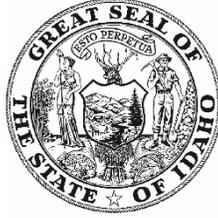


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Wendi Secrist
Executive Director



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Chair

John Young
Vice Chair

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

514 W Jefferson St, Ste 131, Boise, Idaho 83702

Child Care Expansion Grant Review Meeting Minutes

Date: Friday, October 21, 2022

Time: 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Committee Members: Sarah Griffin, ~~Emily Allen, Beth Oppenheimer~~, Erika Rupp, Anna Almerico, Ben Davidson, Caroline Merritt, Renee Bade, Martin Balben (proxy for Beth Oppenheimer)

Staff: Wendi Secrist, Amanda Ames, Paige Nielebeck, Cassie Mansour, Rebecca Watson

Guests:

Called to order at 9:03 a.m.

Welcome

Roll Call – Quorum Met

Review Agenda – No changes to the agenda

Review October 14, 2022 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Mr. Davidson to approve the October 14, 2022 Meeting Minutes as presented. Second by Ms. Griffin. Motion carried.

***Child Care Expansion Grants**

Lucky Duck Preschool

Discussion:

- This application is being revisited, as the applicant submitted additional supporting documents.
- This is a large grant request that is well within the intended purview for the Childcare Grant and the number of new child care seats this would create seems to justify the expense. The sustainability of the funds is a very significant concern due to the way this application is written. The funds look as though they will go directly to the building. If the applicant chooses to sell the building or close their doors in a few years, they could be getting a building for free. If funded, the Committee suggests that we consider writing this contract carefully. For example: “if the applicant closes their doors within 5 years, they will agree to return the ARPA funding when they sell the building.”

- The Committee is also concerned that this applicant doesn't seem to consider staff recruitment and retention for this large of a grant request.
- This applicant has a demonstrated capacity to sustain, as they are an existing child care center that is already the recipient of grant funding.
- Due to the very large request, Ms. Rupp and Mr. Balben both volunteer to speak with them to either guide or to get more information on this project.
- The Committee finalized scoring on this application, with the understanding that the follow-up work would potentially change the scores.
- The Committee would be interested in more information on employee retention for this applicant.

WICAP

Discussion:

- The Committee is interested in the relationship between grant funding and sustainability when the funds are being used to raise employee wages.
- WICAP is a very well-organized statewide recipient of federal funds. However, this application did not meet the Committee's expectations based on how well-connected and organized this applicant usually is in fund-raising efforts. This application did not reflect enough documentation to justify receipt of grant funds, nor did they use the documentation guidelines thoroughly.
- After discussing these challenges with this application, the Committee agreed that this should be returned to the applicant with a request for more robust information.

Whole Child Early Education

Discussion:

- This application had consistent scoring from the Committee for the most part. The Committee felt that no benefits and low pay made staff recruitment and retention questionable. The question of this applicant's desire to offer \$1000 bonus to staff arose. This is under the budget line item: "Staff incentives and bonuses" but only totals at \$3000 per year. This seems to imply that it is an intermittent bonus and not one that can be counted on to encourage staff retention.
- The Committee pointed out that the applicant is currently paying employees \$9/hr and that this would increase to \$10/hr.
- This applicant is participating in the business cohort, which educates and informs them on their business model and helps them develop sustainable practices. This participation is meaningful to the Committee as they are undertaking continuing education.
- The Committee would like clarification on the number of childcare slots they are adding.
- In looking at their in-kind allotment, the Committee noted that this volunteer work is provided by "Madison" but there is no documentation to explain who or what that refers to. After some more review it became apparent that this applicant is in Madison County, and this probably refers to a community partnership with the county.

Small Wonders Daycare & Preschool

Discussion:

- This Committee expressed concern that this does not look like a sustainable project. The funding would be used to prop up salaries and this does not meet our goals for a quality long term arrangement. The Committee also does not feel that a partnership with an enrichment program provider qualifies as a business partnership. It looks, instead like a curriculum partnership, which

is valuable, but does not contribute to the sustainability of the business model, which is the goal of this requirement.

- The Committee doesn't want to limit the vendor partnership relationship, but any relationship that only provides curricular enrichment does not qualify as a business partnership. A vendor relationship that might qualify could be a vendor offering free lawn maintenance (an in-kind match) and potentially getting free or discounted childcare slots. The Committee suggested refining language in the policy to state "partnership that adds business sustainability." The Committee welcomes staff to bring unique ideas to them in a discussion format during a regular meeting.
- The Committee declines to score this application at this time, as it does not meet the requirements of the Grant.

K.I.D.S LLC

Discussion:

- This application includes the same type of vendor relationship as Small Wonders, the Committee declines to score this application as it is written.

God's Little Miracles

Discussion:

- This application includes a relationship with Dunkley Music, which is a curricular partnership. They called it professional development which implies that the teachers are getting the education, but the way that it is laid out in the application makes it seem like the children are receiving the music lessons. The Committee declines to score this application as it is written.

FAQ Discussion/Childcare Grants Updates

The Committee asked staff to put the grant scoring rubric up on the website. The WDC does that for other programs, and likely just overlooked this as the Committee was still working on the rubric when the first deadline passed. This will likely be a very helpful tool for our participants and applicants as they prepare their application's documentation.

If they are an existing provider, and are not engaged in Steps to Quality, the Committee agrees that they do not qualify as a high-quality childcare provider until they begin this process. Our state licensing standards are highly attainable, and the Committee wants to see providers pursuing the Steps to Quality standards. However, this is one possible metric for quality care. If you are NAEYC accredited, a Montessori school, a Head-Start, or under a similar accreditation, they also meet the threshold for this qualification. If a private operation does not pursue Steps to Quality, the Committee just requests that they can articulate those standards that they are adhering to, to bring quality care to their clients.

The Committee would like to request that staff use language that will build up providers who are not meeting the requirements of the policy, when communicating committee feedback. Especially for those small providers who are struggling, or who may have never applied for a grant before, the Committee would like to encourage and provide pathways forward for each applicant. Staff reassured the Committee that they share a commitment to our applicants.

Our next committee meeting is November 4. We should be able to finish scoring the round one applications that day. The second, third, or fourth week of November the WDC staff could host an in-

person 4-hour meeting to compare scores and start awarding grant funding. After some discussion, it seems like 8AM – noon works great for most of the Committee. Ms. Watson will get out a doodle poll to determine a day and time that works for the Committee.

Meeting adjourned at 10:57 a.m.