

Early Childhood Continuum of Care FAQ

What is the intent of the Early Childhood Continuum of Care grant opportunity?

While the Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program (SWVPP) is widely available to Iowans, some working families still cannot participate if the program only covers a portion of the day or would require mid-day transportation to child care. To build a solution that meets the demands of the busy lives of parents, the intention of the grant is to offer full-day options while preserving the state's child care infrastructure. By leveraging existing child care capacity, the grant is intended for SWVPP providers and child care providers to come together to create a full-day continuum of care for preschool aged children.

Who is administering this grant?

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (Iowa HHS) is the lead state agency releasing this grant opportunity. This grant is in collaboration with the Department of Education.

Who is eligible to apply for this grant?

A licensed child care center and an approved local SWVPP are eligible to submit a joint, collaborative application in accordance with this Request For Proposal (RFP). Applicants may not serve in both preschool and child care roles to receive an award.

Who is the lead applicant for this grant?

The SWVPP provider and licensed child care center will be joint applicants, however one must be the lead entity as primary contact and who provides fiscal oversight.

I am an interested community school district but don't have a child care partner. What do you recommend?

Please see Iowa's Child Care Connect to review licensed child care centers in your community who may be interested. [Child Care Search – Iowa Child Care Connect](#)

I am an interested child care center but don't have a SWVPP partner. What do you recommend?

Consider contacting your local community school district and any other SWVPP providers in your area.

Is Head Start an eligible partner?

Yes. A Head Start can apply to be an independent entity providing SWVPP. A Head Start can also apply to be a community partner for the child care portion of the day and then be eligible for the grant. A Head Start program cannot serve in both roles and receive a partnership grant.

Our Head Start program follows Head Start Performance Standards and does not participate in SWVPP. Can we still be an independent entity?

A Head Start program would be required to follow SWVPP Assurances while adhering to Head Start performance standards. The program would then be eligible to serve as the educational component of the grant application.

I am a Head Start and still have questions, who should I contact?

All Head Start entities are encouraged to work with their Office of Head Start contacts to ensure flexibility around funding allowances to ensure no supplanting of funding

What are examples of how the partnership could work?

- The Agency will award one contract per partnership. Funding of more than three awards per partnership will be contingent on available funding. Applicants may not serve in both preschool and child care roles to receive an award.
- *“ABC (SWVPP) provider” partners with “DEF child care center”, this partnership is eligible for one contract for \$100,000 per year for up to three years. “ABC (SWVPP) provider” could also apply with a separate application with “GHI child care center” for another \$100,000 award per year for up to three years.*
- Community-based providers may not singly serve as a SWVPP and child care provider. School district providers of SWVPP may not singly serve as SWVPP and child care provider.

What are some examples of how funding can be utilized?

- A school district offers SWVPP and would like to get additional children enrolled by partnering with a local child care facility for SWVPP with an option of wrap-around child care. The child care facility does not have funding to support additional staffing. The application could include a salary/hourly wage to cover the cost of staff for child care portion of the day.
- School district and child care facility partners need transportation for students to get to and from SWVPP instructional time. The child care program would like to purchase a vehicle. The application could include vehicle purchase and/or wages for staffing for bussing hours.
- A child care program has a licensed teacher to provide SWVPP however they are unable to fund a comparable salary of the team member for the full day. A portion of the teacher's pay is funded by the .5 per pupil allocation for SWVPP. The application could include a wage parity to fund that staff for the full day.
- A Head Start program already operates a partial day but has available space to operate a child care classroom. The Head Start may partner with a SWVPP site to offer child care that wraps around preschool hours. Funding could support staffing for this classroom.

What happens after grant funding is over?

All grantees will be required to build a sustainability plan to continue the project beyond grant timeline.

I am a school district and want to provide full-day preschool without the use of this grant, what are my options?

Hours of child care services offered in addition to or to “wrap around” your SWVPP hours require licensing as a child care facility. You may choose to have parents pay tuition or you may have families apply for Child Care Assistance (CCA), if eligible. For example, if you provide SWVPP from 8am-11am each day but operate from 7am-4 pm, the hours between 7am-8am and 11am-4pm would be licensed child care