

Request for Application

Continuation Grant for Community Early
Childhood Councils



KENTUCKY
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE OF
EARLY CHILDHOOD
READY TO GROW, READY TO LEARN & READY TO SUCCEED

Applications must be submitted by April 30, 2021.
Written inquiries may be sent to ECCouncil@ky.gov.

Table of Contents

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| CALL FOR APPLICATIONS | 3 |
| APPLICATION COMPONENTS | 5 |
| APPLICATION SUBMISSION AND TIMELINE | 10 |
| ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS | 10 |
| MANDATORY COUNCIL REQUIREMENTS..... | 12 |
| COMMITMENT TO REPORTING..... | 13 |
| NOTICE OF AWARD | 13 |
| USE OF FUNDS | 14 |
| ALLOWABLE USE OF FUNDS: | 14 |
| FUNDS MAY NOT BE USED FOR:..... | 15 |

Call for Applications

As authorized under KRS 200.707(1), the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) is issuing a Request for Applications (RFA) from Community Early Childhood Councils (Councils).

About the Community Early Childhood Councils

Community Early Childhood Councils are an integral part of Kentucky's early childhood system. The councils have the crucial role of mobilizing local community members and encouraging partnerships of licensed childcare centers, certified family childcare homes and public preschool providers to offer high-quality learning environments for children who reside in their service areas. To ensure the best early care and education for our youngest citizens, we must mobilize communities at the local level to meet the locally identified needs of children and families. This strategy is the foundation for the creation of the Councils.

History and Funding

During the 2000 legislative session, House Bill 706 was unanimously passed in both chambers of the Kentucky Legislature. At that time, it was the most comprehensive package of early childhood legislation in the nation addressing the needs of the whole child, including: health care, family assistance, high quality education, and community involvement. In addition, it committed 25% of the Kentucky Tobacco Settlement Fund annually to support early childhood programs.

To ensure the best early care and education for our youngest citizens and to reach the long-term goals set forth by the KIDS NOW Initiative, local communities must take action. One of the strategies identified by the Early Childhood Task Force (1999) to help support this outcome was the creation of state and local partnerships to support services designed to meet the locally identified needs of children and families. This strategy became the foundation for the creation of the Community Early Childhood Councils (Councils).

In 2009, The Governor's Task Force on Early Childhood Development and Education (ECDE) was established. The task force made eight recommendations, including establishing the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) and the Kentucky Governor's Office of Early Childhood (GOEC), that would promote an early childhood framework and partner with Kentucky's state agencies, community partners and families to improve early learning experiences and opportunities, helping to ensure school readiness for our children, schools, and communities.

Among the eight recommendations, the Early Childhood Advisory Council is required to strengthen and support Community Early Childhood Councils as early childhood leaders in their communities. Councils address the unique needs and strengths of the local community related to early childhood. Councils were designed to encourage local communities to establish and strengthen relationships; promote collaboration and coordination between early care and education providers, schools and the community as a whole; and involve individuals from a cross-section of the community who can foster efforts to improve outcomes for young children and their families. Councils use new and existing relationships within communities to build and sustain supports for early childhood development and learning.

In December 2013, Kentucky received the third round of Race to The Top-Early Learning Challenge funds through the US Department of Education and the US Department of Health and Human Services. These funds were utilized to increase the quality of early learning programs for children at risk, support families through strength-based initiatives, provide meaningful data to communities, and align professional development systems.

In December 2018, Kentucky received a Preschool Development Grant from the US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Child Care. These funds focused on building upon Race to the Top-Early Learning Challenge efforts and strengthening Kentucky's early childhood mixed delivery system's alignment, coordination, and efficiency. Strategies that were implemented with these funds included capacity-building across the system; data system improvements; improved engagement of families, caregivers, and communities; and alignment and leveraging of existing resources to meet the needs of vulnerable children. Councils were key partners in realizing planned outcomes.

The goal of this Request for Application:

Make measurable progress towards addressing the early childhood development and school readiness goals for the designated service area. (KRS 200.707)

All of the early childhood system-building efforts in Kentucky are most effective when all components work together. The Kentucky Governor's Office of Early Childhood, working in partnership with the Kentucky Early Childhood Advisory Council, has established a strong statewide focus on school readiness, ensuring each child enters school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child's success and ability to be **Ready to Grow, Ready to Learn, and Ready to Succeed**.

Kentucky has Regional Collaborative Community Early Childhood Councils across the Commonwealth that provide local level collaboration and coordination for birth-5 resources to support school readiness. Councils are an integral part of Kentucky's early care and education system and have the crucial role of mobilizing local community members to build innovative, collaborative partnerships to help Kentucky meet its school readiness goal.

Supplemental Funding Opportunity

An additional funding opportunity will be offered in FY2022. This opportunity is provided to allow Councils additional funds to accelerate strategies and encourage innovation. Throughout the Request for Application there are areas designated as additional consideration and marked with an asterisk (*). All Councils are encouraged to complete these components, however they are not mandatory. Councils are eligible to receive additional funding based on the total points awarded in the additional consideration section. These components will be scored separately from the primary Request for Application.

To be considered for supplemental funding, Councils must elect for their application to be considered. Councils must also agree to provide information in the form of data and narratives as it specifically relates to the strategies being effected by the supplemental funding. Supplemental funding will be

awarded to a limited number of Councils based on a scoring system. Funding is contingent upon the availability of Tobacco Settlement monies.

Anticipated Outcomes

Ensuring equity starts with high quality early childhood education. Councils must use data from the Early Childhood Profile to make informed decisions to help prioritize projects that have the potential to achieve the greatest benefits for children 0-5 in your community.

The anticipated outcomes for the Community Early Childhood Council proposal may include (10 KAR 6:010):

1. Encouraging partnerships of licensed child care centers, certified family child care homes, or public preschool providers that provide high quality learning environments for children who reside in a service area covered by the community early childhood council;
2. Increasing the number of child care providers that participate in Kentucky's quality rating and improvement system through program and parent education;
3. Providing information, education, and support to families through partnerships with schools and community organizations; and
4. Increasing the number of children, particularly those at risk, participating in high quality early child care and education programs.

Application Components

Cover Page

The Cover Page (Appendix C) must be typed and notarized and shall include the name and contact information of both the Community Council Chair/Co-Chair(s) and the Community Council Fiscal Agent, the name of the Community Council, the date submitted, total number of application pages, total number of members, and, if the Community Council is multi-county, the counties represented by the application. Community Councils shall complete a Cover Page using the Cover Page template located in the RFA Appendices document on the GOEC webpage using the following link:

<https://kyecac.ky.gov/community/Pages/Community-Early-Childhood-Councils.aspx>

Project Summary

The Project Summary shall provide a brief description (100 words or less) of how the Community Council intends to address the needs of the area served by the council and the planned outcomes. It shall include a statement of how the Community Council's proposed activities comprise a multi-year approach towards achieving the stated School Readiness Goals. Please note, these summaries will be used by the Governor's Office of Early Childhood to describe the work of individual councils, so please be as descriptive as possible.

Service Area Assessment

Develop a needs assessment for your service area using data from the Early Childhood Profile for your Community Collaborative. Additional early childhood data sources are encouraged and accepted. The purpose of this assessment is to take inventory of the current resources and organized care in your area, and to research the number of children participating in each. In narrative form include the following:

1. Existing birth-five resources in each county of your collaborative, including details on any existing partnerships between counties
 - a. List the resources and programs available (literacy programs, family-engagement programs, home-visitation, etc)
 - b. Indicate if your Council is currently partnering with the available resources or programs and the nature of the partnership.
 - i. *Additional consideration may be given for identifying opportunities and strategies for growth of existing or new partnerships, if applicable.
2. Organized care (state-funded preschool, childcare, Headstart/Early Head Start) - Include the following information, if available:
 - a. How many organized care providers are currently available in your county (break down by county)?
 - b. How many slots are available?
 - c. What is the KY All STARS rating of the center(s)?
 - d. What percentage of the county's children are in a 3,4, or 5 STAR quality setting?
 - e. What percentage of children in each county are not enrolled in early care and education?
 - f. How is the Council actively working with organized-care providers?
 - i. *Additional consideration may be given for responses that include: How are they included in the application process? List specific areas of need and barriers of the organized-care providers. Identify opportunities for growth of existing or new partnerships.
3. Gaps and opportunities
 - a. Based on the information provided in part 1 and 2, what are the gaps in your collaborative?
 - b. What opportunities can your Council identify to address the gaps listed above?
 - i. *Additional consideration may be given for responses that include what steps will your Council implement to address those gaps as a collaborative team (of multiple counties and/or communities, members, stakeholders),?

Action Plan Narrative

Provide an Action Plan Narrative that includes:

1. How does your Council plan to address the needs of your area?
 - a. Reference data from the Service Area Assessment or other sources to demonstrate the need. For assistance with the information in the Early Childhood profile, see the Technical Notes section of the Profile.
 - b. Describe previous strategies that have been implemented to address needs and how your Council plans to continue implementing these strategies. If previous strategies

have been unsuccessful, please describe how the strategies will be changed to become more effective.

2. Identify strategies and activities that will be implemented. Strategies and activities will address needs in each of the age categories/transition points listed below. Consider data-driven strategies, such as the examples provided in the *Bright Spots* document found in Appendix M. A minimum of one support must be provided in each age category. Include the following information for each strategy or activity:
 - a. Describe how the strategy or activity will address the needs in your area
 - i. Indicate if a short-term and/or long term need is addressed by each activity
 - b. Identify which outcome this activity will be directly related to (please indicate which outcome you are referencing)
 - i. Indicate the short-term and anticipated long-term impact
 - c. Describe quantitative (countable/measurable) and qualitative (descriptive) data that will be collected based on this activity.
 - i. Describe how the data collected demonstrates a successful outcome (indicate the outcome that you are referencing)
 - ii. Describe how data will be collected (surveys, observation)
 - d. Reference the [Transition to Kindergarten Plan](#) for additional information on the critical early childhood transition points.
 - i. *Additional consideration may be given for action plans that target the critical transition points and demonstrate a sustainable, long-term impact.

For reference, age categories and transition points are:

1. **Prenatal to Home** to assist young families in:
 - i. Understanding what high quality child care looks like and finding high quality child care
 - ii. Identifying resources to support children’s development
 - iii. Promoting enrollment in home visitation or other evidence-based programs
2. **Home to Early Care and Education** supports to promote health, growth and development by:
 - iv. Providing information on developmental screenings to identify developmental disabilities and special health care needs
 - v. Promoting enrollment in high-quality inclusive programs
 - vi. Supporting professional development for child care providers to increase KY Stars ratings
 - vii. Promoting participation in the Youth Apprenticeship program to increase the availability of skilled professionals in the early childhood workforce
3. **Prekindergarten to Kindergarten** supports for those not in a high-quality early childhood environment by:
 - viii. Promoting enrollment in high quality prekindergarten programs
 - ix. Promoting collaboration and partnership among childcare, prekindergarten and kindergarten
 - x. Increasing family engagement

- xi. Strengthening understanding of and supports for kindergarten readiness
- xii. Supporting seamless transitions between early childhood programs and kindergarten

Strategic Goal and Long-Term Planning Worksheets

The applicant shall detail a plan with all required information using the Strategic Goal and Long-Term Planning Worksheet found in Appendix H to ensure proposed strategies and activities are successful in meeting the required outcomes. Note: there is 1 worksheet for SMART goals and 1 worksheet for long-term planning; both worksheets must be completed.

Budget Proposal - Narrative and Worksheet

Applicants shall complete the Budget Narrative describing how the Council plans to use grant funds. Councils shall also complete a Budget using the Budget Worksheet Template (Appendix G) and the Maximum Grant Award Amount by County (Appendix J). Applicants shall also identify any local or private funding commitments and/or in-kind match of 10% of total award. Additional consideration may be given for proposals that include a plan for sustainable funding of strategies and activities. Templates can be found at the Governor's Office of Early Childhood webpage:

<https://kyecac.ky.gov/community/Pages/Community-Early-Childhood-Councils.aspx>

Community Collaborative Plan

1. Identify the strengths and opportunities of your collaborative based on your accomplishments in the previous fiscal year. You do not need to respond to this question if you did not receive funding in FY2021.
2. Describe your Collaborative Council strategy by responding to the following questions.
 - a. How will each community be represented in the collaborative Council?
 - b. What is the most equitable way to ensure all communities are considered when making decisions for the Collaborative Council?
 - c. How will the Collaborative Council continue to communicate with each community within the service area?

Conflict of Interest

Include a signed Conflict of Interest Form (Appendix D) as described in KRS 200.707(5)(c) as outlined under Mandatory Council Requirements of this document. Each Council member must complete a Conflict of Interest Form, and all forms must be submitted to the Governor's Office of Early Childhood.

NOTE: A Fiscal Agent serving as a Council member, must complete Section 2 of the Conflict of Interest Form disclosing his/her role as Fiscal Agent.

Letter of Commitment

Applicants shall also provide Letters of Commitment from the required community interest groups: child care, all Head Start(s) and/or Early Head Start(s) grantees in the service area, and all local school

district(s) within the service area. These letters shall demonstrate each group's commitment to collaboration to increase school readiness in their service area as well as each group's support of the Council. The Superintendent or School Board Chair must sign Letters of Commitment from school districts.

*Additional consideration may be given for letters of commitment from: Workforce Innovation Boards, business leaders, healthcare partners, philanthropic partners, government, and libraries.

Member List

The Community Early Childhood Council Chair/Co-Chair(s) must submit a Members List (Appendix I) with the submission of the application.

The Member List shall be provided to the Governor's Office of Early Childhood using the template available in the RFA Appendices document on the Governor's Office of Early Childhood webpage using the following link: <https://kyecac.ky.gov/community/Pages/Community-Early-Childhood-Councils.aspx>

The Members List shall include a list of all partnering agencies serving on the Council. At least one representative from each of the following entities must be included on the Council:

- Local agency or organization from profit, nonprofit or family child care;
- Head Start or Early Head Start;
- Each school district in the Council's designated service area.

Please include the following information for each member:

- Member's name;
- Member's role on Council;
- Place of employment and agency information;
- Member contact information, including email address;
- The county or counties each member represents;

As a reminder, the following required Council representatives shall be included on the Final Members List:

- Local agency or organization from profit, nonprofit or family child care;
- Head Start or Early Head Start;
- Each local school district in the Council's service area.

The Final Members List shall be provided to the Governor's Office of Early Childhood using the template available in the RFA Appendices document on the Governor's Office of Early Childhood webpage using the following link: <https://kyecac.ky.gov/community/Pages/Community-Early-Childhood-Councils.aspx>

Supplemental Funding: Intent to be considered for supplemental funding

Include a brief statement indicating your intent to be considered for supplemental funding. You must indicate if you would like your application considered for supplemental funding. Applications that do not explicitly state the Council's intent to be considered for this funding will not be considered.

RFA Evaluation Process

Evaluations of RFAs will be completed by independent and trained reviewers using the evaluation criteria identified in Appendix F.

Application Submission and Timeline

Applications must be submitted via hard copy and electronic copy. The following must be submitted to the Governor's Office of Early Childhood:

1. The Council shall electronically submit the application along with all supporting documents via email to the Governor's Office of Early Childhood at ECCouncil@ky.gov **no later than April 30, 2021**. The cover page must be signed by the Council Chair/Co-chair and the Fiscal Agent. Electronic signatures or a scanned copy of the cover page with original signatures are both acceptable. A designee's signature will not be accepted without prior approval from the Executive Director of the Kentucky Governor's Office of Early Childhood.
2. Please keep each email with application documents under 8MB to assist the Governor's Office of Early Childhood with receiving documents. All documents included in the application must be PDF format; no images are allowed. Multiple emails can be sent with application documents, if needed. With each email, please identify the name of your Council in the email's Subject line (e.g., Tri-County Council).

Applications will not be opened prior to the deadline of **April 30, 2021**.

Below is a timeline for submission of documents.

| Activity | Date |
|---|-----------|
| RFA Released | 3/22/2021 |
| Complete Application Due to Governor's Office of Early Childhood | 4/30/2021 |
| Preliminary Notice of Award | 5/10/2021 |
| Signed Contracts, Affidavits and a copy of the letter from the IRS indicating 501(c)3 if applicable due to the Governor's Office of Early Childhood via email and DocuSign. | 6/1/2021 |
| Expected Contract Start Date | 7/1/2021 |

Eligible Applicants

Applicants are required to apply regionally, as outlined in the General Requirements section of this document and in Appendices A. There should be no counties included in more than one application, and no counties may apply outside of the Councils identified in Appendix A. Appendix B is a checklist of required components of a RFA response. The Governor's Office of Early Childhood reserves the right to cancel the selection process at any time for any reason. Funding is contingent upon the availability of Tobacco Settlement monies.

Fiscal Agent Requirements

All applicants must have a designated fiscal agent:

- Councils must identify a governmental, quasi-governmental, or non-profit agency to serve as the fiscal agent. This fiscal agent will serve as the controller of awarded funds and be responsible for all budget and reporting requirements. The fiscal agent is the legal applicant and responsible for fiscal and programmatic oversight.
- A Fiscal Agent serving as a Council member, must complete Section 2 of the Conflict of Interest Form (see Appendix D) disclosing his/her role as Fiscal Agent.
- The maximum amount a fiscal agent or Council project coordinator may use for administrative costs is five percent (5%) of the total amount of the grant award. See KRS 200.707(5)(b).

Council Chair Responsibilities

The Council Chair/Co-Chair(s) is responsible for:

- The submission of the grant application to include required Letters of Commitment, Member Lists and Conflict of Interest documents;
- Programmatic oversight of the awarded grant funding;
- Convening of Council meetings, ensuring all council members have the opportunity to participate in each Council meeting (e.g., providing access via conference call or webinar if needed);
- Compliance with required reporting timelines, which includes the quarterly report;
- Submission of monthly meeting minutes to the Governor's Office of Early Childhood (using approved template);
- Completing and submitting contact information for publication on the Governor's Office of Early Childhood's website;

- Notification to the Governor's Office of Early Childhood office prior to a change in the Council's Chair/Co-Chair(s), Fiscal Agent or members and/or their contact information.

Mandatory Council Requirements

Applicants will be required to complete an application including, but not limited to, timelines, goals, performance indicators, and resources needed to complete the project.

Applicants are required to submit a quarterly report, utilizing the templates provided by the Kentucky Governor's Office of Early Childhood. According to KRS 200.707, Council's must submit an annual report that details activities and services. The quarterly report is required by this request for application. The final report shall serve as the annual report, in accordance with KRS 200.707.

Minutes from meetings (utilizing template provided by Kentucky Governor's Office of Early Childhood) shall be submitted to the Governor's Office of Early Childhood as required in 10 KAR 6:010 Section 5(c).

If an application is received for a geographic area that is not a designated Council (see Appendix A), the application will be disqualified.

For reference, per KRS 200.707(1), "A council shall be composed of no fewer than seven (7) and no more than twenty-seven (27) members. Each council shall be composed of at least one (1) member representing local agencies or organizations from profit, nonprofit or family child care, Head Start or Early Head Start and each school district in its designated service area. Other members may be appointed who represent local agencies and organizations, including, but not limited to, the organizations or agencies listed:

- (a) Early childhood advocate;
- (b) Faith community;
- (c) Family resource center;
- (d) Military establishment;
- (e) Child-care resource and referral agency or child-care subsidy agent;
- (f) Child-care consumer or parent;
- (g) County cooperative extension service;
- (h) Department for public health;
- (i) University, college, or technical school;
- (j) United Way;
- (k) Kentucky Early Intervention System;
- (l) Agency administering services to children with disabilities;

- (m) Home visitation agency;
- (n) Family literacy agency;
- (o) Civic organization;
- (p) Public library;
- (q) Regional training center;
- (r) Community action agency;
- (s) Government;
- (t) Business community;
- (u) Home schooling association;
- (v) Health care professional;
- (w) Foster care parent; or
- (x) Adoptive parent.”

In accordance with KRS 200.707(2), “Members shall serve on a community early childhood council on a voluntary basis and receive no compensation or expense reimbursement for their service.”

Councils may spend up to 5% of awarded funds to contract with a project coordinator to fulfill the deliverables outlined in this application. In accordance with KRS 200.707, the project coordinator may not serve as a member of the Council or be responsible for fiscal or programmatic oversight of these funds. All employees or independent contractors must adhere to state and federal law. For more information, refer to KRS 337.295.

Participation in technical assistance as provided by the Kentucky Governor’s Office of Early Childhood. Technical assistance may be mandatory or optional based on the final score of the Councils application.

Participation in webinars (live or recorded) as provided by the Kentucky Governor’s Office of Early Childhood. Participation by a minimum of one Council representative is highly recommended, but optional.

Commitment to Reporting

Applicants are required to attest to their responsibility to provide quarterly reports (Appendix E).

Notice of Award

Councils will receive preliminary notice of award on or around May 10, 2021. The following steps **must occur, in this order, before** the Kentucky Finance and Administration Cabinet will release grant awards:

1. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA/contract) will be emailed to the fiscal agent and Chair that details the contractual agreement between the Commonwealth of Kentucky and the Council Fiscal Agent via Docusign.
2. The Chair and Fiscal Agent of the Council must sign the MOA (contract) via Docusign.
3. The Affidavit and **a copy of the letter from the IRS indicating 501(c)3, if applicable**, (see Appendix K for the Affidavit) should be emailed to ECCouncil@ky.gov and the original signed affidavit sent to the Kentucky Governor's Office of Early Childhood, 500 Mero Street, Fifth Floor, Frankfort, KY 40601 by April 30, 2021. Please note that the affidavit requires a notary seal.
4. Once approved and signed by the Kentucky Finance and Administration Cabinet, Finance will provide a fully executed contract with effective date.
5. The Fully Executed Contract to Councils will be sent through Docusign and/or email to the Council Chair/Co-chair and Fiscal Agent.
6. The Council must submit an invoice to the Governor's Office of Early Childhood (see Appendix L) and approved by the Kentucky Finance and Administration Cabinet. **Email the invoice to ECCouncil@ky.gov**. Funds for the total award amount will be transferred electronically to the Council Fiscal Agent. Quarterly invoices are not required; please submit one invoice for the full award amount as indicated on the contract.
7. Expenditures made prior to the "effective date" of the MOA are not allowable charges.
8. Any unexpended funds must be returned to the Governor's Office of Early Childhood within 60 calendar days of the contract end date of June 30, 2022. Checks shall be made payable to, Kentucky State Treasurer and sent to the Kentucky Governor's Office of Early Childhood, 500 Mero Street, Fifth Floor, Frankfort, KY 40601.

Use of Funds

Funds shall be used to supplement, not supplant other funds. Councils can, and are required to, seek out additional funding sources and in-kind donations within their community to maximize the impact of the activities the council chooses to help prepare children for kindergarten.

The following is a list of allowable uses of funds as well as a list of restricted uses of funds. Councils shall consider benchmarks and performance indicators that can be used to document activity outcomes when deciding on local activities.

Allowable use of funds:

- Professional Development;
 - To increase the number of children, particularly those at risk, participating in high quality child care programs;
 - To increase the number of high-quality inclusive child care programs; and
 - To increase the number of child care providers that participate in Kentucky's Tiered Quality Rating and Improvement System (TQRIS) through program and parent education.
- Social and emotional awareness;
- Striving Readers Literacy Grant;
- Building community partnerships to ensure sustainability of the Council;
- Raising awareness of school readiness throughout the community;

- Promoting access to evidence-based family engagement and support opportunities;
- Increasing access to developmental screening and follow-up resources;
- Supporting seamless transitions between early childhood programs and kindergarten;
- Ensuring data collection and measurement to demonstrate impact; and
- Hiring of a project coordinator to ensure grant deliverables are met.

Funds may not be used for:

- Capital expenses, major building construction, facility remodeling and playground equipment;
- Purchase of food or refreshments;
- Mini-Grants;
- Purchase of supplies distributed without an activity, event, or intervention; or
- Personnel.