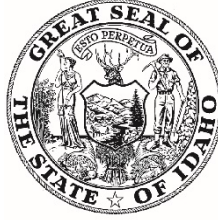


BRAD LITTLE
GOVERNOR

Wendi Secrist
Executive Director



Deni Hoehne
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, May 5, 2023
Time: 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Committee Members: ~~Sarah Griffin~~, Emily Allen, Anna Almerico, Renee Bade, Martin Balben, Ben Davidson, Lori McCann, Caroline Merritt

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

Guests: Aubrie Hunt, Jenny Hay

Called to order at 9:04 AM

Welcome

Roll Call – Quorum Met

Review Agenda – Ms. Secrist requested moving staff updates to the top of the agenda. No objections.

Review April 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes

Motion by Mr. Davidson to approve the April 7, 2023 Meeting Minutes as presented. Second by Representative McCann. Motion carried.

Staff Updates

Ms. Secrist shared with the Committee that Ms. Mansour is moving onto the Idaho Launch team as the project training coordinator. She then introduced Ms. Jenny Hay as the next Child Care Grants/Contracts Operations Analyst.

Committee introductions were made.

***NLEF Waiver Discussion**

Ms. Secrist reviewed the need for a waiver of the \$15,000 cap for the National Law Enforcement and First Responders grant application. This extends the cap to double the amount due to the special circumstances in serving this population.

Discussion:

- Does this doubling of the cap extend to healthcare workers too?

- Not at this time. This is specifically geared to first responders – Law enforcement and fire, specifically. This extends to paramedics as well, as they are emergency medical.
- This language was updated in the waiver request.
- The Committee reflected that this is not only a priority of the Governor in his budget proposal, but that it is a felt need in Idaho communities.
- The Committee noted, in addition, that this cap extension is probably more reflective of the actual cost of true child care start-ups.

Motion by Mr. Balben to recommend approval of the NLEF Waiver to the Council. Second by Mr. Davidson. Motion carried.

Small Provider Mini Bid Update

Ms. Secrist shared that she has been working with the division of purchasing. They are leveraging a NASPO (National Association of State Procurement Officials) contract. This is going to allow us to piggy back on an existing contractual relationship, essentially cutting the timeframe for entering a contractual relationship significantly.

Ms. Bade and Ms. Allen volunteered to help score the small providers when the team gets to that step.

Program Discussion

Timeline for opening next round of applications:

Ms. Ames shared the expected timeline which staff sent out to the Committee last week.

Discussion:

- The Committee considered that the window of applications seems a little short for new applicants who did not apply in the first funding year. The Committee advised an extension for perhaps one more month.
- The Committee proposed an information session before June 15 Like a “Grant Opportunities 101” session prior to opening the grant submission period.
- An open-ended webinar could be helpful for our applicants. Especially if it’s not too labor intensive for staff.
 - The Committee reflected that this is a great way to present FAQs, limitations, and communicate expectations to prospective applicants.
- Staff discussed the benefit of a letter of intent to assess project readiness.
 - A letter of intent could reduce the length of time needed for the application window.
 - Not everyone is eligible for this grant. This could shed light on that. The committee suggested providing mandatory training to get every applicant up to speed in one go.
 - From a workflow standpoint, the letter of intent would be a tremendous help, allowing the team to plan ahead.
- Filtering out applications that are not eligible for this grant earlier in the process would be highly beneficial for staff and the committee.
 - It would also benefit potential applicants who lack a qualifying project; possibly saving them time and resources.
- The Committee proposed this timeline:
 - Staff could schedule an overview webinar in the beginning of June.
 - Starting the following week, applicants could sign up for help sessions.
 - July 15 could be the cutoff for submitting the letter of intent.
 - The previously unfunded applications could be due by August 1st, then the new applications could be due by September 15th.
- Could the staff consider doing a podcast or a pre-filmed/recorded FAQ training?

- The staff recorded a training last year which might be helpful.
- The Committee recommends a simple letter of intent – mostly checkboxes.
- Would we also require a letter of intent from prior applicants?
 - We certainly could. And we could require it by July 1st.
 - If it is just a checkbox letter of intent, this could encourage more effective submissions from previous applicants.

Application and rubric revisions

Ms. Ames and Ms. Mansour shared revisions to the application. See the Application draft.

Discussion:

- The project readiness checklist will allow the applicant to see what is expected of them in the application process.
- The gap survey should be linked in the project overview.
- “Child care needs in your community” is an area with a lot of weight in our rubric. We may want to add more application questions in this section.
- We have three sections in the application about the creation of child care slots. This comes off as redundant. Is there a way to clarify this, or obtain the same data with more brevity?
 - We can try to capture this data differently without losing the nuance.
- High Quality Care should also have a text box so the applicant can describe what program they are using (Steps-to-Quality, Idaho Building Blocks, etc.).
 - The onus should be on the applicant to let us know where they are.
 - That is still a difficult thing to score for a start-up. Do we need to change the way we score that mechanism for new applicants?
 - There will still be some “in good faith” aspect to this scoring.
- What’s the best way to format the Idaho Building Blocks for After School Quality?
 - Maybe the best method is to just ask the question – “For after-school programs, are you currently working toward Idaho Building Blocks for After School Quality Care?”
- Prior grant management experience is not a requirement to apply for the Child Care Expansion Grant.
- We don’t talk about the match anywhere in the application. We may want to include a text box stating that 50% match is a requirement of this grant and ask how the applicant anticipates securing that funding: a bank loan, in-kind, or partnership donations.
- The staff expressed how much they appreciate the feedback from the Committee. This is going to make our scoring job easier in the future!

Ms. Mansour presented the revisions to the rubric. See the rubric draft.

Discussion:

- The hours of operation are very different depending on the type of provider – traditional child care or after school.
 - We may want a different rubric to help with that distinction.
 - We probably do not need a unique rubric for small providers. We may just weigh it differently.
- IDHW uses the following child care size cut off levels.
 - Child Care Center. A child care center cares for thirteen (13) or more children.
 - Group Child Care. Group child care is for seven (7) to twelve (12) children.
 - Family Child Care. Family child care is for six (6) or fewer children.

- Child Care Centers demonstrate a significant statistical difference when they have monthly operational expenses in excess of \$40,000.
- Is there a way of correlating that to how many children a provider like this serves?
 - Ms. Hunt regretted informing the committee that there are statistical limitations to this data.
 - For an existing provider, we could ask if their monthly operating expenses exceed \$40,000.
 - The break seems to come somewhere around 65 children, but this is using old data.
 - The Committee would be using this to compare apples to apples – like with like applications, not to score the applications.
 - The Committee felt that we should align with DHW in this aspect as much as possible.
- This is an important distinction. We want to compare providers based on the actual number of children they are/will be serving, not the capacity of the provider.
 - An in-home provider would be 6 or under.
 - A small provider would be 12 or under
 - A small center is 13-24
 - A Large Center is 25 or more.
 - A center with an operating budget of \$40,000/month will be considered a very large center.
- The scoring of high-quality care was discussed.
- Will we be posting the rubric for applicants to see and consider as they submit their application?
 - Yes! We want applicants to see the standard that is being set for them.
- Add the timeline to the letter of intent so applicants can see the expectations.

Staff shared the Project Readiness Checklist Draft for edits.

Discussion:

- Should the expectations for the grant (including final project expenditures) be listed at the top of this document?
 - Yes! It should be on all the documents we send out. The expectations should be clear.
 - Interim Financing Plan will be requested for these providers since this grant funding is on a reimbursement basis.
 - This is with the caveat that providers with 24 or less spots are eligible to get 50% funding up front.

Teacher Extern Project

Ms. Ames and Ms. Secrist shared news about the Teacher Externship Program. One or two externs will be coming to the WDC over the summer. One of them will be working with the Child Care Grants Team. The STEM Action Center is our partner providing this extern. This is for 200 hours of externship work – this is not a job shadow or a volunteer opportunity. The participants get a stipend and will get credit for it. The goal is that the teacher participants can take this experience back to their classroom and allow it to inform their teaching.

The Extern who will be coming on board with the child care team will be helping update the application budget form and producing helpful resources for applicants and grantees. They will start the week of June 5th.

FAQ Discussion

- AEYC has a statewide project coordinating Wonderschool connectivity and could offer additional assistance to small providers.
 - The more resources we can provide to small providers, the better!

**Motion to adjourn by Ms. Almerico. Seconded by Ms. Allen.
Meeting adjourned at 10:50 AM**