2026-2027 Grant Priorities

Below are the Child Care Services Grant priorities for July 1, 2026 – June 30, 2027.

On your grant application, you will indicate how your grant proposal meets the five priorities. Each priority will be scored on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the highest score. Priorities that are left blank will be given a score of 1.

Priority #1 - Health and Well-being

Children do better when early care and education programs are safe and healthy, provide nutritious meals and snacks, and offer many opportunities for active play. This foundation allows children to take full advantage of learning opportunities. Eligible equipment and activities that promote health and well-being in your program meet this priority.

Priority #2 - Relationships with Families

Children do better when families are engaged in their children's education and development. Building two-way relationships with families helps strengthen a sense of belonging among all children in the program as they experience respect and support for their home cultures and languages. Eligible materials that support the mental health of young children and their families meet this priority.

Priority #3 - Teaching and Relationships with Children

Children do better when early care and education teachers and providers are caring and engaging, have quality learning environments, use a research-based curriculum, and support children's growth and development. Teachers and providers make a big difference in children's lives. These practices help build relationships and give children what they need to learn and grow. Eligible materials, activities, strategies, assessment, and curriculum development to promote social/emotional, physical, and intellectual development in all children meet this priority.

Priority #4 - Assessment and Planning for Each Individual Child

Children do better when their teachers and providers know them well, understand their levels of development, and use the information to plan instruction. Assessment information is accurate and fair when it is gathered in a way that includes observation in natural settings, and a child assessment tool that is valid and reliable. Eligible materials that support child development (infant through school-age) in areas such as literacy, social & emotional growth, science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM), and include assessment support meet this priority.

Priority #5 - Professionalism

Children do better when their teachers and providers have professional preparation that includes higher education coursework, combined with on-going training and support. These qualifications have been found to be consistent predictors of program quality, strong child-adult interactions, quality learning environments, and positive child outcomes. Eligible learning opportunities and professional resources meet this priority.