

**Buncombe County Early Childhood Committee
Funding Subgroup**

ECE subgroup meeting 6/30/2023

- During its June meeting, the Early Childhood Committee decided to form a subgroup for the purpose of making recommendations on allocating remaining funds and multi-year funds.
- Subgroup Attendees: Al Whitesides, Leslie Anderson, Mark Taft

Additional funding recommendations:

There is a total of \$162,419 in remaining funds currently available to allocate:

- Hominy Baptist declined their FY24 grant of \$81,497. Based on the committee's recommendation at the June meeting, \$64,068 of the \$81,497 was used to bring the partial awards from 95% up to 100%. That resulted in \$17,429 remaining unallocated of FY24 funding. There will be at least \$145,000 carried forward from FY23. This means the balance currently available to allocate is \$162,429 plus any additional unspent funding from FY2023 projects.

The sub-group discussed options for the allocating that funding.

Recommendations:

1. The group recommends funding Evolve Early Learning at \$75,000 for FY24 based on the information Evolve submitted outlining how they would use the funds. (See attached)
Vote of full ECE committee required
2. The group recommends no action on remaining funds; leaving the remaining funding unallocated and have it available for future needs, such as adding to the FY2025 grants.

Multi-year funding:

The group discussed the importance of developing a philosophy for multi-year funding. Some potential parameters that could be considered are:

- Limiting the number of years (e.g. to no more than 3 years)
- Set a limit for number of multi-year awards provided each year
- Require successive years be less than previous year indicating an attempt at sustainability
- Limit the amount of multi-year awards to a certain percent of the fund to ensure funds for other applicants

Since the workforce development strategy is being considered and developed by the committee and may include recommendations with a funding implication... and because the Buncombe Pre-K pilot is only funded with federal funding until June 30, 2024; the sub-group feels there are too many unknowns to make multi-year commitments at this time. They would like to revisit this topic when some of these other factors are clearer.

Recommendations:

1. The group recommends no action; annual grants only for FY2024 with no new multi-year commitments at this time.

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Thank you to the committee for giving us the opportunity to share how we would best utilize the remaining ~\$75,000.

A lot has changed since we initially requested funding in February for Evolve with the introduction of the Expansion and Access Fund. We believe there is a high likelihood that we will receive the expansion grant (\$125,000) and a matching investment from Hill-reality to be a catalyst for our capital expansion into the rear of the building in 2024. This next school year, we are preparing to take our mission to the next level with your support. We have critical needs that will allow us to continue to serve those who are at the biggest risk of undesirable outcomes in life. We are concerned about the potential end of stabilization grants and continued rising prices. Our infant room and playground remodel were much more expensive than budgeted which has hurt our operating budget. However, these additions have added an important community resource and teacher retention opportunity for our teacher-parents. Infant care is not viable as a standalone program. In order for us to maintain the pilot's goals of a continuum of care from 6 mo-6 years we have to expand. Growth is the path to sustainability* for Evolve. Our unique program will someday serve as a model for how public/private/nonprofit partnerships can create W.E.L.L.* environments where teachers, students, and families can thrive. The Empowerment Coach position is key to serving our unique population well. This position will become stabilized with the addition of more slots.

Our critical needs this year are:

1. Continue the Empowerment Coach (Behavior, ACEs* & Learning Support) Program (44,300)
 - a. Trained E Coach for staff and students daily, FT (\$40,000/yr)
 - b. Monthly Group Coaching for All Staff (\$1200)
 - c. Monthly Coaching for Teacher Teams (2) (\$2400)
 - d. Leadership Retreat - (\$700)
2. Finish the Toddler Playground (\$3,000)
3. Administrative Expenses including Accounting, Insurance (\$13,000)
4. Benefit -Direct Primary Health Care Insurance for all full-time staff (\$14,000)

In order to avoid the looming ledge with the Stabilization Grant and other potential funding limitations, we have already announced a private pay tuition increase, added 2 more students to our pre-k classrooms for the fall and cut back from other benefits like bonuses.

*ACEs- [Adverse Childhood Experiences](#) - 1 in 6 people experience 4 or more ACEs. ACEs are linked to poor life outcomes. Likely more children are at risk since COVID, lockdowns, and the ending social support funding.

*W.E.L.L. - Well, Empowered, Leaders, living their Legacies (This is evidence-based & best practice informed)

*Sustainability to us is being able to serve 65 6 month to 6 year olds in 6 inclusive classrooms at our standard of quality, equity, and inclusion

Please let us know if you have more questions, need clarity, or would like to visit. We can also update the committee as we hear back about other grants.