

# Early Learning Program Quality Enhancement Program

---

## *FY2021 Early Childhood Grants*

### ***YWCA of Asheville and Western North Carolina***

---

Beth Maczka  
185 S. French Broad  
Asheville, NC 28801

O: 828-254-7206

### ***Sala Merritt***

---

185 S. French Broad  
Asheville, NC 28801

grants@ywcaofasheville.org  
O: 828-254-7206 ext. 206

# 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](http://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\***

Early Learning Program Quality Enhancement Program

### **Strategy\***

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

Supporting capacity and/or quality for existing programs

### **Funding Request\***

How much funding is this project requesting for FY2021?

\$450,000.00

### **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](mailto: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.

The YWCA Asheville has served our community and upheld our mission of Eliminating Racism and Empowering Women for over 112 years. The YWCA's 5 star Early Learning Program was established in 2001. ELP is committed to providing high quality care with an emphasis on social emotional development. We welcome families of all races, sexual preference, special needs and religious background. Children receive regular nutrition education, eat whole grain and unprocessed fresh foods and all 3-5 year olds receive swim lessons. In addition to providing full day childcare for 148 children, the YWCA provides over 9,700 hours of free short-term childcare to over 227 families who are looking for work, going back to school or seeking resources from social services. Other ways we support the whole person throughout their life include the MotherLove Program for pregnant and parenting teens, the Getting Ahead Program to help women break out of poverty, and our free community open swim.

### 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 YWCA's 5 star Early Learning Program (ELP) seeks \$450,000 to support the gap in childcare fees due to Buncombe County not being reimbursed at a rate by the state that falls in line with the cost of living here in Asheville. This would increase affordability, promote teacher credentials & career track, & help to better respond to the needs of families impacted by poverty. We believe our approach to affordability can be a model for other centers with the long-term goal to increase the voucher rates for Buncombe County.

**Program Capacity:** Funding received from Buncombe County enabled us to expand ELP & serve an additional 14 children overall (ages 6 weeks to 5 years). The value of 14 additional vouchers per month for infants and toddlers was \$158,256 that was not spent on vouchers from the YWCA in the previous year. As we strive towards our goal of making each infant and toddler classroom 50/50 private pay & voucher with DSS placements receiving 1st priority. However, the cost is we will have to continue to supplement our child care rates until the reimbursement rate issue is addressed. If not addressed these fees will eventually need to be charged back to our parents. It is imperative that we prioritize investment in the expansion of voucher slots so that critical state resources stay in Buncombe County & serve our families. We also operate NC Pre-K & Early Head Start at our site at a total loss in revenue of \$68,875.59 annually.

**Affordability:** We continue to work towards creating a sliding scale Buncombe County Scholarship program to address different areas of affordability including scholarships for

(1) voucher co-pays, (2) wrap around care for families who otherwise can't access NC PreK, (3) for families just over the voucher income eligibility level & (4) for private pay families faced with paying the actual cost of care.

## 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 YWCA will clarify the process by which foster care voucher placements can be accessed.

**Affordability:** The YWCA will establish a sliding scale scholarship program to support families accessing childcare from various levels of income. While details will be finalized depending on funding, the following funding needs would be addressed.

1. Increase use of vouchers – Provide partial scholarships for co-payments for families who otherwise cannot afford to accept a voucher. This would prevent voucher families from dropping out when they can't pay a co-pay & will help parents maintain employment by stabilizing their childcare cost.
2. Support NC Pre-K families - Provide scholarships for wrap around care to families who work full time & can't afford the extra payment.
3. Support families up to 250% of the poverty level with a priority to support single & teen parents. We would serve families just over the voucher eligibility that may not otherwise be able to afford childcare.
4. Increase private pay fees to the full cost of care and then scholarship income eligible private pay families for the difference between the current rate & the cost of care. This will have the long-term effect of increasing the voucher subsidy rate to a more equitable rate.

**Milestones:**

- o Summer 2020 - Develop and prepare for implementation of scholarship program
- o Fall 2020 Increase percentage of vouchers accepted as children transition & voucher slots are increased.
- o January 2020- Share scholarship guidelines & lessons learned with childcare partners through the A/B Partnership for Children.

Additionally, we will continue to develop & offer opportunities to provide professional development for our teachers in order to improve up on the quality care that we already are known for offering. It is the mission of the YWCA to Eliminate Racism, Empower Women and to promote peace, justice freedom & dignity for all. Support from Buncombe County will help us further live into this mission.

## People Served\*

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

ELP currently serves 148 children from 6 weeks to 5 years. We are continuing to work towards our goal to make each infant and toddler classroom 50% private pay and 50% voucher with first priority for vouchers going to DSS placements and children in foster care. Please note that this year there was a hold placed on new vouchers being issued for several months. This hold was recently lifted but it caused a problem with us being able to bring in new voucher families. Again, it is imperative that our community prioritize investment in the expansion of voucher slots so that those critical state resources stay in Buncombe County and serve our children, families and workforce.

## 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 is fully aligned with the County Commissioner's goals.

- o The YWCA is an active participant with the WNC Childcare Coalition and also participated in the Asheville Buncombe Pre-K Planning Collaborative.
- o The project seeks to have a 50/50 ratio of voucher and private pay children in our program
- o The project addresses affordability by instituting a Buncombe County scholarship program which will increase access to and retention of vouchers as well as extending increased affordability to families.
- o The project seeks to address not having to charge back fees not paid by the state to our parents
- o ELP staff will be better able to respond to the needs of families impacted by trauma, poverty and addiction through improved teacher coaching and parenting support groups.

## Evaluation\*

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

Key evaluation measures will include:

- o Improved developmental milestones for all children based on the use of the Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies Gold development continuum. Continued utilization of the Creative Curriculum – Teaching Strategies Gold assessment tool will assist us in determining the progress of our children and success in our classrooms. Currently 56% of children are meeting milestones.
- o Parenting support group evaluations. Each parenting class will complete pre and post course evaluations indicating their increased confidence in parenting.
- o Our data will show that we have achieved our 50/50 ratio in our classrooms.

## 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?

The YWCA's mission of Eliminating Racism and Empowering Women permeates the whole organization. It begins with an intentional hiring process which includes a diverse hiring committee and questions that ask applicants about their commitment to the YWCA's mission. Once hired, staff members attend a 90 minutes Racial Justice Training and a one hour Empower Hour which gives a broad overview of our mission and programs.

The YWCA welcomes children with special needs and currently serves children who are deaf and hard of hearing and autistic. Teachers are learning sign language to serve these children's needs. A priority is placed on hiring bi-lingual staff and they are paid a 50 cent per hour premium. Every department is expected to have bi-lingual staff, but cross departmental support is available when needed for interpretation. The YWCA is working to translate forms and communication for families who do not speak English.

## Collaboration\*

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

The YWCA partners with Verner on hosting two Early Head Start Classrooms. The YW also collaborates with several other different agencies:

- o Buncombe County Partnership for Children provides financial assistance training, and quality enhancement assistance to staff.
- o MAHEC provides health screenings and professional staff to assist with ongoing health-related or behavioral issues.
- o The Land-of-Sky Regional Council places our volunteer foster grandparents who are a much needed resource and loving presence.
- o Buncombe County Developmental Services, FIRST and the Sunshine Program help the YW accommodate children with special needs. The County also supplies a behavior specialist and an infant and toddler specialist.

## 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.

ELP - COMPLETED Quality Enhancement FY21\_ECE\_Grant\_Budget\_Form (1).xlsx

County funds will be used the following specific areas:

- o Continued Professional Development for our teachers
- o Continuation of our newly created Parenting Support Groups and training for teachers to learn to facilitate groups.
- o Creation of a Buncombe County Scholarship to help families utilize and keep vouchers and NC Pre-k and for families who can't afford the actual cost of care rates that the YWCA will now charge.
- o The prevention of burdening our parents with the additional fees that cost to care their children due to the low reimbursement rates from the state.

A major outcome of these investments will be for the YW's Pre-K classroom to fully meet the Goal Level Requirements laid out in the 2017 report The Key to Our Futures: Expanding Access to High-Quality Preschool in Asheville and Buncombe County.

## Sustainability\*

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

The YWCA of Asheville's 112 year history, financial leadership, and resiliency predict our future sustainability. The organization has no long-term debt, a strong asset to liability ratio, and a diverse revenue stream that includes contributions, grants, program fees, and earned revenue.

The YW is led by a strong, engaged, all-female Board of Directors. The Board has an active committee structure that oversees sustainability, finance, and advocacy. Participation on the YW board offers many women leadership training unique in this community, and furthers our mission of the empowerment of women.

The current fiscal year reflects a deficit, however, this is a year of transition. We have a new CEO, Libby Kyles, and we have invested in staffing and fundraising, added new classrooms to our Early Learning Program and we will develop a new strategic plan. Our investments, especially in fundraising and early childhood, will show a positive change in our financial position next year.

## 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?

If the YW were to receive partial funding we would prioritize investing in staff, training and parenting groups and reduce the amount available for scholarships to families. It is essential that all centers raise rates to reflect the true cost of care and educate families how much they are already being subsidized to serve their children. Only when we as a community reflect the true cost of care, will we be able to advocate raising the voucher rates under a new alternative market rate system at the state level.

### 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.

Should the opportunity for multi-year funding be made available, The YWCA's request would be as follows:

Year 1: \$250,000

Year 2: \$150,000

Year 3: \$150,000

This is the expected time frame it will take for the state to implement an alternative market rate system & increase the rate paid for vouchers. It is critical to receive three year funding now to expand infant slots, invest in the staff and programming required to comply with the goal level standards for Pre K and to reduce staff turnover which directly impacts the children's developmental outcomes. The state could increase voucher payments to a rate that would require much less local investment if it equalizes reimbursement across similar urban counties. As stated earlier, if the YW was located in Charlotte or Raleigh we would receive \$250,000 more in voucher subsidy for the very same number of children served. The disparity has resulted in a severe shortage of childcare slots, because centers can't afford to serve infants and toddler and thus resulted in a loss of \$1,200,000 of vouchers because centers can't afford to accept the voucher rate.

### Resource Support

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

The YW will work closely with both the WNC Childcare Coalition & Buncombe County Commissioners to monitor & advocate for a fair alternative market rate from the NC DCDEE. It is important to remember that Buncombe County has a very isolated childcare crisis. Other counties have a waiting list for vouchers because they have enough slots. We don't have a waiting list for vouchers because there is no place to use them.

Through these grants, Buncombe County will be able to reverse that dynamic by helping centers raise their rates to the true cost of care and accept more vouchers. Thank you for your leadership in addressing the childcare crisis.

The YWCA will be learning how to implement a new scholarship program and to determine how to be most fair to families needing support. We will work with County staff and WNC Childcare Coalition to share our experience & sample communications with parents regarding a new rate structure.

## 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?

By documenting a holistic scholarship program that can be utilized by other centers, many more centers could increase the number of vouchers that they accept, better utilizing our state funded vouchers and increasing the number of low income children served in Buncombe County. Additionally, a shared wage rubric that can be replicated by other centers to recruit and retain staff will serve the work force overall and increase the number of people who see a career in childcare as a viable career opportunity.

## Other

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

We are very appreciative of the support that we have received in the past from Buncombe County. This support has allowed us to bring all of our teachers up to a living wage. By being able to do so, it has increased morale among our staff and the change is apparent across the organization.

With this said, although we were able to bring everyone up to a living wage, we like other child care centers in the area still experienced a hard time with trying to fill our positions at this new rate of pay. That delay in being able to hire teachers caused us not to be able to fill our classrooms as quickly as we anticipated during this funding year. However, we are happy to report that we currently have only one (1) vacancy and we are nearly full at this point with only 5 vacancies in our class rooms. However, we currently still have a waitlist of over 160 spaces in various age group. Our largest vacancies in our infant rooms.

It is our hope that as this committee comes together to review these applications that they recognize the importance of the work that we do and the need for us to be able to continue to supplement the child care slots without passing these fees onto our families if we can help it.

## File Attachment Summary

---

### ***Applicant File Uploads***

- ELP - COMPLETED Quality Enhancement FY21\_ECE\_Grant\_Budget\_Form (1).xlsx

# Early Childhood Education and Development Fund

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

<b>Organization Name:</b>	<b>YWCA of Asheville and Western North Carolina</b>
<b>Project Name:</b>	<b>Early Learning Program Quality Enhancement</b>
<b>Grant Amount Requested:</b>	<b>450,000.00</b>

<b>FY2021 Proposed Project Revenue</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Proposed Buncombe County Early Childhood Grant	\$ 450,000.00	
Private Pay Tuition	\$ 822,180.74	
Subsidized Tuition	\$ 363,030.70	
List other sources:		
List other sources:		
List other sources:		
List other sources:		
List other sources:		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,635,211.44</b>	

<b>FY2021 Proposed Project Expenses</b>	<b>Proposed Grant</b>	<b>Other Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Personnel	\$ 367,162.00	\$ 826,999.49	\$ 1,194,161.49	Full Staff - Pay is determined by using livable wage + \$ for degrees/Certs etc
Travel/Training	\$ 10,600.00		\$ 10,600.00	Training of teachers - degrees/certifications/new curriculum
Technology	\$ 1,068.00		\$ 1,068.00	Teacher/Parent software
Curriculum/Assessments	\$ 12,136.00		\$ 12,136.00	Curriculum and Parent Support
Licensing/Dues			\$ -	
Nutrition		\$ 92,000.00	\$ 92,000.00	
Transportation			\$ -	
Supplies/Materials	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 35,482.34	\$ 37,482.34	Children's learning events/Supplies for children
Building Maintenance/Repair		\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	
Rent/Occupancy/Utilities		\$ 108,877.92	\$ 108,877.92	
Furniture			\$ -	
Playground/Outdoor space	\$ 8,650.00		\$ 8,650.00	Upgrade and maintain safe playing/learning environment
Printing/Marketing/Website/Postage		\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	
Admin Expenses (Legal, Accounting, Insurance, etc.)		\$ 5,550.00	\$ 5,550.00	
Other (please list in comments section)	\$ 48,384.00	\$ 314,150.15	\$ 362,534.15	Swimming Lessons for all children 3+/Benefits
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$ 1,835,559.90</b>	

<b>Overall Organization Budget</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Notes</b>
FY2019 Actual Year-End Revenue	\$ 3,640,924.00	Fiscal Year 7/18 to 6/19
FY2019 Actual Year-End Expenses	\$ 3,485,782.00	Fiscal Year 7/18 to 6/19
FY2020 Adopted Budget Amount	\$ (275,502.00)	Fiscal Year 7/19 to 6/20 - Net Profit/(Loss)
FY2021 Proposed Budget Amount	\$ -	Planning for Fiscal Year 7/20 to 6/21 begins in March 2020

Good afternoon Burnett ,

Please find our responses for the grant applications below:

YWCA – EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM (ELP) PROJECT		
	QUESTIONS	RESPONSES
1.	Can you explain the discrepancies between the budget and the narrative? They don't seem to line up. Most of the funding listed in the budget is for personnel, but your narrative talks about a scholarship fund for parents/co-pays for vouchers, etc.	Please see the attached UPDATED budget form. Somehow I inadvertently attached a previous version of the budget.
2.	How will the Buncombe County scholarship program work? Other applications mention this also.	The scholarship program Increase private pay fees to the full cost of care and then scholarship income eligible private pay families for the difference between the current rate and the cost of care. This will have the long-term effect of increasing the voucher subsidy rate to a more equitable rate.
3.	What does point in Results mean: "not having to charge back fees not paid by the state to our parents" ?	The YWCA supplements the costs of every child that comes through our door (this includes both voucher and private pay families). Western North Carolina is not reimbursed for child care costs at the rate of other regions in WNC. Therefore, we are only reimbursed a portion of childcare fees from the state. If this does not change soon, we will need to charge back those costs to our families, which is something that we don't want to do to families who are already struggling. <b>Please note that last year \$1.2 million in vouchers were returned from Buncombe County due to the lack of childcare slots. It is imperative that our community prioritize investment in the expansion of voucher slots so that those critical state resources stay in Buncombe County and serve our children, families and workforce.</b>
4.	The fiscal year 2021 funding request is \$450,000; however, the	That was a <u>typo</u> on our part. We are requesting

requested multi-year funding (Yr. 1-\$250K, Yr. 2-\$150K, Yr. 3-\$150K) equals \$550,000. Can you explain the \$100,000 increase in the multi-year scenario?

\$150,000 per year (over 3 years) respectively which would total a \$450,000 request.

# Early Childhood Education and Development Fund

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

<b>Organization Name:</b>	<b>YWCA of Asheville and Western North Carolina</b>
<b>Project Name:</b>	<b>Early Learning Program Quality Enhancement</b>
<b>Grant Amount Requested:</b>	<b>450,000.00</b>

<b>FY2021 Proposed Project Revenue</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Proposed Buncombe County Early Childhood Grant	\$ 450,000.00	
Private Pay Tuition	\$ 822,180.74	
Subsidized Tuition	\$ 363,030.70	
List other sources:		
List other sources:		
List other sources:		
List other sources:		
List other sources:		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 1,635,211.44</b>	

<b>FY2021 Proposed Project Expenses</b>	<b>Proposed Grant</b>	<b>Other Funds</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Personnel	\$ 241,503.00	\$ 952,658.49	\$ 1,194,161.49	Full Staff - Pay is determined by using livable wage + \$ for degrees/Certs etc
Travel/Training	\$ 10,600.00		\$ 10,600.00	Training of teachers - degrees/certifications/new curriculum
Technology	\$ 1,068.00		\$ 1,068.00	Teacher/Parent software
Curriculum/Assessments	\$ 12,136.00		\$ 12,136.00	Curriculum and Parent Support
Licensing/Dues			\$ -	
Nutrition		\$ 92,000.00	\$ 92,000.00	
Transportation			\$ -	
Supplies/Materials	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 35,482.34	\$ 37,482.34	Children's learning events/Supplies for children
Building Maintenance/Repair		\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	
Rent/Occupancy/Utilities		\$ 108,877.92	\$ 108,877.92	
Furniture			\$ -	
Playground/Outdoor space	\$ 8,650.00		\$ 8,650.00	Upgrade and maintain safe playing/learning environment
Printing/Marketing/Website/Postage		\$ 1,000.00	\$ 1,000.00	
Admin Expenses (Legal, Accounting, Insurance, etc.)		\$ 5,550.00	\$ 5,550.00	
Other (please list in comments section)	\$ 174,043.00	\$ 314,150.15	\$ 488,193.15	Swim Lessons for all children 3+/Benefits-\$125,659 Scholarships/Vouchers
<b>Total</b>			<b>\$ 1,961,218.90</b>	

<b>Overall Organization Budget</b>	<b>Amount</b>	<b>Notes</b>
FY2019 Actual Year-End Revenue	\$ 3,640,924.00	Fiscal Year 7/18 to 6/19
FY2019 Actual Year-End Expenses	\$ 3,485,782.00	Fiscal Year 7/18 to 6/19
FY2020 Adopted Budget Amount	\$ (275,502.00)	Fiscal Year 7/19 to 6/20 - Net Profit/(Loss)
FY2021 Proposed Budget Amount	\$ -	Planning for Fiscal Year 7/20 to 6/21 begins in March 2020