

NEW EARLY CHILDHOOD OPPORTUNITIES BEST IN CLASS GRANT PROGRAM AND FAMILY ENGAGEMENT KINDERGARTEN READINESS PROGRAM

The State of North Dakota is funding a new early childhood grant program and a Family Engagement opportunity through the North Dakota Department of Human Services, replacing the previous early childhood grant through the Department of Commerce. The new programs will be released for guidance and applications by June 21, 2021.

BEST IN CLASS GRANT PROGRAM

The Best in Class competitive grant program established by the 2021 67th Legislative Assembly and codified in NDCC 50-11.1.

PROGRAMS WHO ARE ELIGIBLE TO APPLY: Early childhood programs that serve children in the year before kindergarten, and who have reached four years of age before August first in the year of enrollment. Programs eligible to apply can be operated by educational facilities, federally funded Head Start programs, licensed early childhood programs, including those operated in connection with a church, business or community organization.

- Operates for at least four hundred hours over a period of at least thirty - two consecutive weeks and incorporates at least ten hours of research - based family engagement.
- Has been determined to meet the equivalent of standards and expectations of no less than step three in a North Dakota early childhood quality improvement system.
- Is willing to admit children of all learning abilities into the program.
- Is willing to serve children who receive assistance from the Child Care Assistance Program.
- Operate in compliance with the grant requirements, including: (1) Maintaining the recommended group size for number of children served; (2) Complying with requirements related to qualifications, training, and professional development of staff delivering services; and (3) Adhering to expectations established by the department for monitoring and oversight.

APPLICATION: A North Dakota early childhood program deemed eligible may apply for the Best in Class grant. An approved program is eligible for an annual award of \$120,000 per approved group size. The grant award must be matched with no less than \$20,000 in other funds. Grant funds will support the provision of quality early childhood experiences, including expenditures related to staffing, training, equipment, and supplies.

Application and information will be posted www.nd.gov/dhs/services/childfamily/pre-k.html by June 21, 2021.

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT OPPORTUNITY: WATERFORD UPSTART

Waterford Upstart is accepting registrations from North Dakota families interested in an in-home kindergarten readiness program for 2021-2022. There is no cost to this program and families are provided a new device, internet if needed, and adaptive educational software.

To learn more or to register please visit www.waterford.org/upstart/ or contact Carolyn Kueber at (701) 328-1640.