access to high quality experience to children-specifically those who may be least likely to have access. Won’t have group of 9 or 18? What strategies to co-op, partner, collaborate, grow

- What do you hope to gain by participating in this cohort
  - Seeking game changers
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Questions & Answers

Thank you!

- Answers will be posted by the end of day - April 13th
- Applications Due: April 22nd 5:00 pm CT
  E-mail to dhsec@nd.gov