

Gov. Reynolds advances child care solutions with full-day continuum of care grants and new statewide fund

1 message

Margaret Buckton <jen@iowaschoolfinance.com>

Tue, May 20, 2025 at 9:23 PM



Dear RSAI School Leaders:

Governor Reynolds announced the child care continuum grant opportunity via a press conference this afternoon. See this [link](#) from the press release to find out more. The application deadline is June 25, so there is a quick turnaround to get into this one. Page 6 of the grant document references an Applicants' Conference on Wednesday morning, May 21st, at 9:30 per the following paragraph (including link to participate).

B. Applicant's Conference – *An applicant's conference will be held via Virtual Meeting on May 21, 2025 at 9:30am. The purpose of the conference is to highlight the RFP with prospective applicants and to allow them an opportunity to ask questions regarding the RFP. Representation or attendance at the conference is not required. However, the conference provides the only opportunity for prospective applicants to receive answers to verbal questions. Questions asked at the conference that cannot be adequately answered during the conference may be deferred. Interested applicants shall register or join by clicking on the following link: <https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1613387422>. This link will also be posted in the website Links section of this Funding Opportunity and will be removed after the conference is held. Following the Applicant's Conference, the link to the recorded meeting will be provided for future reference at the website Links section of this Funding Opportunity.*

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From: **Press Releases from Iowa Governor's Office** <IowaGovernorsOffice@public.govdelivery.com>

Date: Tue, May 20, 2025 at 3:38 PM

Subject: RELEASE: Gov. Reynolds advances child care solutions with full-day continuum of care grants and new statewide fund

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Governor Kim Reynolds ★ Lt. Governor Chris Cournoyer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tuesday, May 20, 2025

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Gov. Reynolds advances child care solutions with full-day continuum of care grants and new statewide fund

DES MOINES— Today, Governor Kim Reynolds reaffirmed her commitment to strengthening Iowa's child care system by launching a new Statewide Solutions Fund, extending the successful Child Care Assistance pilot program that supports child care workers, and introducing a Continuum of Care grant to encourage preschool and child care partnerships to provide a full day of care for 4-year-olds.

"When individuals, businesses, and government all work together to solve a problem, Iowans benefit. Nowhere is this more evident than in child care," Gov. Reynolds said. "Programs like the Child Care Assistance pilot and the Statewide Solutions Fund will continue to increase our childcare workforce and capacity. And, the Early Childhood Continuum of Care grant will help give working parents what they need—a full day continuum of care for their children."

Continuum of Care Grants

To address gaps in full-day care, Iowa HHS is releasing a Request for Proposal for the Early Childhood Continuum of Care grant. Grants of up to \$300,000 over three years will support partnerships between [Statewide Voluntary Preschool Program \(SWVPP\)](#) sites and licensed child care centers to offer seamless, full-day care for 4-year-olds.

"This first-of-its-kind grant opportunity supports partnerships between high-quality preschool and child care programs, providing a full day of care that meets the needs of children and working families," said Iowa Department of Education Director McKenzie Snow. "We know that about 90 percent of a child's brain develops by age 5, and Iowa's new Continuum of Care grant will

expand family access to high-quality early childhood options that lay the foundation for learner success in school and beyond.”

Additional funding will help support a strong early child care talent pipeline, further supporting working families with young children.

“These investments in early childhood initiatives are critical to support working parents and prepare young kids for school. Additionally, each day we entrust our child care workforce and provider partners with caring for our children – these programs demonstrate our commitment to recognizing and honoring their very important role,” said Iowa Health and Human Services Director Kelly Garcia.

More information on this grant is available [here](#).

Statewide Solutions Fund

The new fund allows individuals and Iowa businesses to contribute toward boosting child care workforce wages. Donations will be used in two ways:

- Restricted funds will go to regional child care solutions funds.
- Unrestricted funds will be matched 2:1 by the state to amplify impact.

This statewide effort builds on a successful pilot that launched nine regional funds and showed strong economic potential. According to the Common Sense Institute of Iowa, a statewide fund could:

- Add nearly 11,000 new child care slots.
- Enable 5,000 more women to enter the workforce—including 1,000 new child care workers.
- Create up to 8,000 jobs across Iowa.
- Generate \$45 in GDP growth and \$21 in personal income for every \$1 invested privately.

For more information on the Statewide Solutions fund, click [here](#).

Child Care Assistance Pilot Extended

The state will continue the innovative pilot program that allows eligible child care workers to qualify for Child Care Assistance—even if their income exceeds traditional limits. Currently serving over 900 families and 1,500 children, the program ensures that those who care for Iowa’s children can access affordable care for their own.

More information on these programs is available [here](#).

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