

Buncombe County Early Childhood Teacher Workforce Development Program

FY2021 Early Childhood Grants

Buncombe Parntership for Children

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Application Form

INSTRUCTIONS

Buncombe County requests proposals for community based projects to enhance outcomes for young children and their families in our community. Grants made through the Early Childhood Education and Development Fund will be focused on access to quality early childhood care and education.

Please refer to the Grant Guidelines published on the Early Childhood Grants website at buncombecounty.org/grants for complete information about the grant program, including: Purpose; Funding; Eligibility; Timeline; Grant writing workshop; Review process; Awards; and more.

Applications are due by 5:00 pm on February 14, 2020.

BASIC INFORMATION

BASIC INFORMATION – Before completing the application, please tell us a little about the request.

Project Name*

Buncombe County Early Childhood Teacher Workforce Development Program

Strategy*

Recognizing that some projects will use more than one strategy, select the strategy that most closely applies to this project:

Implementing workforce development strategies to recruit and retain qualified teachers

Funding Request*

How much funding is this project requesting for FY2021?

\$143,019.00

Grant Guidelines*

Have you read and understand the information presented in the FY2021 Grant Guidelines for Early Childhood Grants (Grant Guidelines)?

If no, please contact County staff to request assistance: Rachael Nygaard, (828) 250-6536 or rachael.nygaard@buncombecounty.org.

Yes

APPLICATION

APPLICATION QUESTIONS – Responses to these questions will be scored by the grant committee. Each question is worth 10% of the final score.

Organization*

Give a brief history, including date of founding, focus, services, and record of success.

Buncombe Partnership for Children (BPFC) was established in 1995, with the mission to strengthen the capacity of educators, families and the community to build a strong foundation for children's learning and development beginning at birth. We invest in and partner with organizations to offer programs that: improve the quality of early care and education; increase access to affordable, quality early care and education; expand early literacy activities; support children's healthy development; and provide family support.

We have strong, established working relationships with ECE providers and stakeholders and are seen as an advocate and connector across the local EC community. In the 2018-19 fiscal year, over 400 children enrolled in the NC Pre-K Program and in addition, 155 educators received a needed salary supplement averaging \$1,650 through our WAGE\$ program (proven to reduce turnover), and 63 4 and 5 star rated facilities received unrestricted Sustaining Facility Quality grants from BPFC to help with the ever-increasing costs of offering high-quality programs.

Given our relationships with ECE and other community-based programs for families, we successfully recruited participants from the Early Head Start program, the YWCA's Mother Love and drop-in child care programs. The program has a strong success rate with 9 of 15 participants completed the program, 8 worked as substitutes, and 4 were offered full-time teaching positions from ECE providers where they substituted.

BPFC has proven to be a nimble organization that values innovation, this is directly reflected in the creation of the WFD program. The early success of the pilot received attention from local business leaders & the Workforce Development Board who encouraged BPFC to apply for a grant from the newly created Workforce Innovation fund to replicate the program in three nearby counties. While we were hesitant to expand while still in pilot phase, the regional expansion has proven to be successful.

Need for the Project*

What is the main issue this project is established to address? What data or qualitative factors/stories are available to show that need?

The Asheville Buncombe Preschool Planning Collaborative's 2017 report clearly identifies the lack of a qualified early educator workforce as a key barrier to expanding early care and education slots. Directors of local ECE programs report ongoing challenges with recruitment and retention of qualified teachers. The Workforce Development Program offers the 114 licensed programs in Buncombe County a solution: a substitute program to meet immediate staffing needs as well as an employable pool of new teachers who have completed the program.

Directors also report lack of sufficient time to provide the NC Division of Child Development and Early Education (DCDEE) required orientation and training for teachers new to DCDEE licensed child care. To address this need, we will offer a new program component to provide the DCDEE required orientation and training for newly hired teachers. These teachers will join Workforce Development Program participants for the initial 24 hours of training and return to their new centers ready to work with a DCDEE required paperwork file completed.

In the first year of the program, 12 ECE programs requested to be substitute placement sites. By accessing the substitute pool, they were able to provide much needed coverage for teachers on maternity leave, vacation, out for illness, and to provide extra support in high-needs classrooms.

In addition to the need for qualified substitutes, ECE providers reported numerous openings for assistant teachers. Participants who completed BPFC's WDP Program, are eligible to be assistant and even lead teachers after completing EDU 119, though they recognize that to be competent and confident lead teachers, continued education and classroom experience are needed. Since the beginning of the program, a total of 18 substitutes, averaging 10 active subs at a time, have worked as substitutes for a total of over 4,300 classroom hours.

Project*

Explain the project and how it will work. Include the overall purpose and any models or evidence-based practices that will be included. What specific activities and milestones are included in the project plan?

The WDP Program addresses the ECE teacher shortage through an entry-level training program and career pathway that includes training, substitute placement, Introduction to Early Childhood Education EDU 119, and coaching leading to full time employment. Our partners assist with participant recruitment and referral. The program is based at the Edington Center and critical supports such as food and child care are provided during training and class time so that participants are able to access the program. In the first phase of the program's pathway, participants receive 24 hours of living-wage paid, pre-service training in which they complete the NC DCDEE requirements to be a classroom teacher including background check, fingerprinting, and TB test.

In phase two, participants may work as substitutes as BPFC temporary employees while they continue to receive training and coaching. BPFC recruits new ECE substitute placement sites, manages the substitute pool, places and supervises subs, and works with site directors.

In phase three, participants enroll as a cohort in the Introduction to ECE course and participate in weekly study groups to further prepare them to enter the teaching workforce. Through the STEP Program, income eligible participants receive free tuition, books and a small monthly stipend. For those who do not qualify for STEP, grant funding is essential. Upon completion of this certificate program, BPFC provides career coaching and other supports for participants to enter full-time jobs in ECE programs.

We will be piloting a new program component offering basic teacher orientation and the development of the required DCDEE teacher documentation file for newly hired teachers who are not part of the workforce development program. A limited number of ECE programs will receive this support at no cost during the pilot year. After the pilot year, we will sustain this service by charging nominal training fees and staff time for DCDEE file compilation.

People Served*

Who will be served by this project? Include demographics for children and families served, workforce, and/or any other relevant groups.

Based on current program enrollment, we expect to continue to recruit participants from communities with higher rates of underemployment and unemployment who are primarily women of color between the ages of 18 and 30; many of whom are mothers. Additionally, students in High School Career and Technical Education programs have joined the program, benefiting from extra training from program staff, joining the substitute pool for summer and evening work, and encouragement to stay in the field as they pursue continued education. With support from Poder Emma, we launched a successful Spanish cohort this fall and plan to offer additional cohorts in Spanish to support communities who would otherwise be excluded from entering the ECE field. Participating centers have been requesting substitutes that speak Spanish and who

look like the students they serve. We know from research that children benefit when they have teachers who reflect their race. We expect that the new WDP cohorts will reflect the racial make-up of the 19-20 cohorts – black 26%, Latinx 51 %, and white 23%.

We anticipate continuing to enroll participants who enter the program while employed part-time, but are interested in changing careers, women who are trying to get back into the workforce after having a child, and those that are new to the world of work. Some of the major barriers to employment identified by our participants include: child care, transportation, and homelessness.

Also served are the twelve participating ECE programs, which are located across the county from Candler to Black Mountain. The programs include Early Head Start, religious-sponsored, private for-profit, non-profit, public school, NC Pre-K, and Developmental Day sites. CAO(Head Start), encompassing 17 additional Buncombe facilities, will be participating as of March 2019. These facilities enroll 1,274 children who benefit from having a consistent substitute and a director who can focus on quality rather than meeting ratios.

Results*

What results do you hope to achieve with this project? Be specific about how much impact the project will have in line with the goals of the fund, and how many people will be served.

For projects requesting funding for slots, also please include:

- Total new slots created
- Total slots maintained
- # of Subsidy slots created
- # of Subsidy slots maintained
- # of teachers/staff positions created
- # of teachers/staff positions maintained

This project supports the goals of the Buncombe County Early Childhood fund by (recruit and retain qualified teachers

With continued implementation, we expect to see several system changes. By increasing the number of entry-level teachers, the workforce shortage will slow. With each cohort of 15 new teachers, we have the potential to provide care for up to 99 children in classrooms (11 new teachers times 9 maximum children). The substitute pool has the potential to impact even more children as substitutes are placed in a wide variety of programs around the county. Program quality will improve with teacher stability and access to substitutes. Directors will be able to release teachers for professional development and hire new teachers from the substitute pool. We also expect to see an increase in the number of teachers of color in the field.

We expect to offer 2 training cohorts enrolling 20 participants resulting in the following:

- 15 participants will receive a certificate of completion training, receive a required for employment (level 1) as evidenced by a complete NC DCDEE employment file and training certificates
- 15 participants will be offered employment as substitute teachers (level 2)
- 10 participants will complete EDU119 with a grade of C or better (level 3)
- 15 participants will receive offers of full-time employment as early childhood teachers
- 2 participants who finish the WDP program will enroll in an additional ECE Community College course.
- 15 early childhood programs will be substitute placement sites (an increase of 3 sites)
- 5 ECE programs will use orientation and DCDEE file creation services for newly hired teachers

Evaluation*

How will you know you have succeeded? Explain the project evaluation process, including specific measures that will be tracked.

This project has multiple funding sources, each requires a specific set of eligibility guidelines, outputs and outcomes. We consistently reevaluate recruitment strategies, participant engagement and performance, and seek feedback from placement site directors in order to continue to improve the program and strengthen our partner relationships. This assessment resulted in positive program changes - moved the EDU 119 class to the A-B Tech campus to better orient students to community college resources, offered more homework support sessions for EDU 119, hired a bilingual (English/Spanish) staff member, and will further streamline substitute request and placement processes.

We will consider the program a success when we:

Have full enrollment in the two cohorts

75% participants complete the program

We have ample substitutes available to meet ECE providers' requests

75% of participants will receive offers of full-time employment

Offer high-quality orientation and DCDEE staff file creation services to BC ECE programs

Equity*

Describe your approach to racial and socio-economic equity, both inside and outside the organization. What are some specific examples of practices that are in place or to be put in place with this project?

When our systems work collaboratively, are shaped using a racial equity lens, and implement strategies that account for structural racism, we ensure the best possible future for our children and community. Leading with racial equity means prioritizing strategies that work to improve outcomes for children of color and give special consideration to the knowledge, experience and innovation of people of color.

BPFC continues its racial equity journey with our Board, staff, and programs. Our Board has included goals related to board member diversity and racial equity in its last two governance plans. Program data disaggregated by race/ethnicity is collected by program staff and reviewed by board committees. Staff have convened an Equity Team to help define what we mean by equity, diversity and inclusion. We have redesigned hiring practices, job descriptions, and our employee handbook using an equity lens. Staff hold monthly book/article discussion sessions focused on equity content. This year, we entered into a contract with Cenzontle for language justice training for board, staff and contractors. We are beginning to incorporate more language justice strategies with outreach materials and interpretation services. We hosted Racial Equity Institute (REI) training in January 2020 and now 100% of BPFC staff and 30% of the Board have been through REI training, with a goal of 100% by end of 2020. Our organization understands we have much to learn and are committed to changing our systems to produce better outcomes for people of color.

Within the Workforce Development program we are constantly focused on reducing barriers to participation for our program participants, connecting to relevant community services, and have framed our teaching and coaching practices to be culturally responsive to meet the unique needs of our participants.

Collaboration*

List any formal and/or supportive partners. Describe their roles in the project. How will they make it stronger?

Project partners are AB Tech and Blue Ridge Community College ECE Departments, Green Opportunities (GO), STEP, Buncombe County Schools CTE programs, Community Action Opportunities, and NC Works. GO will recruit job seekers looking to enter the field, provide case management services for participants dually-

enrolled in the STEP program who are experiencing barriers to employment. The STEP program works with eligible participants to navigate the AB Tech enrollment process and fund tuition. AB Tech's ECE Department will provide support for participants enrolled in AB Tech courses and maintain open communication with project staff with FIRPA agreements in place. Blue Ridge Community College ECE Department will provide the EDU 119 Class in Spanish. Community Action Opportunities donates classroom space for child care during evening and weekend trainings and provides referrals to the program from their LifeWorks and Head Start programs. NC Works supports participants who are WIOA-eligible (Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act) by providing case management and access to tuition funding. Children First/Communities in Schools Project POWER AmeriCorps Service members are an integral part of the program, providing additional substitute time as well as program supports such child care, outreach, and DCDEE file development. The Program Director will serve as a link between partnering agencies, hosting regular meetings, leveraging the strengths of community partners, and tracking progress to outcomes.

Budget*

Download a copy of the budget form [HERE](#). Complete the form, and upload it using the button below.

Explain how grant funds will be used, specifically what type of expenses will be covered by County funds. Describe other sources of revenue, including type of funding, source, restrictions and status.

CO WDP Budget 20-21.xlsx

Funds from this proposal will be used to support the Program Director, cover allocated office expenses, and provide supports to 20 program participants, including two AmeriCorps Service members, child care, food, training stipends for the initial 24-hour pre-service training, and tuition and books for EDU 119 for participants not eligible for leveraged STEP resources. Other funding sources include the NC Works Innovation grant, private funding, partner unkind, and AmeriCorps program income. To date in fiscal year 2019-2020, approximately 50% of our current program participants do not meet WIOA or STEP requirements. Therefore, funding from Buncombe County is very important in ensuring all individuals interested in participating have the opportunity.

Sustainability*

How will the project continue to succeed after the funding of the grant? Explain your plan for making this an ongoing effort.

The program sustainability plan includes increasing the contribution of program income generated from the CCR training fees. While the fee for a 1.5 hour training is a modest \$7.50 (the standard fee charged by western Child Care Resource & Referral provider), given the volume of educators enrolling annually in training, this revenue will allow us to cover food and a portion of child care.

We fully expect to decrease time and costs associated with managing the substitute pool through our work with Opportunities Exchange (described in the EC Systems Coordination proposal) learning from colleagues in other states who are successfully managing sustainable substitute pool services. Additionally, we will increase program efficiencies as we move to more automated systems such as management software for substitute scheduling and billing.

Given the success rate of this program and the replication in three counties overseen by BPFC, we are hopeful that there will be continued workforce innovation funding.

ECE programs that are currently tapping into the substitute pool are able to pay the substitute rate which allow us pay substitutes a certified living wage. We intentionally met with groups of providers at the start of the program to determine a rate they could afford and would allow us to help cover program costs.

OPTIONAL INFORMATION

OPTIONAL INFORMATION – This information will not impact grant scoring but will be helpful to the committee.

Partial Funding

If the project were to be offered a grant for partial funding, what factors would need to be considered?

The program could operate with partial funding, with reductions to participants and ECE programs served.

Multi-Year Funding

If you would like this project to be considered for multi-year funding (up to 3 years), what amounts would you request for years 2 and 3? What milestones would this funding allow you to accomplish? Explain why more years are needed to accomplish goals.

This application is for one year, however we do intend to apply for future funding.

Resource Support

How can Buncombe County support your organization with this project and in strengthening your work (related to equity, scale, or impact)?

There are several ways in which Buncombe County could support this work beyond funding:

We acknowledge there is ongoing work to be done around equity and workforce issues. We have received much support from community partners on these issues, but additional expertise from the County around program design and reducing barriers to employment for participants would be helpful and appreciated.

Consultation for long-term data analysis and data visualization.

Scale-up

What is your vision for how the strategies from this project could contribute to a significant scale-up the overall system to collectively address the child care crisis?

As the program continues to serve more participants, we expect to see a significant decrease in the teacher workforce shortage, thus stabilizing the workforce and then increasing teaching positions. The addition of professional development and coaching provided by the program coordinator will help decrease the turnover rate. Expectations for directors to pay a living wage for entry-level teachers will help increase wages in the field. After five years, we expect to see the results of this program sustained as former participants continue to move up the pathway toward higher education and higher wages.

Other

Is there anything else that you want the committee to know?

WDPsupportBCECE.pdf

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- CO WDP Budget 20-21.xlsx
- WDPsupportBCECE.pdf

Early Childhood Education and Development Fund

Proposed FY2021 Project Budget (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021)

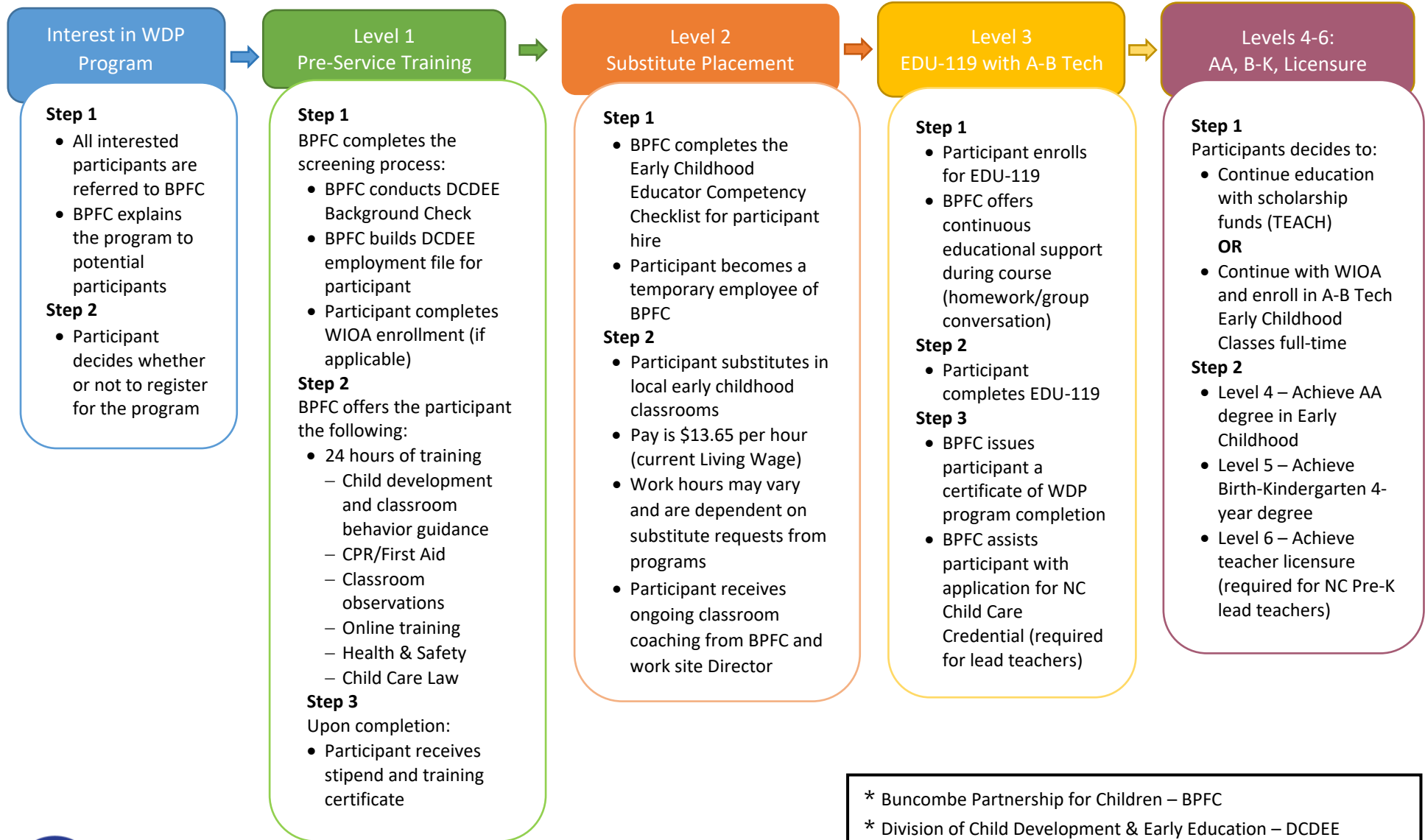
| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Organization Name: | Buncombe Partnership for Children |
| Project Name: | Early Childhood Teacher Workforce Development Program (WDP) |
| Grant Amount Requested: | \$143,019 |

| FY2021 Proposed Project Revenue | Amount | Notes |
|--|----------------------|--|
| Proposed Buncombe County Early Childhood Grant | \$ 143,019.00 | |
| NC Works Governor's Innovation Grant | \$ 107,868.20 | |
| Partner in-kind | \$ 5,850.00 | STEP leveraged funds |
| Private funds | \$ 10,891.00 | Leveraged by BPFC |
| AmeriCorps Program Income | \$ 8,000.00 | Reimbursements for substitute child care |
| List other sources: | | |
| List other sources: | | |
| Total | \$ 275,628.20 | |

| FY2021 Proposed Project Expenses | Proposed Grant | Other Funds | Total | Notes |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--|
| Personnel | \$ 91,757.00 | \$ 72,815.50 | \$ 164,572.50 | |
| Travel/Training | \$ 32,984.00 | \$ 47,404.00 | \$ 80,388.00 | Personnel - 1 FTE Prog Director, .1 CCR Director, 2 Americorps |
| Technology | | | \$ - | Travel/Training - EDU 119, employee training, stipends |
| Curriculum/Assessments | | | \$ - | |
| Licensing/Dues | | | \$ - | |
| Nutrition | | | \$ - | |
| Transportation | | \$ 808.50 | \$ 808.50 | |
| Supplies/Materials | \$ 8,139.00 | \$ 5,210.00 | \$ 13,349.00 | STEP in-kind for EDU 119 books, meeting and conference |
| Building Maintenance/Repair | \$ 2,983.00 | \$ 1,162.00 | \$ 4,145.00 | |
| Rent/Occupancy/Utilities | \$ 4,857.00 | \$ 1,478.00 | \$ 6,335.00 | |
| Furniture | | | \$ - | |
| Playground/Outdoor space | | | \$ - | |
| Printing/Marketing/Website/Postage | \$ 2,108.00 | \$ 1,062.00 | \$ 3,170.00 | Communications and postage |
| Admin Expenses (Legal, Accounting, Insurance, etc.) | | | \$ - | |
| Other (please list in comments section) | \$ 191.00 | \$ 2,669.20 | \$ 2,860.20 | barriers |
| Total | | | \$ 275,628.20 | |

| Overall Organization Budget | Amount | Notes |
|------------------------------------|-----------------|---|
| FY2019 Actual Year-End Revenue | \$ 5,484,282.00 | Grants received in 17-18 were budgeted for spending in 18-19. |
| FY2019 Actual Year-End Expenses | \$ 5,571,472.00 | Includes \$1,064,717 for child care vouchers & 2M+for NC Pre-K slots. |
| FY2020 Adopted Budget Amount | \$ 5,695,892.00 | Current approved budget |
| FY2021 Proposed Budget Amount | \$ 5,710,000.00 | |

ECE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT PATHWAY





ASHEVILLE
CITY SCHOOLS

Learn. Discover. Thrive.

Asheville Primary School • 441 Haywood Road Asheville, North Carolina 28806

Phone: 828-350-2900 • Fax: 828-251-4913

February 10, 2020

To Whom It May Concern

I am writing a letter of support for the Workforce Development Program through Buncombe Partnership for Children. Through this program, we have been able to hire high quality substitutes to fill vacant positions. This has been very important since we are unable to use Asheville City Schools substitutes due to the required background checks for all staff through DCDEE. This past month, we have used Ashley Jones who is appropriate with children, provides developmentally appropriate activities, and gets along well with all staff. She stepped in when needed and needed little direction once in the classroom.

Thank you for providing this program to the child care centers within Buncombe County.

Sincerely,

Susanna Smith
Preschool Director

| | | | |
|--|---|----------------------|--|
| Organization Name: | Buncombe County Partnership for Children | Project Name: | Buncombe County Early Childhood Teacher Workforce Development Program |
| COVID-19 Response: | | | |
| <p>We plan to move forward with the same number of cohorts and participants as projected. There would be budget line items changes. For example, expenses for food and child care would decrease while training is provided via Zoom. However, we will need to offer additional paid training time (beyond the 24 hours) to take the place of the 20 hours of classroom guided observations as we anticipate participants not being able to be in classrooms this summer.</p> | | | |
| Response to Committee Questions: | | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How will the substitute pool participants be evaluated as teachers? <p>In order to receive a certificate of completion for the 24-hours of training, each participant is evaluated based on a competency checklist that covers 10 content areas, including: health and safety, child development, challenging behavior, working well with others, and following directions. When the certificate is conveyed, a participant may be placed as a substitute. During substitute time, the participant is expected to be working on enhancing their teaching skills. The WDP Program Coordinator provides continued observations of substitutes in the classrooms with feedback. We have just created an assessment tool to be used by the substitute placement director and classroom teacher to provide feedback. This tool will be used in FY 21.</p> | | | |