

Collaborative Workforce Support Initiative

Proposal to LCEY

July 15, 2021

As Wisconsin seeks to provide families with the quality care and services they need and to help businesses attract and retain talent, shortages in the child care workforce are a critical focus. Addressing this issue requires a multi-faceted approach; as such, Wisconsin is planning a package of programs and supports that will begin to roll out this fall.

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Wisconsin Department of
Children and Families

Current and Proposed Workforce Strategies

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) seeks collaborative partners to launch two programs with a technical assistance aspect and a toolkit that will support early care and education (ECE) providers and employers across the state, focusing on a set of strategies tied to the [Statewide Birth to 5 Strategic Plan](#):

1. **Pipeline:** Promote ECE careers through higher education and other workforce strategies. DCF is investing in [T.E.A.C.H. scholarships](#) administered by Wisconsin Early Childhood Association (WECA). The Department of Public Instruction has dual credit coursework to encourage high school students to enter an ECE career after graduation and the Department of Workforce Development is currently piloting early care and education apprenticeships.
2. **Shared Services:** Expand statewide networks that allow providers to pool staff, resources, and services while receiving support for business and educational operations. DCF and WECA are expanding this programming through investment in the [Wisconsin Early Education Shared Services Network](#).
3. **Public-Private Partnerships:** Develop innovative, collaborative child care business models. The following proposed package is focused on this strategy.



Public-Private Partnership Funding Program: Focused on supporting existing providers

- Businesses can contract with established child care providers, including the purchasing or contracting of slots for children of employees, apprentices, or students/interns.
- Dollars must go to child care providers to encourage higher staff compensation and help cover expenses.
- \$10 million dollars from the Coronavirus Response and Relief Supplemental Appropriations Act (CRRSA).
- No structural improvements are allowed, matching funds are required.



Workforce Grants: Focused on innovation and growth

- Intended to create something new, such as child care businesses, or enhance existing programs through expansion/new offerings, with partnerships to support higher staff compensation/reduce expenses.
- DCF has approximately \$6.5M budgeted from the Preschool Development Grant, more funds can be added.
- Funding can go to community organizations and/or businesses.
- Cannot use funds for capital expenditures, including building new facilities or remodeling existing facilities to change their essential purpose or use.



Business-Child Care Partnership Toolkit (see pp. 4-5): Assistance for businesses interested in building child care capacity in their communities

- Will provide business community with considerations for partnering around child care, key resources, and spotlight success stories.
- Launching in phases, beginning in fall 2021; anticipated completion date of March 2022. Kick-off of collaboration between WECA, DCF, and the Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation is happening this month.

Technical Assistance, most likely in the form of Child Care Navigators, is a component of both programs. The Navigators will assist businesses in maneuvering the child care system.

Applications for the Public-Private Partnerships Program and Workforce Grants are expected to open in fall 2021 with an anticipated start date of January 1, 2022.

Ideas for How You Can Contribute

Here are some ideas to consider for how the Leadership Council on Early Years (LCEY) can contribute to the success of this package.



Funding

Your agencies may administer or know about funding sources beyond those managed by DCF, including those supporting workforce initiatives. You may also hold expertise around lending and tax incentive opportunities for business and community development. We need your help to determine if these funding sources/incentives can address the programs' critical needs, particularly:

Capital Expenditures: Developing new or improving existing facilities is critical for expanding child care capacity, but DCF funding cannot support purchasing of buildings or construction.

Child Care Navigators: Child Care Navigators will offer intensive support to businesses interested in partnering around child care. We envision them as regional positions, perhaps sitting at the regional workforce boards. DCF is seeking diverse funding to ensure these positions live beyond the DCF program terms.

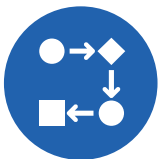
Potential funding sources and mechanisms DCF identified for collaboration include:

- Minority/veteran-owned business loans
- Entrepreneurship funds
- Tax incentives
- Fund 80
- Career and technical education funding
- Higher education tuition/loan forgiveness
- Apprenticeship support funds
- Emergency loans to businesses/providers



Marketing and Outreach

Your agencies connect with stakeholders outside the typical DCF reach, including business leaders, community developers, K-12 school leaders, career, technical, and higher education staff. We need your assistance in ensuring these audiences are aware of these programs and able to apply.



Program Design and Implementation

Opportunities may include:

- Setting grant criteria and refining program design
- Reviewing Applications
- Supporting collaborative development and rollout of the Toolkit
 - Subject Matter Experts
 - Reviewers

Draft Toolkit Table of Contents

A. Why Should Businesses Partner with Child Care? (Including data, graphics, testimonials)

1. An Introduction to Wisconsin's Child Care Landscape
 - a. County Profiles
 - b. Cost of Care
2. The Business Case for Partnering with Child Care: How does quality, accessible child care benefit my business?
 - a. Reduce worker shortages by allowing more parents to work
 - b. Increase employee retention, especially of women
 - c. Keep community members/Prevent "brain drain"
 - d. Attract new businesses and residents to area
 - e. Receive tax Incentives/write-offs
3. What do businesses bring to child care?
 - a. Diversified funding (beyond tuition), financial stability
 - i. Allow for capital improvements
 - ii. Offer matching funds to apply for additional funding sources
 - iii. Opportunity to increase wages and benefits
 - b. Other Resources
 - i. Facilities
 - ii. Business knowledge: Improve child care business practices
 - iii. Marketing/Outreach Capabilities

B. Building Successful Business-Child Care Partnerships

1. My Business is Interested in Building Child Care Capacity in My Community: What Now?
 - a. Identifying needs and partners
 - b. Meeting families' needs, equity & inclusion
 - c. Overview of early care and education programs (feature those that provide out of home care, list eligibility and funding for all programs)
 - i. Private Child Care
 1. Family care in homes
 2. Centers
 - ii. Head Start/Early Head Start
 - iii. 4K
 - iv. Summer/after school programs
2. Our Community Identified a Need for Business-supported Child Care: What are examples of models that we can implement?
 - a. Child Care Start-up with Business and Community Collaboration
 - i. Description
 - ii. Considerations
 - iii. Impact
 - iv. Reflections/Tips from those who have done this
 - b. On-site Child Care
 - i. Description
 - ii. Considerations
 - iii. Impact
 - iv. Reflections/Tips from those who have done this
 - c. Employer Purchase of CC Slots
 - i. Description
 - ii. Considerations
 - iii. Impact
 - iv. Reflections/Tips from those who have done this
 - d. Child Care Subsidies

- i. Description
- ii. Considerations
- iii. Impact
- iv. Reflections/Tips from those who have done this

C. Moving Forward: Rules and Regulations for Opening or Expanding a Child Care Site

1. Pre-licensing Checklist for start-up of a small child care business:
 - a. Steps of process
 - b. Links for guidance
 - c. Contacts for each step
2. Who Can Help Me Navigate this Process?
 - a. Child Care Navigators
 - b. CCR&Rs
3. Child Care Licensing:
 - a. Eligibility
 - b. Licenses
 - c. Requirements
 - d. Operating rules, costs, safety, other considerations
 - e. Collecting fees, private pay, Wisconsin Shares
4. Best business practices for child care
 - a. Bookkeeping
 - b. Legal aspects
 - c. Taxes
 - d. Fair compensation of staff, including benefits

D. High-Quality Child Care: Why It Matters and How We Achieve It

1. Case for Quality: Pull data about importance of quality
2. Qualified Staff
 - a. Recruiting, Hiring, Training Staff
3. Quality Rating (YoungStar)
4. Partnership with K-12 Schools and Higher Education, how this contributes to a thriving, well-educated community
 - a. Professional Development
 - b. Transitions

E. Sustaining Child Care in My Community

Developing a Sustainability Plan

F. Resources

1. Spread the word: PowerPoint slides, handouts for sharing with others
2. Links: WECA business class and shared services networks, CCR&Rs, regional economic development offices, etc.