

FY2023 Buncombe County Early Childhood Grant Report

Organization Name:	Evolve Early Learning	
Project Name:	Infant/Toddler & Empowerment Coach Pilot Program	
Reporting Quarter: (Check one)	X	Quarter 1 (July 1, 2022 - September 30, 2022)
	X	Quarter 2 (October 1, 2022 - December 31, 2022)
	X	Quarter 3 (January 1, 2023 - March 31, 2023)
	X	Quarter 4 (April 1, 2023 - June 30, 2023)

Narrative summary of grant related activities

Please provide a brief summary (no more than 1500 characters). You may attach supplemental documents if needed.

Quarter 1	<p>We have had a great start to the year. Our teachers are feeling more confident and our Empowerment Coach Program got off to a great start this summer and is evolving to meet the unique needs of our school. Five days a week we have an Empowerment Coach floating and working in all three classrooms. They support with transitions, meals, nap time, kids who need extra tlc, or kids who are needing support to be safe, and of course coaching and empowering kids. Often they work 1-1 or in small groups with our kids with Special Rights and Abilities. This program is supporting staff, students, and allowing admin to focus on other tasks. Coaches and classroom teachers are getting biweekly coaching and training to support them in their growth as a coach. We decided to train several staff instead of just one to be in this role as we had so much interest and talent. This seems to be working well as different staff having eyes on challenges leads to collaborative problem solving. These staff members are also classroom teachers so they bring learnings back from other classes. It has really solidified our community culture. We are in the final steps of getting our first draft of plans together for the infant room to send to Building, Fire, Sanitation, and Licensure. Once we have the approval to add sinks and open up a direct exit to the fire exit (not county funds) we will have a clear timeline on opening that program. We have already attracted an infant teacher. We have a waitlist for this program. We will have four 6 month or older infants for the pilot this year. We will let them loop with their teacher until they are 2. We hope to have plans to expand by then but we need help. We need help to expand our building to meet the need. We have started conversations with the playground landscaping team. We are waiting for vouchers to come through for 3 families. We have decided to go ahead and enroll these children and are offering scholarship until subsidy is processed.</p>
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Quarter 2	<p>This had been an exciting quarter for research and development. We met with our sanitation, building, fire officials, electricians, plumbers, and builders to discuss the playground and classroom. We started training our infant teacher and working on policies and practices for this program. We are meeting weekly with our future infant cohort. This is helpful as we plan our flow and materials. We are learning that infant care is VERY different from preschool. The requirements and the needs of the children make staffing difficult. We have space for 5 babies but 5 slots does not give us enough income for two full-time teachers. Having one teacher will not work with 5 so we are looking at 4 infant slots, one teacher and admin/floater support. We are working to find the perfect staff/child ratio for the age and space. It is tricky. We cannot fit 6-8 babies in the space so that isn't an option. One of our biggest challenges right now is the playground. The cost of grading and resurfacing is 10X what we had hoped to spend. We are working with a few folks trying to problem solve the surfacing. We have some great ideas for the playground and know something will unfold but are sad that our current ground isn't easier to work with now. We are looking into other avenues for funding. We met with a newly-local architecture firm to begin assessing and planning the rear expansion to our existing building. We have a lot to navigate to upgrade that unairconditioned warehouse space into a childcare/early developmental services center. We are excited to work with a professional team who can help us develop a plan, budget, and phased implementation for this project. Certainly this expansion is going to require fund raising from sources outside of the Buncombe ECE Fund. We are actively seeking partners who can help develop our capacity to fund raise and expand as an equitable community hub for exceptional learners in Asheville.</p>
Quarter 3	<p>This quarter was an exciting and challenging quarter as we invested deeply in our staff and center. We carefully planned the infant room remodel and playground upgrades while in operation. This has presented a unique challenge for us. We are nearly finished with the interior changes and expect consultants to license the space in the next 2 weeks. We have 4 students starting right away and will add a 5th student as we finish training with Chrissy from MEHEC and other infant specialists. We are also busy working through our extensive waitlist for this summer and next year. We receive so many requests for infant and toddler care and for kids with special needs and developmental delays. The families we speak with are desperate. This March we went on our first ever Leadership Retreat where staff gathered for a long weekend to dig in to our personal and school wide work to empower children and families. It was an amazing experience that has already transformed our aftercare program, enhanced our in-home opportunities, and provided some great clarity on how to support certain children currently in our care. We also worked on developing our vision for the future and identifying areas where we can improve. We are happy to be working with Mrs. Ebony Phillips to do a research study at Evolve on the Multicultural Learning Experiences for students at our school. It will help us further our mission for equity and inclusion. This relates to our Empowerment Coach program as it is showing promise in supporting behaviors but also in developing a wonderful opportunity for increased parental involvement. This quarter we spent a lot of time meeting with builders and permitting folks. It is increasingly complicated working with the city and all of the entities that oversee our work. We wish that the public at large understood how expensive and difficult it is to do infant care. It is really a unique challenge especially in remodeling situations. We are very proud of what we have accomplished with your help.</p>

Quarter 4	<p>The fourth quarter was very exciting as we opened our infant room, welcomes our first students, and finished the infant playground. We found that staff volunteered to continue to attend coaching over the summer even though the grant has ended. Teacher are excited to have a full-time empowerment coach and coaching next year as well. The overall pilot for the infant room and the Empowerment Coach program is a huge success with parents, teachers, and children all benefiting. We have found the infant room will be a good resource for staff retention. Completing of our work with La Bella provided us with an excellent budget, plan, and visuals for our building owners, funders, and the Expansion Grant application. We found a way to add two new classrooms to the space connected to our center. It is possible we will be able to build out that space in the next 1-2 years with partnerships we have been forming. Leveraging this grant has been a very important part of our success. We are very grateful for the year's support. We are ending our year with 39 students (full), a wonderful diverse staff, and a full roster (and lengthy waitlist) for all ages 6mo-6 years this fall.</p>
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Progress toward annual goals

Measure	Annual Goal	Actual Results (Enter Data)				Progress
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Please only include new data for the specific quarter						
Teachers being trained as Empowerment Coaches	1	4	x	1	x	5
Coaching Sessions for Staff- any staff/co-teachers	20	4	16	16	15	51
Students served through Empowerment Coaches	6	3	3	10	3	19
# of total slots maintained, by student age	36	32	2	1	39	74
- Student age less than 1 yr	4	0	0	0	2	2
- Student age greater than 1 & less than 2		0	0	0	2	2
- Student age greater than 2 & less than 3		1	-1	1	0	1
- Student age greater than 3 & less than 4		18	-7	-5	6	12
- Student age greater than 4 yrs		13	10	5	29	57
# of Child Care Subsidy slots	9	6	1	1	3	11
# of NC Pre-K slots	0	0	0	0	0	0
# of unique students served	36	32	34	35	39	140
Enrollment percentage	100%	89%	94%	96%	100%	100%
# of children on wait list, by student age		73	90	112		275

- Student age less than 1 yr		8	10	17	23	58
- Student age greater than 1 & less than 2		11	15	19	25	70
- Student age greater than 2 & less than 3		17	21	24	30	92
- Student age greater than 3 & less than 4		20	24	28	20	92
- Student age greater than 4 yrs		17	20	24	15	76
Student attendance rate	85%	85%	79%	88%	88%	88%
Student achievement on school readiness assessment (meet or exceed standards)	90%	n/a	80%	90%	90%	90%
Teacher retention	85%	90%	100%	100%	90%	100%
Teacher attendance	85%	95%	90%	90%	90%	95%

Comments:

This quarter we had several illnesses that effected attendance for staff and students.

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Student demographics (if applicable)

	Actual Results (Enter Data)				
	Please only include new data for the specific quarter				
	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	Student Count
Race/Ethnic Categories					
American Indian or Alaska Native	0				0
Asian	0				0
Black or African American	2				2
Hispanic or Latino	3			3	6
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0				0
White	26		1		27
Multi-race	1				1
Total	32	0	1	3	36

Comments:

This year we have a variety of identities, races, and family make-ups that make our school very unique. We have many bilingual children. We are continuing efforts to recruit more children from diverse backgrounds that live in our neighborhood. Transportation from Deaverview is a limit. We are curious if there are plans for a preschool to be in Deaverview's new community center. We hope so, if not we need to work on getting students brought in from that area. No bus or safe walking path goes between us.

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Use of funds to date and any budget considerations

Spending Category	Starting	Total Spending (Enter Data)				Amount
		Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	Quarter 4	
Personnel	\$ 20,269	\$ 2,944	\$ 7,963	\$ 8,050	\$ 1,313	\$ -
Travel/Training	\$ 2,300		\$ 800	\$ 1,500	\$ -	\$ -
Technology						\$ -
Curriculum/Assessments						\$ -
Licensing/Dues	\$ 189			\$ 189		\$ -
Nutrition						\$ -
Transportation						\$ -
Supplies/Materials	\$ 866		\$ 366	\$ 500		\$ -
Building Maintenance/Repair	\$ 8,112	\$ 1,500			\$ 6,612	\$ -
Rent/Occupancy/Utilities					\$ -	\$ -
Furniture	\$ 6,200		\$ 2,326	\$ 3,874	\$ -	\$ -
Playground/Outdoor space	\$ 21,160		\$ 186	\$ 2,775	\$ 18,199	\$ -
Printing/Marketing/Website/Postage						\$ -
Admin Expenses (Legal, Accounting, Insurance,	\$ 9,859	\$ 5,959	\$ 1,950	\$ 1,950	\$ -	\$ -
Other (please list)						\$ -
Total	\$ 68,955	\$ 10,403	\$ 13,591	\$ 18,838	\$ 26,124	\$ -

Comments: