



DHLW+M Early Childhood Area

Des Moines, Henry, Louisa, Washington, Muscatine

Request for Proposal Preschool Tuition Scholarships

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Application due date is **August 4th 2025 by 4:00pm**. Late applications will not be accepted.

Purpose and Overview

The DHLW+M Early Childhood Area Board (referred to in this document as DHLW+M) is seeking request for proposals to select the most qualified applicant to coordinate and implement a Preschool Tuition Scholarship program serving families with young children in Des Moines, Henry, Louisa, and Washington counties.

[Early Childhood Iowa \(ECI\)](#) is a statewide initiative that distributes funds to designated area boards to support the vision that *Every child beginning at birth will be healthy and successful*. The local DHLW+M Board consists of members representing citizens, elected officials, education, health, human services, faith, business, and consumer. [DHLW+M Early Childhood Area](#) determines community needs for young children, establishes priorities, and provides funding to programs that improve outcomes for children pre-birth through age 5 and their families.

Attachments

- A. Tool O: ECI Statewide Performance Measures, pages 9-11 (scholarships)
- B. Preschool Tuition Scholarship Program Criteria: DHLW+M Policy 4.10
- C. Scoring Rubric
- D. Trend data for tuition scholarships
- E. Scholarship RFP Application FY26
- F. Scholarship RFP Budget FY26

Eligibility

To be considered eligible for funding an applicant must:

- Serve all counties identified: Des Moines, Henry, Louisa, Washington. Applications to serve less than the four counties will not be considered.
- Demonstrate the commitment and ability to comply with all reporting requirements relevant to DHLW+M Board policies and ECI Tool O. This RFP applies to the 'Early Care and Education Scholarships' service type starting on page 9 of Tool O. Technical assistance relating to questions about DHLW+M policies or Tool O is available prior to submission of an RFP. Contact Tasha Beghtol, tbeghtol@dhlw.org or 319-461-1369.
- Demonstrate the capacity to create and disseminate program materials within 30 days of contract execution. Program materials include, but are not limited to; tuition applications for families, program agreements for participating preschools, and promotional flyers. Technical assistance to

complete these tasks will be available through the DHLW+M office after an application has been awarded funding.

- Have basic knowledge of the ASQ 3 developmental screening tool.
- Have basic knowledge of Child Care Assistance (CCA).
- Serve families with children 3 - 5 years of age.
- Work collaboratively with the DHLW+M Board, early childhood committees, and other regional organizations/agencies providing services to achieve program objectives and successful outcomes.

Ineligible Applicants

Preschool programs and/or the lead agency of a preschool program that may be the recipient of a tuition scholarship payment are not eligible to apply.

Funding

The DHLW+M Board receives state funds from Iowa Department of Health and Human Services. DHLW+M receives funding in the following categories

- Administration
- Family Support Home Visitation
- Community Collaboration and Planning
- Discretionary

The Preschool Scholarship Program will be funded through the ‘Discretionary’ category. The intent of this RFP is to award ONE contract up to \$50,000 for State Fiscal Year 2026.

Application Process

1. The DHLW+M Director will complete a technical review of RFPs submitted on time for completeness and eligibility.
2. A comprehensive review of proposals is completed by a committee of the DHLW+M Board. Additional information from the applicant may be requested after the comprehensive review.
3. The committee will provide recommendations to the DHLW+M Early Childhood Area Board for consideration of approval.

The DHLW+M Board reserves the right to negotiate proposal details and may grant less than the amount requested. Applicants awarded less than the amount requested will have an opportunity to resubmit budgets and proposed outputs based on the awarded amount.

The DHLW+M Board reserves the right to reject, in whole or in part, any or all applications, and to cancel this RFP if it is in the best interest of DHLW+M.

The DHLW+M Board is subject to Iowa *Open Meetings* and *Open Records* laws. An RFP submitted and reviewed by the DHLW+M Board and/or committees of the board are considered public documents and can be reproduced.

General Instructions

The narrative portion of the application and cover page are found in a fillable PDF titled Scholarship RFP Application FY26. The Budget form is a separate excel document. Detailed budget instructions begin on page 4 of this document. All questions for the RFP should be directed to Tasha Beghtol, 319-461-1369 tbeghtol@dhlw.org

- All proposals are due by **August 4th 2025 by 4:00pm.**
- Cover page and Budget form should be signed and dated.
- All questions in the application must be answered.
- **Submit: One** electronic version of the completed Scholarship Application RFP FY26 and Budget form to Tasha Beghtol at tbeghtol@dhlw.org

Funding Guiding Principles

Proposals will be evaluated using a scoring system. Total maximum score possible is 100. Narrative section worth 75 points and Budget worth 25 points.

Notification of Awards

Applicants will receive email notification of the DHLW+M Board's decisions within 5 business days from the date of the meeting at which the application was considered. It is the intent of DHLW+M to issue contracts effective August 22nd, 2025.

TIMELINE	
**Timeline is subject to change by the DHLW+M Early Childhood Area Board as needed	
July 1 st 2025	RFP released <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Notice sent via email to current contractors and local ECI partners & posted on the dhlw.org website
August 4 th 2025	Proposals due <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Electronic submission only
August 5 th – August 13 th	Proposals reviewed by a committee of the DHLW+M Board
August 19 th 2025	DHLW+M Early Childhood Area Board meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Committee will submit funding recommendations for discussion and approval.
August 22, 2025 – June 30, 2026	Anticipated contract duration

Budget instructions

The Budget form is in excel and includes some embedded basic addition formulas. The Budget form is not locked to allow programs to add narrative space as needed. Headings, required categories, and general layout of the excel sheet should not be altered. If an applicant needs help with completing the excel document, they may contact Tasha Beghtol at tbeghtol@dhlw.org for assistance.

Budgets should be calculated based on the estimated expenses of the project for the proposed contract time period. Provide detailed narrative for each line item in the space identified on the excel form. Show the math that justifies the total line item requested. For example:

Operational request is \$5400

Narrative shows → Rent \$200/mo x 12 = \$2400 Utilities \$250/mo on avg x 12 = \$3000

Other Funding

Other funds are not required in order to be eligible for funding, but applicants are strongly encouraged to identify other funds being used to support the direct service/activity in the application. Other funds include grants, donations, and/or additional revenue, from an outside source, specific to the service/activity. In-kind funding is not to be noted in the application.

Direct salaries: Includes all staff and supervisors to be paid by the grant and doing work directly related to the program being funded. Include a detailed breakdown of the total salary per staff person. For example – 1 consultant (.5FTE) 20hrs/wk @ \$20/hr X 50wks = \$20,000. Salaries of an agency wide administrator should not be included in this section. See Indirect Administration below.

Benefits: Includes all benefits associated with the salary of the direct staff identified for the program such as social security, IPERS, health insurance, 401k, etc.

Contracted services: Includes any subcontracted staff that will be used to directly support the program requesting funding. Provide hourly and/or daily rates and the total cost.

Travel: Includes mileage, lodging and meals that are directly related to program activities of direct staff. Mileage rate shall not exceed the federal IRS rate. Hotel rates and meals shall not exceed the current federal rate. Rates can be found on the U.S. General Services Administration website - [GSA rates](#). Itemized receipts will be required. Travel does not include fuel expenses. Fuel receipts are only accepted if a contractor has fuel identified as a supply directly related to the service such as a transportation specific program.

Equipment: Includes equipment purchased with an expected useful life of one year or longer. Expenditures for single items over \$1000 must be itemized and inventoried.

Office Supplies: Includes miscellaneous supplies and materials such as pens, paper, ink, copies, etc. The amount may be shown in one lump sum.

Operational: Includes costs associated with operating the program such as rent, utilities, phone, and internet. Operational may also include insurance directly related to the program and annual fees associated with the use of a particular model or curriculum.

Staff professional development: Includes registration fees to attend trainings and/or conferences for the purpose of increasing direct staff knowledge.

Incentives: Includes items and or earned monetary rewards that are provided to program participants/families/children actively enrolled in the services/activities. **Scholarships** and salary stipends provided to program participants would be considered an incentive expense.

Indirect Administration: Indirect costs are those that are incurred for common or joint objectives benefitting all programs and cannot be readily identified or assignable to a final cost. Indirect costs relate to central management and administrative functions that are necessary and beneficial to all programs administered by the organization. Photo copies for the purpose of submitting claims are considered indirect administrative costs and should not be billed monthly as a direct program expense. All programs are encouraged to utilize indirect administration even if your agency does not have a formally established indirect rate. See Tool H (A) on the Early Childhood Iowa website for more information.

Applicants with a federally approved indirect administration **MUST** include documentation of the rate identified in the budget. Applicants that do not have a federally approved rate may request up to 5% for indirect administration. The 5% indirect rate is calculated based on the subtotal request to the DHLW+M Early Childhood Board not the total operating costs of the program if other funding is received.