

Planning & Evaluation Committee

Tuesday, October 6, 2026

1:00 pm – 3:00 PM

Zoom

Be the Driving Force . . .

. . . to engage partners to achieve lasting positive outcomes for all children, beginning at birth.

I. Determination of Quorum & Call to Order – Chair

Quorum = 4 of 7 total committee members or 50%

- A. Chair's Comments Felicia Johnson
 - 1. Welcome **Adriana Londono**

II. Approval of Minutes August 4, 2026*

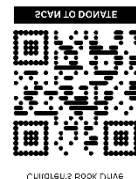
III. President's Report Provided in Packet for Review

IV. Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation Pamela Federline

- A. Strategic Planning Update/Goals
- B. RFP Allocation Timeline and Preparation
 - 1. [Smart Start Allocation Center](#)
 - 2. Bidder's Packet PowerPoint

V. Information^Δ Pamela Federline

- A. **Reminder:** Complete contact and other required [Committee forms](#)
 - 1. [New Volunteer online form](#)
- B. FTCC PFHE Book Drive – October 2026 – Book Month QR Code
- C. Boo-Levard – October 29th – Volunteers / Candy
- D. [2nd Grilled Cheese Festival- November 7th](#)
- E. Little Land 2027- March 16th



VI. Adjournment Felicia Johnson

A. Next meetings – 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.*

- 1. December 1, 2026
- 2. January 12, 2027- RFP Allocation Meeting- 1:00 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.- Online
- 3. February 2, 2027- RFP Allocation Meeting- 1:00 p.m.- 5:00 p.m.-In Person
- 4. March 2, 2027- RFP Allocation Meeting- 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.- In Person
- 5. April 6, 2027
- 6. June 1, 2027

* Needs Action ^Δ Information Only ! Possible Conflict of Interest (Recusals)

*P&E committee meetings typically last an hour, but please reserve two hours just in case.



Partnership for Children of Cumberland County, Inc.
Planning and Evaluation Committee
August 4, 2026 (1:05 pm – 2:46 pm)



P&E MEMBERS PRESENT: Felicia Johnson, Dr. Ginny Kaplan, Kandy Dillion

P&E MEMBERS ABSENT: Dr. Jacqueline Lancaster-Covington

STAFF SUPPORT PRESENT: Pamela Federline, Tamiko Colvin, Mary Sonnenberg, Heather Inman, Daniele Malvesti Petti, Marie Lilly

GUESTS:

AGENDA ITEM	DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATION	ACTION	FOLLOW-UP
I. Determination of Quorum & Call to Order	A. Felicia Johnson called the meeting to order at 1:05 pm	Called to Order	
II. Review and Approval of Minutes	A. The Planning and Evaluation Committee minutes from August 5, 2025 and December 2 nd were approved unanimously		
III. President's Report	A. The President's Report was reviewed by Mary Sonnenberg		
IV. Planning, Monitoring, and Evaluation	A. FY 25-26 Q4/Year End Data Review B. Strategic Planning Updates/Goals C. RFP Allocation Timeline and Preparation a. Discussion of Meeting Type (Online or In-Person) D.	Jan 12-Online Feb 2- In person March 2- In person	
V. Information	A. Reminder- Complete contact and other required Committee forms B. Little Land 2026- March 14, 2026 C. Grilled Cheese Festival with Dirt Bag Ales- November 7 2026 D. Little Land 2027- March 16, 2027		
VI. Meeting Adjourned	A. Meeting was adjourned the meeting at 2:46 pm.	Meeting Adjourned The next P&E Meeting will be in person at PFC and via Zoom on October 6th	Steven Gipson will send invitations.

Approval: Based on committee consensus, the minutes of the above-stated meeting are hereby approved as presented and/or corrected.

Committee Chair

Date

Submittal: The minutes of the above-stated meeting are submitted for approval.

Secretary

Date

President's Report
Executive Committee (Acting on Behalf of Board)
Hybrid Meeting - Charles Morris Conference Room
Thursday, September 24, 2026

A. NCPC/DCDEE Updates / Legislative Updates

1. NCPC

- This month's special stories focus: **2026 Kindness Awards Recipients.**
- September is Smart Start Month.
- NCPC is hosting **Coffee for Dolly Day** as part of their **September 25 Give Like Dolly Day Campaign.**
- Legislative information from Marta Hester at NCPC is attached.

2. DCDEE

- New market rates were posted September 9, 2026 and are effective October 1, 2026. FAQs attached. The link to the Market Rate Table is in the FAQ document.
- **Child Care Resource and Referral Services for the South-Central Region**
 - Contracting is still in process.
 - Julanda Jett and the Programs Team have started visits with staff in the counties in our territories.
- **NC Pre-K**
 - Most providers are in contract and August reimbursement is being processed.
 - **NC Pre-K Let's Get Enrolled – Applications for the 2026-2027 school year continue to be processed.** Please share the URL: **LetsGetEnrolled.com**. Contact Ar-Nita Davis (adavis@ccpfc.org) with any questions.
 - The Site Selection Committee has convened and is making visits to programs. Recommendations for new sites will be reviewed at the October NC Pre-K Planning Committee. for the next 3-year cycle.

3. State and Federal Level – Many lawmakers in Washington and Raleigh are campaigning due to the impending November elections.

- Congress is expected to remain out of session until mid-November after midterm elections.
- **Supporting Early-Childhood Educators' Deductions (SEED) Act** extending tax credit to early childhood providers passes Congress. Announcement attached.
- Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM) for Head Start. The NPRM is open for public comment for 60 days and the comment period ends on October 6, 2026. More information about the proposed rule can be found [here](#).
- For additional updates, refer to the NC Center for Nonprofits' **September 18 Public Policy update**.

4. Local Level

- United Way has coordinated a **9/25** event celebrating Dolly Parton and her legacy. The theme is "Let's Paint Cumberland County Pink & Blue!" Similar events are being hosted across NC and nationwide.
- The City of Fayetteville is launching Stronger Partners Initiative. This initiative was created to bring established nonprofit leaders together to think intentionally about where their organizations are going, learn from community experts and one another, and build relationships that can help move their vision forward. More information and opportunities to come.

B. Grant Opportunities/Updates/RFPs

- PFC requested adjustments to the remaining funding from the City of Fayetteville's Revenue Replacement Grant in order to fully expend the funds (**Family Connects and Workforce Development Program**). The

City approved the requested adjustment. The City has requested that all funding be expended by October 31, 2026.

C. Building Sustainability and Organizational Sustainability & Succession Planning

- The **Building Sustainability Work Group met on September 21** to continue reviewing options. The group will not meet again until further discussions are had with DHHS.
- **Organizational Sustainability & Succession Planning:** The RFP for firms with experience providing nonprofit legal consultation and merger facilitation services is being released October 1 with a deadline for proposals of October 16.

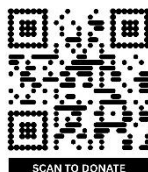
D. Staff Updates

- Congratulations to **Johanna Betancourt** who was selected as **our new Early Literacy & Play Coordinator**. Johanna joined the Partnership in April 2026 as an Early Care & Education Coach. Her expertise and creativity make her a great fit to lead library and Kaleidoscope Play & Learn operations.
- Currently Hiring for 3 full-time positions: IT Technician, Early Care & Education Coach, and NC Pre-K Data & Eligibility Specialist. For more information about these positions and to apply, visit our careers page at ccpfc.org/hr/careers.

E. Events/Recognitions

- **Chuy's Friends and Family Days will be September 26-27.** We have been chosen as the proceeds recipient for the launch of their restaurant which is at the site of the former Bahama Breeze location. The event is by invitation. Meals are complimentary along with non-alcoholic beverages. Proceeds coming to the Partnership will be from each Margarita sold.
- **Boo-Levard Office Trick or Treat October 29 from 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm.** Hotdog plate sale 11:30 am – 1:30 pm and 5:00 pm – 7:00 pm. Things you can do: Donate bags of candy or prepackaged snacks, purchase a plate for lunch, and/or join us with the families. We 175 children registered to come!
- **Professional Development Day at Methodist University on October 10th** (\$15 per person). The keynote speaker will be **Dr. Nefertiti Poyner** (*Joy Belongs Where You Are: Reset for Purpose, Energy, and Alignment*). Breakout Sessions (Choose from three trainings): *Inclusion Essentials: Modifying Classrooms for Children with Special Needs; Use your Words: How our Words Impact Children; Strengthening Team Collaboration* (Directors only)
- Students in the **Parents for Higher Education (PFHE) at FTCC will host a book drive** on campus during National Book Month in October to collect new and gently used children's books for PFC. Dates for the book drive are **October 1-31. To donate a book to the cause, you use the QR code below.**
- **Grilled Cheese Festival – Save the date for Saturday, November 7, 2026.** Contact dmalvesti@ccpfc.org. Presale tickets are on sale at <https://ccpfc.org/cheesy/>. Presale tickets will end October 30th. Only day of the event ticket option is four tokens for \$25. * All five food trucks have been secured and we would appreciate board support in ticket sales, purchasing tickets, invite a friend, purchasing a table, connecting us to a table sponsor, and sharing event and ticket links with your networks.
- **Giving Tuesday – Giving Tuesday Campaign will open for donations, November 23, 2026 at 9:00 am and will close at 11:59 pm on December 1, 2026.**
- **Barnes & Noble Book Drive** – We are the named recipient. Dates have not been finalized.
- **Kindness Awards are underway all September 21 – 25** with one recipient being honored the First Sunday in October at Festival Park due to scheduling needs. Follow our social media posts of each presentation. We will also celebrate the recipients at Executive Committee today or at the October Board Meeting.
- **Little Land 2027 – Save the date for Saturday, March 13, 2027, 10:00 am-2:00 pm, Crown Expo Center.**

Children's Book Drive



2026

KINDNESS AWARDS

Celebrating Their Impact

HONOREES

Saneequa Barlow

Nekya Brown

Felisha Williams-Brown

Wendy McAdams-Flores

Carl Pringle

Tashonda McCormick

Sonia Roldan-Jackson

Christopher Baumann

The Kinsey House



2026
KINDNESS AWARDS
Celebrating Your Impact

Sonia Roldan-Jackson

Nominated by: Major Lori Holloway, Fayetteville Police

In October 2025, Civilian Investigative Assistant Sonia Roldan-Jackson recognized a need that can easily go unnoticed: children in the community needed warm coats for the approaching winter. Through her daily interactions with children, both personally and professionally, she saw the challenges many families face and chose to respond with compassion and purpose.

Sonia organized a community children's coat drive that quickly grew into a tremendous success. Her passion inspired friends, colleagues, community members, and local partners to join the effort, resulting in the donation of more than 300 coats for children in need. Because of her leadership, hundreds of young people entered the winter months with warmth, comfort, and a tangible reminder that their community cared for them.

The significance of Sonia's kindness reaches beyond the coats themselves. She identified a specific need, invited others into the solution, and transformed concern into collective action. In doing so, she helped families meet an essential need while also strengthening a spirit of generosity throughout the community.

Sonia's selfless character is evident in every aspect of her work and service. She consistently advocates for victims and works to improve the lives of those she serves. Her ability to notice people who might otherwise be overlooked, mobilize support, and act with empathy reflects the true spirit of kindness and makes Fayetteville a more caring place for children and families.

*In recognition of the kindness you have shown
and the difference you continue to make in our community.*

2026
KINDNESS AWARDS
Celebrating Your Impact

Christopher Baumann

Nominated by: Sgt. Malachy Quillen, Fayetteville Police Department

Detective Christopher Baumann embodies the spirit of kindness by going above and beyond in service to the community, especially its youngest and most vulnerable members. For several years, he has served as the Fayetteville Police Department's beloved mascot, "Buster," dedicating countless hours of his personal time to community events, school programs, and outreach activities.

Through this role, Detective Baumann creates positive and meaningful interactions with children and families. His ability to connect with young people helps build trust, comfort, and stronger relationships between law enforcement and the community. Each interaction offers children an experience of safety, encouragement, and connection that can shape how they view the people who serve their community.

His compassion is equally evident in the difficult aspects of his work. Throughout his career, he has investigated numerous domestic violence cases and circumstances that can deeply affect children. In these moments, he takes extra time to ensure that young victims are not overlooked and that they receive reassurance, attention, and protection.

Detective Baumann's impact comes from his willingness to care in both visible and quiet ways. Whether he is bringing joy as Buster or helping a child through a frightening experience, he gives his time and attention with genuine compassion. His actions demonstrate that kindness can build trust, restore a sense of safety, and make a lasting difference for families throughout the community.

*In recognition of the kindness you have shown
and the difference you continue to make in our community.*



2026
KINDNESS AWARDS
Celebrating Your Impact

**Spring Lake Family Support
Services Center at
★
The Kinsey House**

Some acts of kindness create ripples that transform an entire community. The story of The Kinsey House is one such example.

What began as a chance meeting between Richard Alan Kinsey and Debora Hudson in 2015 grew into a shared vision rooted in faith, compassion, and a deep love for the Spring Lake community. Their friendship helped inspire the creation of Spring Lake Family Support Services in 2019. In 2020, Alan donated his family home to the organization because he trusted Debora Hudson's vision, asking only that it be named The Kinsey House in honor of his mother, Nell, whose love for the community continues to inspire its work.

The Partnership for Children had the pleasure of connecting with The Kinsey House in May 2026 through its Butterfly Kisses, Baby Wishes community baby shower. What impressed us most was not simply the event itself, but the extraordinary heart behind it.

In a community where many families face significant challenges, The Kinsey House demonstrates what meaningful outreach looks like: meeting families where they are, recognizing their dignity, building relationships, and bringing people together to provide tangible support. Their commitment reminds us that kindness is more than a single generous act. It is a sustained investment in people, grounded in the belief that every family deserves to feel valued, supported, and connected.

The Partnership for Children is delighted to present the Kindness Award to Spring Lake Family Support Services Center – The Kinsey House, honoring its compassionate leadership, unwavering community commitment, and the lasting legacy of kindness it continues to build.

*In recognition of the kindness you have shown
and the difference you continue to make in our community.*



2026
KINDNESS AWARDS
Celebrating Your Impact

Saneequa Barlow

★
Nominated By: Dominique Womack

Saneequa Barlow, founder of The Jr. Artist Program, demonstrates kindness by creating a place where young girls can feel seen, supported, and encouraged to become confident leaders. Her nonprofit empowers girls of all ethnicities through community engagement, leadership development, and fellowship. For the past six years, she has led a summer camp serving more than 20 girls across Cumberland and Hoke Counties, offering education in life skills, mental health awareness, body positivity, self-defense, and other areas that strengthen the whole child.

What makes Saneequa's service especially meaningful is the care behind it. She has built a safe, nurturing environment where girls can ask questions, discover their strengths, develop resilience, and form positive relationships. Her work reminds each participant that she matters and that her voice, future, and well-being are worth investing in.

Saneequa has often funded this work herself, reflecting a deep personal commitment to the young people she serves. Now officially recognized as a 501(c)(3), The Jr. Artist Program is positioned to pursue grant support, expand its reach, and deepen its impact. Her compassion has already created opportunities for girls to grow, and her continued leadership will help even more young people feel empowered, prepared, and connected.

*In recognition of the kindness you have shown
and the difference you continue to make
in our community.*

2026

KINDNESS AWARDS

Celebrating Your Impact

Tashonda McCormick



Nominated By: Elaine Johnson

Tashonda McCormick is a beacon of hope whose kindness is expressed through education, literacy, mentorship, and faithful community service. As a dedicated special education teacher, she is deeply committed to supporting her students and families throughout the area. Over the past four years, she has actively participated in children's reading programs and has earned multiple awards for exceptional community partnerships that promote literacy.

As a children's book author, Tashonda generously provides free books to families, helping parents and children create meaningful moments together through reading. Her efforts do more than place books into children's hands. They encourage curiosity, strengthen family bonds, and help young readers see learning as something joyful and accessible.

Tashonda also serves her church as a mentor in its special needs' ministry, offering guidance, encouragement, and support to individuals and families. She regularly hosts educational events across the community, including Shon's Stories reading sessions and pop-up literacy events. Through these opportunities, she creates welcoming spaces where children can build confidence, and families can connect with learning resources.

An active member of the local North Carolina Association of Educators and a proud graduate of Fayetteville State University, Tashonda leads by example. Her willingness to help, share advice, and create opportunities for others makes her an inspiring role model. Her kindness leaves a lasting impact because it equips children and families with encouragement, knowledge, and a stronger belief in what is possible.

*In recognition of the kindness you have shown
and the difference you continue to make
in our community.*

2026

KINDNESS AWARDS

Celebrating Your Impact

Wendy McAdams-Flores



Nominated By: Gloria Young & Ebony Pulley

Wendy McAdams-Flores consistently turns kindness into action. She adopted Montclair Park in honor of her brother, Detective Brian McAdams, carrying his legacy forward by bringing family, friends, and local youth together to clean the park. Through this effort, she not only improves a shared community space but also teaches young people that caring for their community is a meaningful way to honor others and create lasting change.

Her generosity reaches children, families, schools, and neighbors experiencing hardship. Each year, Wendy helps distribute backpacks and school supplies, and through her LLC, Brian's Love, she adopted Sunnyside Elementary School and partnered with Delta Sigma Theta to support students and staff. She also regularly feeds individuals experiencing homelessness near the Headquarters Library and remains active in the Fayetteville Alumni Chapter. Her kindness is consistent, practical, and offered with a heartfelt smile.

Wendy's long-term impact is equally remarkable. Before moving to North Carolina in 2011, she was a founding member of Spark Academy Elementary School, part of the KIPP program, in Newark, New Jersey. She began supporting kindergarten students and remained connected to many of them from 2009 through 2026, motivating, mentoring, and nurturing them as they pursued their goals. Many of those students graduated from college this year, demonstrating the lasting power of steady encouragement and belief in a child's potential.

In May 2026, Wendy received the "Be the Change" award for her dedication to Spark Academy. Her continued impact also led to an Honorary Doctorate Degree from OWNit. These recognitions reflect what her community has experienced firsthand: Wendy's kindness is not a single gesture, but a lifelong commitment to showing up, lifting others, and helping people thrive.

*In recognition of the kindness you have shown
and the difference you continue to make in our community.*



2026
KINDNESS AWARDS
Celebrating Your Impact

Nekya Brown

Nominated By: LeTyssa Stokes

Nekya Brown is a warm and compassionate leader whose kindness is rooted in a genuine heart for children and a willingness to serve wherever she is needed. At Evans Metropolitan AME Zion Church, she faithfully volunteers her creative talents by designing flyers and promotional materials that strengthen church events and outreach. As Youth Director, she invests her time in guiding young people and volunteered to teach during Vacation Bible School.

Nekya's impact extends beyond the tasks she completes. Through her consistent presence, encouragement, and example, she helps young people feel welcomed, valued, and supported. Her service creates opportunities for children and families to connect, participate, and grow within a caring community.

As a committed mental health advocate and an active member of both the NCNW and the NAACP, Nekya continues to use her voice and energy in service to others. She is known for stepping forward to help and for treating people with compassion. Her everyday acts of kindness build trust, strengthen community connections, and make a meaningful difference in the lives of those around her.

*In recognition of the kindness you have shown
and the difference you continue to make in our community.*



2026
KINDNESS AWARDS
Celebrating Your Impact

Felisha Williams-Brown

Nominated By: LeTyssa Stokes

Felisha Williams-Brown embodies kindness through a life devoted to serving others. Selfless, compassionate, and driven by purpose, she does more than recognize the needs around her. She responds with her time, leadership, and a genuine desire to ensure that others feel supported, encouraged, and valued.

As Chair of the Connectional Lay Council of the AME Zion Church, Fayetteville District, at Evans Metropolitan AME Zion Church, Felisha leads with both her heart and her hands. Through initiatives such as the Back-to-School event, she brings local organizations together to provide students and families with backpacks filled with school supplies, valuable community resources, and access to a health fair. Her leadership transforms generosity into meaningful action, helping children begin the school year feeling prepared, confident, and cared for.

Felisha's kindness also shines through her work in Medicaid at Cumberland County DSS, where she makes a meaningful difference in the lives of the families she serves. Her dedication to the community extends even further through her active involvement with the NAACP and the NCNW.

Across every role, Felisha leads with a heart of gold, unwavering determination, and a deep commitment to helping others access support, encouragement, and opportunity. Her kindness strengthens the community, uplifts families, and inspires others to serve with the same compassion and purpose.

*In recognition of the kindness you have shown
and the difference you continue to make in our community.*



2026

KINDNESS AWARDS

Celebrating Your Impact

Carl Pringle



Nominated By: Dominique Womack

Carl Pringle is lovingly known throughout the community as "Uncle Carl," a name that reflects the dependable care and protection he offers to children and families. Whether he is hosting monthly community feedings or volunteering in elementary schools, he shows up with children's safety, well-being, and confidence at the forefront. He has invested years of heart and hard work in making sure young people feel protected, nourished, and reminded that they have someone they can depend on.

As a dedicated supporter and volunteer with the Angel Program at Ponderosa Elementary School, Uncle Carl continued serving even after his grandchildren moved to different schools. His decision to stay involved speaks to the depth of his kindness. He was not serving only because of a personal connection; he remained because he wanted every child to know they were not alone and should not have to face bullying without support.

Through his nonprofit, Uncle Carl's Safe Space, he raises funds each year to send a group of children to summer camp for a full week. The organization also assists people facing difficult times by providing food, clothing, and essential resources. His "Lunch on Us" initiative, held on the first Sunday at Festival Park, offers a meal to anyone who needs one. His mission is simple and inclusive: feed people and help ensure that no one in the community goes hungry.

Uncle Carl's impact comes from the dignity, consistency, and compassion he brings to every act of service. By creating safe spaces, meeting immediate needs, and standing beside children and families, he strengthens the community, one relationship at a time.

*In recognition of the kindness you have shown
and the difference you continue to make
in our community.*

From: Marta Hester <mhester@smartstart.org>

Sent: Friday, September 11, 2026 1:38 PM

Subject: Smart Start Network Update for Week of September 7 - 11, 2026

Good afternoon,

Smart Start Network Public Policy Meeting on Friday, October 2, 2026, to afford an opportunity to provide feedback that will help inform various items and sections in the upcoming 2028-2030 CCDF Plan. As noted in the attached infographic on *Child Care and Development Fund Plan Development PHASES AND STAGES*, one of the first steps in CCDF Plan development involves reflecting on the current plan by becoming familiar with its content. This step will help in identifying both strengths and areas that may benefit from further development. To prepare, please begin reviewing the [current CCDF plan](#) and consider any items, sections or topics in which you would like to provide feedback. Your insights in these areas are invaluable, and your participation will help guide this work. There will also be a subsidy services consultant at the October 2, 2026, meeting to help respond to any subsidy services-related questions within the plan.

Friday, October 2, 2026, 10:00am to 11:00am

Preparation on 2028-2030 CCDF Plan to include guidance on how to submit comments

Presenters:

Laura Hewitt, CCDF Plan Coordinator, NC DCDEE

Andrew Moser, Lead Policy, NC DCDEE

STATE UPDATE

New NC Child Care Market Rates

NC Division of Child Development and Early Education posted the new market rates on Tuesday, September 9, 2026. The webpage includes changes to the Subsidized Child Care Assistance Program Market Rates effective October 1, 2026.

- [Market Rates - Market Rates](#)

Midterm Elections

NC County Boards of Elections began sending absentee ballots last Friday, September 4, 2026, making North Carolina the first state in the country to begin voting in the 2026 midterm election. The 2026 ballot includes one U.S. Senate seat, all 14 of North Carolina's U.S. House seats, all 170 seats in the N.C. General Assembly, one N.C. Supreme Court seat, three N.C. Court of Appeals seats, statewide referenda, and numerous local races. See your sample ballot [here](#).

North Carolina voters will be asked to show a [photo ID](#) when voting in person. Voters casting an absentee ballot by mail must include a photocopy of an acceptable ID or complete an ID Exception Form.

2026 NCGA Candidate Information

- [House: Unofficial General Election Candidates for 2027](#)
 - [Senate: Unofficial General Election Candidates for 2027](#)
 - General Election: November 3, 2026
- Go to www.ncsbe.gov for additional information.

Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education

[Blue Ribbon Commission on Public Education](#) met on Monday, August 31, 2026. While the Commission is not focused on early care and education per se, many have expressed interest. The commission's first charge calls for stronger early literacy instruction and a deeper teacher pipeline to include a literacy coach in every low-

performing elementary school and streamlined teacher licensure. If interested, please see agenda items from August 31st meeting below.

- Date: Monday, August 31 at 10 a.m.
- Location: [Friday Institute for Educational Innovation](#)
 - [CHARGE 1: Teacher Training and Student Advancement](#)
 - [Education Briefs](#)
 - [Agenda](#)
 - [Members](#)
 - [YouTube Video Link](#)

FEDERAL UPDATE

Congressional Update

Congress is expected to leave Washington after September 17, 2026, and remain out of session until mid-November after the upcoming midterm elections.

Stay-at-Home Parent Child Care Subsidy Proposal

The Trump administration is drafting a proposal that could reshape federal child care policy by allowing married couples to receive funding from the Child Care and Development Fund (CCDF) for taking care of their own children at home if they meet certain income requirements. The proposal would create a new category of care within CCDF referred to as "parent-based childcare." Media outlets are sharing that the proposal may include an estimated \$9,000 per child annually to reflect the average value of assistance provided through CCDF. Families would need to meet several requirements as outlined below:

- Be a married couple.
- Have one spouse working at least 35 hours per week.
- Have the other spouse stay home to care for the child.
- Meet state income eligibility requirements.

The Trump Administration's draft proposal excludes unmarried couples with a stay-at-home parent and single parents who do not work.

- [Why the Trump Admin's Stay-at-Home Parent \\$9,000 Tax Credit is Dividing Republicans - Newsweek](#)
- [Trump proposal would pay stay-at-home parents through child care program](#)
- [White House looks to implement plan that pays parents to stay home](#)

Head Start Funding to Improve Head Start Nutrition, Facilities and Services

On September 8, 2026, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), Administration for Children and Families (ACF), announced over \$225 million in Head Start supplemental awards to strengthen nutrition services, improve facilities, and help programs address critical one-time needs to better serve children and families across the nation. For a listing of the NC Head Start Programs receiving a portion of 2026 Supplemental Funds for Head Start Nutrition Programming, go to [2026 Supplemental Funds for Head Start Nutrition Programming | HeadStart.gov](#).

- [HHS Awards Over \\$225 Million to Improve Head Start Nutrition, Facilities and Services | HHS.gov](#)

RESOURCES

NC Early Childhood Foundation (NCECF) Report

According to a [press release published by the North Carolina Early Childhood Foundation \(NCECF\)](#), there is a disconnect between when parents are expected to work and when childcare is available. The [full report](#) examines several interconnected challenges facing North Carolina:

- Access to affordable childcare
 - Workforce participation
 - Employee recruitment and retention
 - Economic stability for working families
- [New report examines if childcare meets working parents' needs - EdNC](#) [New report examines if childcare meets working parents' needs - EdNC](#)

National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER)

NIEER's research reveals that parents reading to preschool-age children was 85% pre-pandemic and declined to below 75% during and after the pandemic.

- [Parent-Child Shared Book Reading With Preschoolers During and After the COVID-19 Pandemic | National Institute for Early Education Research](#)

Congratulations to the state of Illinois for recently establishing a new Department of Early Childhood to make it easier for families to find the services they need under one agency.

Finally, look for a meeting link later today to be disseminated to the upcoming Smart Start Network Public Policy Meetings, with regularly scheduled meetings resuming shortly thereafter.

Thank you,

Marta



Marta T. Hester, M.A.
 Director of Public Policy and Advocacy
 984.221.1221

The North Carolina Partnership for Children
 1100 Wake Forest Rd, Raleigh, NC 27604



Implementation of 2026 Market Rates FAQ

This FAQ is an attachment to Change Notice Letter #26-05. Please refer to the Change Notice Letter for full policy and procedures.

1. When are the new Market Rates effective?

Response: The new Market Rates are effective October 01, 2026.

2. What is the Statewide Floor rate?

Response: The statewide floor rate is a benchmark—based on provider-reported data—used to set fair, market-aligned subsidy rates that support equitable access to care for families using Subsidy Child Care. The statewide floor rate was part of a critical investment that helped raise the rural child care reimbursement rates to a state average to help keep child care open and available in those communities.

3. What does the color coding mean on the Market rate Charts?

Response: The 2021 Statewide Floor Rates are highlighted in ORANGE, the 2023 Market Rates are highlighted in GREEN, and the current Market Rates – Hold Harmless Rates are in WHITE

4. What does Hold Harmless mean?

Response: Hold Harmless means that if a provider's Current Market Rate is higher than the recommended rates from the 2021 statewide floor or the 2023 county market rate, DCDEE will not lower the provider's rate. The provider is 'held harmless' from any rate decrease.

5. What is the 75th Percentile?

Response: The term "75th percentile" is used to describe the subsidy reimbursement level that enables a parent to afford 75 percent of the privately purchased care of a certain type in an area. To determine the 75th percentile, the private pay rates for all children served within a category of care are ranked by child from lowest to highest. Counting from the bottom (lowest rate), rates are counted three-quarters of the way up to identify the rate that represents the 75th percentile. Increasing reimbursement rates to the 75th percentile of the 2023 Market Rate Study is critically important to be compliant with the CCDF Federal rules.

6. How will a provider know the market rate being paid to them?

Response: Providers can review the Market Rate table on the Division's website at <https://ncchildcare.ncdhhs.gov/Home/DCDEE-Sections/Subsidy-Services/Market-Rates> to identify the rates for the county where their facility is located.

Examples (non-specified county)

5 Star Child Care Center - Infants		5 Star Family Child Care Home - Infants	
2023 Market Rate	\$ 1622.00	<i>2023 Market Rate</i>	<i>\$ 758.00</i>
2021 Statewide Floor rate	\$ 1400.00	2021 Statewide Floor rate	\$ 884.00
Child Care Center is reimbursed at the 2023 Market Rate		Family Child Care Home is reimbursed at the 2021 Statewide Floor Rate	

If you have additional questions about the information in this FAQ, please contact DCDEE or your Local Purchasing Agency / Local Department of Social Services.

NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES • DIVISION OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND EARLY EDUCATION

LOCATION: 1915 Health Services Way • Raleigh, NC 27607
MAILING ADDRESS: 2201 Mail Service Center • Raleigh, NC 27699-2200
www.ncdhhs.gov • TEL: 919-814-6300 • Fax: 984-236-8222

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

Bill Extending Educator Tax Deduction to Early Childhood Educators for the First Time

The bipartisan Supporting Early-Childhood Educators' Deductions (SEED) Act is set to become law, marking a key bipartisan victory for early childhood educators and an important step forward for federal child care policy.

The SEED Act will, for the first time, allow early childhood educators to claim the same federal tax deduction for out-of-pocket classroom expenses currently available to K-12 teachers. The legislation was led by Senators Susan Collins (R-ME) and Michael Bennet (D-CO), and Representatives Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Jimmy Panetta (D-CA), David Valadao (R-CA) and Maggie Goodlander (D-NH).

Update: The President signed the bill into law on September 18th.

The following is a statement from First Five Years Fund (FFYF) Executive Director Sarah Rittling:

"The SEED Act becoming law is a bipartisan recognition of the early educators who make child care possible for millions of families and help power our economy every day. This is also an example of what Congress can accomplish when lawmakers work together. At a time when families, educators, and providers continue to face enormous challenges, this progress shows that bipartisan action on child care is both possible and achievable.

"Early educators play an essential role in giving young children a strong start and building the foundation for their future success. But for too long, they have been left out of a tax benefit available to their K-12 peers, even as they spend their own hard-earned money on books, supplies, and materials for the children in their classrooms.

"We are deeply grateful to Senators Collins and Bennet, and Representatives Fitzpatrick, Panetta, Valadao and Goodlander, and the bipartisan lawmakers in both chambers who championed the SEED Act and helped get it across the finish line. We look forward to building on this momentum and continuing to advance bipartisan solutions that strengthen child care for families, educators, and communities across the country."



**NC Smart Start RFP
Bidders Conference
FY 2027-28 to FY 2029-30
September 15, 2026**

AGENDA

- I. Introduction**
- II. Welcome and Strategic Pillars**
- III. PFC and Smart Start Eligibility Requirements**
- IV. Timeline for Grant Submission, Review, and Approval**
- V. Application – Bidders Packet**
 - a. Grant Application (FORM)**
 - b. Smart Start Application**
 - c. Budget**
 - d. Budget Narrative**
 - e. Resources to Support Activities**
- VI. Technical Assistance (TA) for RFP Development**

Introductions

*Please briefly identify yourself
and your organization*



Vision: Successful children ensure a thriving community and long-term economic prosperity.

Mission: Be the driving force to engage partners to achieve lasting positive outcomes for all children, beginning at birth.



Our Strategic Pillars

A strong foundation for brighter futures.

These five strategic pillars guide our work to ensure all children, families, and communities have the opportunity to thrive.



1

Sustainable & Adaptive Organization

Strengthen organizational sustainability through leadership development, financial resilience, operational excellence, workforce retention, communication, and continuous improvement.



2

Equitable Access & Early Intervention

Ensure all children and families, particularly those facing barriers, can access high-quality early learning opportunities, developmental supports, and family-centered services.



3

Strong Workforce, Strong Outcomes

Support and strengthen the early childhood workforce through professional development, workforce pipeline development, retention strategies, and knowledge transfer.



4

Authentic Community Voice & Engagement

Create meaningful opportunities for families, providers, and community members to inform decisions, shape services, and strengthen trust within the early childhood system.



5

Connected Systems, Partnerships & Regional Leadership

Advance coordinated systems of care through strategic partnerships, shared solutions, regional collaboration, and collective action to improve outcomes for children and families.

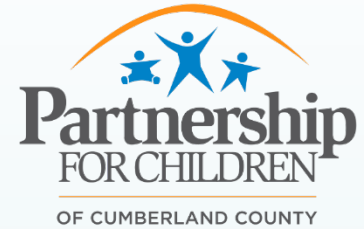
*Stronger Together
for Brighter Futures* 

Guiding Principles for Early Childhood Grantmaking

EFFECTIVE EARLY CHILDHOOD INTERVENTIONS PROMOTE ACADEMIC SUCCESS & IMPROVED WELL-BEING

- Improving the educational experiences of our children, beginning at birth, leads to a healthier community. Healthier communities have lower healthcare costs and more productive workforces.
- Early childhood experiences influence early brain development and contribute to later academic success and lifetime well-being.
- High-quality early childhood educational investments are cost effective strategies for improving academic success and promoting lifetime health.

Current Programs/Services



- **Early Education Resource and Referral Support & Professional Development for Child Care and Family Child Care Homes**
- **Consumer Education and Referral**
- **Child Care Health Consultants**
- **Parents for Higher Education Subsidy**
- **Workforce Compensation/Pipeline (WAGE\$)**
- **DSS Subsidy**
- **Family Connects Program – Universal Newborn Home Visiting**
- **Literacy – Dolly Parton’s Imagination Library**
- **Kaleidoscope Play and Learn**



Eligibility Requirements

Organization Type

- Organizations must be classified as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and as public charities under Section 509(a).
- Schools, municipalities, and government programs are eligible.
- Individuals, child care facilities, and for-profit organizations are not generally funded, except in some instances where there is no suitable tax-exempt organization to carry out a program or project.
- Organizations that do not meet the above criteria (1, 2 or 3) may not use conduit organizations to apply for funding.

Eligibility Requirements

Target Audience

- Serve the Cumberland County area **or** a regional project that serves families with children between prenatal and kindergarten entry **and/or** service providers of children between prenatal and kindergarten entry.

Capacity

- Organizations should have at least a **three-year history** of Evidence-based, Evidence-informed program services.

PFC & Smart Start Requirements

STATE ALLOCATION PROCESS

The NC Partnership for Program conducts an annual allocation process to review and approve funding for programs that meet the criteria of Smart Start's objectives based on both the availability of annual funding and the requirements of the state legislature.

Program activities are reviewed and approved by the Smart Start Board of Directors on an annual basis.

PFC & Smart Start Requirements

1. PFC follows a three-year strategic planning cycle, and the three-year Smart Start bidding process aligns with the Board's planning cycle and strategic directives.

a. Next Cycle Fiscal Years:

FY 2027-2028, FY 2028-2029, & FY 2029-2030

b. *Contracts for each subsequent fiscal year in the multi-year bidding period will be executed **ONLY** after satisfactory evaluation of performance, and availability of funds is confirmed each year.*

2. Smart Start funds must be allocated to programs that meet **Evidence-Based or Evidence-Informed (EB/EI)** criteria and evidence, as a legislative mandate.

PFC & Smart Start Requirements

3. Smart Start funding is required to be allocated the following portions:
 - a. 41-45% to Child Care Subsidy;
 - b. 25-29% (*totaling 70%*) for Child Care-related activities;
 - c. Remaining 30% to Family Support, Health, and System Support.
4. All Smart Start grantees must work collaboratively with PFC's Planning and Evaluation team to provide reports either through an existing software that can provide extracted reports, or via the PFC Salesforce Portal. If other data systems are used by Smart Start Grantee, the grantee must provide client-level demographic data, program participation data or related required outputs, and outcome data.
5. A 19% match is required for all Smart Start Local Partnerships; however, PFC requests documentation of a *minimum of 5%* for Smart Start grantees.

PFC & Smart Start Requirements

6. Fidelity Bonding Requirements

All grantees are required to have and maintain fidelity bond insurance, naming the Local Partnership as an additional insured or joint loss payee. Grantees who receive than \$100,000 in grant funds per fiscal year are also required to list the Local Partnership as a Certificate Holder, insure that amount of coverage is at least 50% of the total funds allocated, and that the policy remains in effect for at least one year after the end of the fiscal year in which funds are received.

Governmental entities are exempt from this requirement.

Smart Start Review Process

Decision Levels: Funding decisions are approved at three levels - a local committee, the local PFC Board, and the NC Partnership for Children.

- 1. Role of the Review Panel:** A review panel of representatives from the community, including staff from community organizations, and experts involved in children's issues and grantmaking, will review proposals and make funding recommendations to the PFC Board. PFC Staff provides only a supporting role.
- 2. Role of Board:** The PFC Board approves final local funding decisions.
- 3. Role of NC Partnership for Children:** NC Partnership for Children approves Smart Start Investments for Cumberland County.

Timeline for Annual Plan Review and Approval

September 15, 2026: Grant Application Form Available by close of business on the RFP Allocation website page at <https://ccpfc.org/about-pfc/smart-start-allocation-center/>

September 16 to November 13, 2026: Technical support from PFC Staff to grantees available.

November 17, 2026: Proposals due electronically by 11:59 p.m. on the due date.

November 18 to January 5, 2027: Review and prepare applications for External Reviewers.

Timeline for Annual Plan Review and Approval

January to March 2027

January 12, 2027

February 2, 2027

March 2, 2027

Partnership Review Process – **HYBRID & IN PERSON**

Smart Start Allocation: Reviewer Orientation

Smart Start Allocation: Grantee Presentations

Smart Start Allocation: Funding Recommendations

March 18, 2027

Executive Committee update on process and recommendations

April 29, 2027

The Partnership Board will review plan recommendations for activities/funding for approval

April-May 2027

Annual Submission of Activities (ASA) due to the North Carolina Partnership for Children*

End-May 2027

Partnership *initial* notification to applicants regarding proposal approval and initial approved budget.

Smart Start Application

Requirements

The following are **required** for submission of your FY 2027-2030 Smart Start Application:

1. Use of an Online Application Form
2. Upload of several files:
 - a) Activities
 - b) Personnel
 - c) Budget

Smart Start Application

Suggested Resources

- **PFC Strategic Plan 2026-2029**
- **Strategic Pillars**
- **RFP Allocation Grant Application Working file**
- **Smart Start RFP Full Form Sample**
- **Cost Principles**
- **Required document files**
- **Links for needs assessment data sources**

<https://ccpfc.org/about-pfc/smart-start-allocation-center/>

Application Assessment

We will review and score applications based on several key factors. Examples include:

- How well your activity is linked to **Smart Start EB/EI** programming or has sufficient research underpinning the program to be approved by NCPC.
- Relationship to the **Partnership's Strategic Pillars**.
- The strength of potential **impact** of required measures of outputs and outcomes.
- The **level of impact in the community** for children from birth to kindergarten, their families, and the early childhood community of professionals.
- An organization's **ability to leverage funding** to support the activity and its overall fiscal capacity.

Application Availability

NEXT STEPS

The online application will be available by close of business on September 15th

<https://ccpfc.org/about-pfc/smart-start-allocation-center/>

Technical Assistance

During the proposal development period, Zoom, telephone, and email technical assistance will be available. The following Fiscal and Program staff will provide support and guidance during the application process.

- Grant application, Evidence-Based or Evidence-Informed (EB/EI) Practices, Outcomes & Valid Assessment Tools, Grant Management Module:

Pamela Federline pfederline@ccpfc.org (Overall Grant TA, EB/EI Practices)

Heather Inman hinman@ccpfc.org (Outcomes and Assessment)

Steven Gipson sgipson@ccpfc.org (Grant Form Submission issues)

- Budget/Contract:

Marie Lilly mlilly@ccpfc.org (Budget and Justification)

Karen Staab kstaab@ccpfc.org (Fiscal Monitoring Support)

Michelle Downey mdowney@ccpfc.org (Contract Support)



Bidder's Application Packet

**Smart Start RFP Allocation Cycle
FY 2027-28 through FY 2029-30**

**September 15, 2026
10:00 am to 12:00 pm**

AGENDA
Smart Start RFP Allocation Cycle
FY 2027-28 through FY 2029-30
September 15, 2026

Facilitator: Pamela Federline, Vice President, Planning & Evaluation

- I. Introduction Pamela Federline
- II. Welcome & Strategic Pillars Mary Sonnenberg
- III. PFC & Smart Start Eligibility Requirements Pamela Federline
- IV. Timeline for Grant Submission, Review, and Approval
- V. Application
 - a. Grant Application – *Training and Use*
 - b. Smart Start Application
 - c. Budget
 - d. Budget Narrative
 - e. Resources to Support Activities
- VI. Technical Assistance (TA) for RFP Development: Available Dates to Request Support

The PowerPoint for today's session will be provided, as it has useful information to assist you with developing your proposal.

Eligibility Requirements

Organization Type:

- Organizations must be classified as tax-exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and as public charities under Section 509(a).
- Schools, municipalities, and government programs are eligible.
- Individuals, child care facilities, and for-profit organizations are not generally funded, except in some instances where there is no suitable tax-exempt organization to carry out a program or project.
- Organizations that do not meet the above criteria (1, 2 or 3) may not use conduit organizations to apply for funding.

Target Audience:

- Serve the Cumberland County area or a regional project that serves families with children between prenatal and kindergarten entry **and/or** service providers of children between prenatal and kindergarten entry.

Capacity:

- Organizations should have at least a **three-year history** of Evidence-based, Evidence-informed program services.

State Allocation Process:

The NC Partnership for Program conducts an annual allocation process to review and approve funding for programs that meet the criteria of Smart Start's objectives based on both the availability of annual funding and the requirements of the state legislature.

Program activities are reviewed and approved by the Smart Start Board of Directors on an annual basis.

Partnership for Children's Allocation Process:

1. PFC follows a three-year strategic planning cycle, and the three-year Smart Start bidding process aligns with the Board's planning cycle and strategic directives.
 - a. Next Cycle Fiscal Years: *FY 2027-2028, FY 2028-2029, & FY 2029-2030*
 - b. *Contracts for each subsequent fiscal year in the multi-year bidding period will be executed ONLY after satisfactory evaluation of performance, and availability of funds is confirmed each year.*
2. Smart Start funds must be allocated to programs that meet Evidence-Based or Evidence-Informed (EB/EI) criteria and evidence, as a legislative mandate.
3. Smart Start funding is required to be allocated the following portions:
 - a. 41-45% to Child Care Subsidy;
 - b. 25-29% (*totaling 70%*) for Child Care-related activities;
 - c. Remaining 30% to Family Support, Health, and System Support.
4. All Smart Start grantees must work collaboratively with PFC's Planning and Evaluation team to provide reports either through an existing software that can provide extracted reports, or via the PFC Salesforce Portal. If other data systems are used by Smart Start Grantee, the grantee must provide client-level demographic data, program participation data or related required outputs, and outcome data.

5. A 19% match is required for all Smart Start Local Partnerships; however, PFC requests documentation of a *minimum of 5%* for Smart Start grantees.

6. Fidelity Bonding Requirements

All grantees are required to have and maintain fidelity bond insurance, naming the Local Partnership as an additional insured or joint loss payee. Grantees who receive than \$100,000 in grant funds per fiscal year are also required to list the Local Partnership as a Certificate Holder, insure that amount of coverage is at least 50% of the total funds allocated, and that the policy remains in effect for at least one year after the end of the fiscal year in which funds are received.

Governmental entities are exempt from this requirement.

Smart Start Review Process:

Decision Levels: Funding decisions are approved at three levels - a local committee, the local PFC Board, and the NC Partnership for Children.

1. **Role of the Review Panel:** A review panel of representatives from the community, including staff from community organizations, and experts involved in children's issues and grantmaking, will review proposals and make funding recommendations to the PFC Board. PFC Staff provides only a supporting role.
2. **Role of Board:** The PFC Board approves final local funding decisions.
3. **Role of NC Partnership for Children:** NC Partnership for Children approves Smart Start Investments for Cumberland County.

Timeline for Annual Review and Approval:

September 15, 2026: Grant Application Form Available by close of business on the RFP Allocation website page at <https://ccpfc.org/about-pfc/smart-start-allocation-center/>

September 16 to November 13, 2026	Technical support from PFC Staff to grantees available.
November 17, 2026	Proposals due electronically by 11:59 p.m. on the due date.
November 18 to January 5, 2027	Review and prepare applications for External Reviewers.

January to March 2027	Partnership Review Process – HYBRID & IN PERSON
January 12, 2027	Smart Start Allocation: Reviewer Orientation
February 2, 2027	Smart Start Allocation: Grantee Presentations
March 2, 2027	Smart Start Allocation: Funding Recommendations

March 18, 2027	Executive Committee update on process and recommendations
-----------------------	---

April 29, 2027	The Partnership Board will review plan recommendations for activities/funding for approval
-----------------------	--

April-May 2027	Annual Submission of Activities (ASA) due to the North Carolina Partnership for Children*
-----------------------	---

End-May 2027	Partnership initial notification to applicants regarding proposal approval and initial approved budget.
---------------------	---

Requirements:

The following are **required** for submission of your FY 2027-2030 Smart Start Application:

1. Use of the Online Application Form – applications submitted via email or paper submissions will not be accepted.
2. Upload of several files:
 - a) Activities
 - b) Personnel
 - c) Budget

Required file documents will be available at <https://ccpfc.org/about-pfc/smart-start-allocation-center/>

Suggested Resources:

Planning and Evaluation has put together some useful resources to assist you with an application for a Smart Start activity. Suggested resources include, but are not limited to:

- PFC Strategic Plan 2026-2029
- Strategic Pillars
- RFP Allocation Grant Application Working file
- Smart Start RFP Full Form Sample
- Cost Principles
- Required document files
- Links for needs assessment data sources

Suggested resources will be available at Required file documents will be available at <https://ccpfc.org/about-pfc/smart-start-allocation-center/>

Application Assessment:

We will review and score applications based on several key factors. Examples include:

- How well your activity is linked to **Smart Start EB/EI** programming or has sufficient research underpinning the program to be approved by NCPC.
- Relationship to the **Partnership's Strategic Pillars**.
- The strength of potential **impact** of required measures of outputs and outcomes.
- The **level of impact in the community** for children from birth to kindergarten, their families, and the early childhood community of professionals.
- An organization's **ability to leverage funding** to support the activity and its overall fiscal capacity.

**THIS APPLICATION COVER PAGE IS A SAMPLE ONLY AND NOT FOR USE FOR USE
WITH ACTUAL SUBMISSION**

The Partnership for Children is using an electronic form developed for CCPFC for use with uploading applications for this allocation cycle and management of the review process. Therefore, the following is *illustrative* of the requested type of information, but it will appear in a different form in the software. We recommend you use Word to complete your application (a file to assist you will be provided), then transfer your information to the online form at this link: <https://ccpfc.tfaforms.net/5170646>

Smart Start Request for Proposal FY 2027-2030

Page 1:

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Agency/Organization: [Official name of your organization]

Applicant First Name:
[Primary Contact submitting the application]

Applicant Last Name:

Type of Organization: [Drop down menu]

Agency Status: [Drop down menu]

*As a Smart Start Direct Service Provider

Organizational Mailing Address:

City: State: Zip Code:

Is your Mailing Address the same as your physical address? Yes No

ORGANIZATION MAIN CONTACT INFORMATION

Website Address: Main Phone:

Fax (Optional):

PROGAM CONTACT

Program Contact First Name: Program Contact Last Name:

Title:

Phone: Email Address:

FISCAL CONTACT

Fiscal Contact First Name: Fiscal Contact Last Name:

Title:

Phone: Email Address:

CEO/AUTHORIZED SIGNATURE

Authorized Signature First Name:

Authorized Signature Last Name:

Title:

Phone:

Email Address:

PAGE 2: PROJECT INFORMATION

PROJECT/ACTIVITY NAME: **TEXT FIELD**

SMART START FOCUS AREA: **Checkbox; select one**

- ☐ EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION
☐ FAMILY SUPPORT
☐ HEALTH

What PFC Strategic pillars will your activity address? **Checkbox; Best answer**

Sustainable & Adaptive Organization: Strengthen organizational resilience through diversified funding, leadership succession, modernized systems, and staff retention

Equitable Access & Early Intervention: Ensure early, equitable access to high-quality early learning, intervention, and navigation support.

Strong Workforce, Strong Outcomes: Invest in workforce compensation, development, and stability to improve child and family outcomes.

Authentic Community Voice & Engagement: Create accessible, meaningful opportunities for families and communities to shape systems and decisions.

Connected Systems & Strategic Partnerships: Reduce silos and maximize impact through intentional, cross-sector partnerships.

FUNDING REQUEST FOR FY 2027-2028 **[Numeric field]**

ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT: \$_____ (Only applicable to Subsidy Programs)

PROGRAM SERVICES GRANT REQUEST: \$_____

REQUIRED ACTIVITY DESCRIPTION

After reading this proposal, reviewers should understand the activity's intent and why it exists, as well as how it will operate. Assume the reader has little familiarity with the entity or activity.

Smart Solutions: Activities funded with Smart Start dollars must be *Evidence-Based or Evidence-Informed*. Most activities funded will be part of the NC Partnership for Children's Smart Solutions. Please select which description best fits the proposed activity. If approved, supporting documentation will be required.

___ **Current NCPC Smart Solution**

___ **Activity not currently approved by NCPC (selecting this option will require the applicant to provide research substantiating the activity's efficacy).**

- a) Please identify the specific Smart Solution activity you plan to implement.

TEXT FIELD

- b) Please describe evidence supporting your organization's successful implementation of your proposed activity. If your organization is not a current Direct Service Provider, please describe your organization's success in implementing the Smart Solution or activity you are applying for, or experience generally operating similar programs.

TEXT FIELD

- c) If you propose varying from the model program identified in any way, please describe those changes and the rationale for the change(s). Use **N/A** if there are no anticipated changes.

TEXT FIELD

- d) Please describe how your program or activity specifically supports the **Strategic Pillars of Partnership for Children**.

TEXT FIELD

Contract Activity Description (CAD): Each activity will have a Contract Activity Description (CAD) that becomes part of the contract between the Partnership for Children of Cumberland County and the funded organization. NCPC standardized (e.g., required) CADs for an activity **must be used**, even if you plan to add additional information to describe your activity. If an activity is approved for funding that uses a non-standardized CAD, North Carolina Partnership for Children (NCPC) must approve it. If unsure whether an activity has a standardized CAD, please refer to the RFP Allocation website for assistance. *Importantly, every word in your description has meaning and will be used to assess and monitor your activity's progress if funded.*

TEXT FIELD: WORD COUNT LIMIT [500]

PAGE 3: ACTIVITY NARRATIVE

Needs Statement

1. What issues are you addressing?
2. Describe the NEED for your program (please include relevant local and/or state statistics).
3. WHAT data or trends show a need for this activity?
4. Does it fill a gap in services?
5. If applicable, please explain how the activity is unique in the community or how this service will enhance, expand or work with similar services currently offered in Cumberland County.

TEXT FIELD – WORD COUNT LIMIT [750]

Target Population

1. Please describe WHO the activity will serve.
2. Describe the target population(s), including eligibility criteria for participation.
3. Describe how this activity will fit into the continuum of services available to your selected target population.

[Example: The activity will target preschoolers and their caregivers who are not in a formal preschool program]

TEXT FIELD – WORD COUNT LIMIT [250]

Program or Activity Elements

1. Describe the strategies and/or activity components.
2. When describing programs with defined models, please provide an outline of the scope of services, and the anticipated duration and frequency of the activity each time offered.
3. Also describe WHEN and WHERE the service/activity will operate.

Each strategy/activity will translate to output(s) and outcome(s) in the *Activity Evaluation and Data Collection Plan*. Some outputs and outcomes will be required by the NC Partnership for Children.

TEXT FIELD – WORD COUNT LIMIT [500]

Please upload: *Activity Evaluation and Data Collection Plan*

Collaborations:

1. Describe how the activity will collaborate with other resources in the community to ensure the activity's success. For example, list the types of support and resources from organizations and agencies other than Smart Start.
2. Include organizations and agencies that collaborate in developing or delivering the activity. Consider collaborative opportunities that your agency may not currently participate in but could benefit or support your target population's services.

TEXT FIELD – WORD COUNT LIMIT [500]

Family Engagement: If applicable, how will you promote the program to and engage families in the activity and related family outreach opportunities with PFC?

**Program marketing by contractors receiving Smart Start funds is a contractual requirement with PFC.*

[If your activity is not family engagement or outreach related, please write N/A]

TEXT FIELD – WORD COUNT LIMIT [500]

Addressing Barriers to Access & Equity:

1. Identify barriers of access and equity your target population may encounter to participate in your proposed activity and provide a plan to address each anticipated or identified barrier.
2. Plans should include goals, strategies, persons responsible for strategy implementation, and a timeframe for achieving goals.

TEXT FIELD: WORD COUNT LIMIT [500]

Personnel:

1. BRIEFLY describe the roles/services each staff position provides to implement an activity, and the required credentials, as applicable.
2. Who will oversee the program's overall project management, supervision, and program model fidelity (even if not Smart Start-funded)?
3. If no personnel currently manage an activity, what is the recruitment plan?

TEXT FIELD: WORD COUNT LIMIT [250]

Please Upload: Attach the **FTE Personnel Worksheet** and description(s) with clearly defined qualifications, education, and responsibilities for each position listed. Job descriptions will be required if approved for Smart Start Funding. (Sample Below)



Smart Start Request for Proposal Personnel Worksheet FY 2024-FY 2027

Position Title	FTE	Specific services/tasks of the role	Required Credential
<i>Example: Kaleidoscope Facilitator</i>	<i>.25</i>	<i>Facilitate KPL sessions</i>	<i>Kaleidoscope Training Certificate: KPL 101</i>

*Add additional lines as needed.

Please Note: If awarded Smart Start funds, applicants must provide a complete job description with clearly defined qualifications, education, and responsibilities for each position listed.

Sustainability:

Describe how your organization will sustain the activity and/or scale the activity after the three-year allocation cycle.

TEXT FIELD – WORD COUNT LIMIT [150]

PAGE 4. BUDGET INFORMATION

A. Grants and Materials:

- 1) Will this activity include *grants, stipends, incentives, or scholarships* of any kind? **[Yes] [No]**
- 2) IF Yes, please list ALL items intended to be given away free of charge to participants. For example, provide list of materials being provided to participants, a description of the intended purpose for the materials.

TEXT FIELD – WORD COUNT LIMIT [100]

B. BUDGET AND NARRATIVE JUSTIFICATION

Please complete the required Budget Template. The spreadsheet includes a section for a related line item budget narrative that includes appropriate justifications. If you are providing a per unit service, a methodology must be included for the rate used. Please include cash and/or in-kind contributions where applicable. All contributions must meet auditing requirements.

Please Upload: *Please upload a detailed activity budget via the Excel form provided.*

ADDITIONAL ATTACHMENTS:

While not prohibited, other attachments must **directly** support your application and will be limited to a single .pdf attachment of **five** pages or less. For example, you may include a sample of marketing materials, but please do not submit tables of data your reviewers would have to interpret or narrative that does not fit in a word count limited section. Importantly, If you have a question about an attachment you would like to submit, please contact Pamela Federline at pfederline@ccpfc.org.

Please Upload: *Additional Attachment (Please upload only 1 additional attachment if needed)*

SECTION 6. Application Signature

Please sign and date below. The completed application must include the signed and dated statement below.

I understand that **[FILL IN NAME OF APPLICANT AGENCY – TEXT FIELD – WORD COUNT LIMIT [10]]** will be held accountable for the above requirements outlined in the RFP, and others as contained in the contract that will be executed if the agency or entity receives PFCCC funding. I also certify that I will fully disclose, to the best of my knowledge, any conflict of interest between this entity or agency, its staff, officers or directors and the Partnership.

Individual Authorized to Sign Grant Submission Name: **TEXT FIELD – WORD COUNT LIMIT [5]**

ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE FIELD: _____

DATE: DATE FIELD [AUTO POPULATE] _____

For technical assistance, please contact those noted below for specific support:

Grant application, Evidence-Based or Evidence-Informed (EB/EI) Practices, Outcomes & Valid Assessment Tools, Logic Model:

Pamela Federline pfederline@ccpfc.org (Overall Grant TA, EB/EI Practices)

Heather Gallagher hinman@ccpfc.org (Outcomes and Assessment)

Steven Gipson sgipson@ccpfc.org (Grant Form Submission issues)

Budget/Contract:

Mary Lilly mlilly@ccpfc.org (Budget and Justification)

Karen Staab kstaab@ccpfc.org (Fiscal Monitoring Support)

Michelle Downey mdowney@ccpfc.org (Contract Support)

Thank you for your interest in Smart Start!

For more information, please contact

Pamela Federline

Vice President

Planning & Evaluation

pfederline@ccpfc.org