



Request for Proposals (RFP)

High Quality ECE Center Scholarship Grants

Purpose of the RFP

The High Quality ECE Center Scholarship Grants are designed to strengthen York County's early childhood education workforce by supporting employee retention and stability. This grant provides funding to offset childcare tuition costs for employees who work at high-quality nonprofit early childhood education (ECE) centers in York County.

Recognizing that access to affordable, reliable childcare is a significant barrier for many ECE professionals, this funding is intended to reduce financial strain on staff, improve retention, and support centers in maintaining a stable, experienced workforce.

Funding Overview

Grant funds must be used exclusively to offset childcare tuition costs for employees of the applicant center. We allow up to 10% of grant funds to be directed towards administrative overhead.

Centers may use funds to:

- Reduce deficits associated with existing employee childcare tuition discounts
 - Increase the percentage of tuition assistance currently offered
 - Initiate a childcare tuition assistance program for employees
 - Expand eligibility for existing tuition assistance programs
 - Prevent planned reductions in childcare tuition assistance
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Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to apply, organizations must meet all of the following criteria:

- Be a nonprofit organization operating in York County, PA with appropriate IRS determination
- Operate an early childhood education center that serves children birth through six years old
- Hold an active Keystone STARS Level 3 or Level 4 designation at the time of application and award
- Use grant funds solely to offset childcare tuition for employees working at the center, with up to 10% allowable as administrative fees

Eligible employees may include full-time and/or part-time staff, as defined by the applicant center, provided the assistance is clearly described in the proposal.

Allowable Use of Funds

Grant funds may be used to offset childcare tuition for:

- Children of employees enrolled at the applicant center
- Any employee classification that is identified as eligible in the proposal (e.g., teaching staff, administrative staff, full-time or part-time staff)

Funds may not be used for:

- General tuition discounts not tied to employee status
 - Compensation outside of administrative fees
 - Facility costs, supplies, or professional development
 - Endowment building
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Grant Outcomes and Priorities

Primary Outcome

- Improved employee retention among staff eligible for childcare tuition assistance

Secondary Outcomes

- Reduced staff turnover

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- Improved ability to recruit and retain experienced staff
- Increased staff satisfaction and financial stability

Priority may be given to proposals that:

- Serve a high percentage of teaching staff
 - Demonstrate financial need or existing deficits related to tuition assistance
 - Clearly articulate how tuition assistance supports workforce stability
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Application Requirements

Applicants must complete the full grant application which opens **Monday February 23, 2026**, and provide all required organizational and programmatic information, including:

Organizational Information

- Proof of nonprofit status
- Required financial and governance documentation
- Organizational history and mission (if applicable)

Program Information

- Total enrollment and ages served
- Total staff size and staffing structure
- Description of current or proposed childcare tuition assistance program
- Number of employees eligible for and using tuition assistance
- Percentage of tuition covered and total annual cost

Results & Impact Data

Applicants will be asked to provide baseline workforce data and commit to reporting outcomes after 90-days of implementing the use of funds:

- Staff retention and turnover
 - Number of employees receiving childcare tuition assistance
 - Qualitative feedback on the impact of tuition assistance
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Reporting Requirements

Grantees will be required to submit a report after 90 days of implementing program funds. Reporting will focus on workforce outcomes rather than financial auditing alone and will include:

- Updated staffing and retention metrics
- Use of grant funds
- Narrative and anecdotal evidence of impact

Exact reporting questions will mirror those outlined in the application and will not require additional data collection beyond standard center records.

Grant Period

The grant period will be 12 months from the date of award. Funds must be expended during this period unless otherwise approved in writing.

Review Process

Proposals will be reviewed based on:

- Eligibility and completeness
- Alignment with grant purpose
- Clarity and feasibility of the proposed use of funds
- Demonstrated potential for improving employee retention

Funding decisions are final and subject to availability of funds.

Questions

Questions regarding this RFP may be submitted to:

Laura O'Grady
Vice President, Impact and Strategy
logrady@unitedway-york.org

Issuance of this RFP does not obligate the funder to award a grant or pay any costs incurred in the preparation of an application.

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