

Attachment A: Best in Class Program Description 2025-2026

The Best in Class program aims to address the need for high-quality early childhood experiences for all children in the year prior to kindergarten. The 2021 67th Legislative Assembly recognized this need and established Best in Class to ensure that children in North Dakota receive the best possible preparation for kindergarten.

Best in Class programs are effectively supported by coaches and continuously make improvements that demonstrate a strong return on investment for the state and its youngest learners. By emphasizing individualized learning experiences driven by play-based curriculum and authentic assessment, the Best in Class program helps ensure that every child in North Dakota is prepared for success in kindergarten and beyond.

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Best in Class Program Design

Best in Class is designed to drive results – high quality, supported interactions between adults and children based on developmentally appropriate practices. Best in Class supports participating programs and educators using assessments to individualize learning and create better outcomes for children.

Programs Eligible to Apply

North Dakota early childhood programs that provide quality experiences and serve children who have reached **age four before August 1st in the year of enrollment** are eligible to apply. This includes:

Program Types	Licensed Child Care Licensed child care settings (center or group), inclusive of those operated in connection with a church, business, or organization, that are in good licensing standing.	Head Start Grantee Federally funded Head Start programs.	Local Education Agency Public/Private Programs that are operated by educational facilities, public or private that are committed to completing the Four-Year-Old Program Approval (SFN 1304) every two years. Four-Year Old Program Approval Health and Human Services North Dakota
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AND

North Dakota Early Childhood Quality Improvement Systems	Licensed child care programs participating in Bright & Early ND (ND QRIS) with a current rating of Step 3 or 4, and in good licensing standing. Licensed child care program meeting the standards and expectations of a nationally recognized early childhood accrediting entity.	Head Start Grantees in compliance with Federal Head Start Monitoring Protocol.	Local Education Agencies in compliance with ND Department of Public Instruction Desk Audit Approval System, in good fiscal standing, and in compliance with all Federal Title Program Monitoring; has obtained approval for Pre-K grade configuration from the Department of Public Instruction.
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Program Requirements

Awarded programs will operate in compliance with the program requirements and research evaluation criteria.

Programs must:

- Operate each section for a minimum of 400 hours over 32 consecutive weeks. Programs operating at least 800 hours over 32 consecutive weeks are prioritized.
- Admit children of all learning abilities who are **four years old before Aug. 1st, 2025**.
- Prioritize 50% of the slots in each section to assure inclusion of all children.-
- Charge tuition based on Best in Class sliding fee scale (unless tuition fees are less or waived).
- Be willing to admit children who receive child care assistance.
- Maintain teaching staff to child ratio, one teaching staff to every ten children.
- Comply with current North Dakota requirements related to qualifications, training, and professional development of staff delivering services.
- Participate in 15 hours of early childhood specific professional development (lead teachers are required).
- Adhere to expectations established by HHS for coaching, monitoring, fiscal oversight,

and data collection/reporting (Teaching Strategies GOLD).

- Incorporate at least ten hours of research-based family engagement.
- Ensure families are aware of Best in Class family participation components.
- Purchase materials and equipment with awarded funds to meet Best in Class Environment Standards upon completion of an environment needs list.
- Use Teaching Strategies GOLD® for ongoing observation and assessment under HHS Teaching Strategies™ license.
- Implement a research-based curriculum of the program's choosing. Creative Curriculum is offered to participants at no cost.
- Coordinate and offer health screenings and referrals (developmental, hearing, vision, dental & physical). Screenings are to be completed no sooner than six months prior to the first day of attendance and no later than November 30th.
- Adhere to snack and meal guidelines.
- Participate in programmatic research, including randomized studies that examine core components of program design and program outcomes.

Awards

The primary purpose of the ND Best in Class award is to offset the revenue difference a program may experience as a result of using the Best in Class Sliding Fee Scale.

All funds are subject to availability of funding.

New Best in Class programs approved with a large group size of 11-20 children and operating at least 800 hours are eligible for an award up to \$120,000; programs approved to operate with a small group size of 8-10 children and operating at least 800 hours will receive an award up to \$60,000. Based on group size, programs operating 400 to 799 hours in at least 32 consecutive weeks will receive half the awarded amount.

Returning Best in Class programs funding model will be based on four levers - group size, tuition dependence, school district's free and reduced priced student enrollment and schedule of operation to determine awarded amount.

Baseline Award

- Group of 11-20 – up to \$120,000
- Group of 8-10 – up to \$60,000

Tier 1 calculation

- Tuition Dependent* and/or School District with 50% or more Free and Reduced Priced Student Enrollment = 100% of award dollars
- Not Tuition Dependent or a School District with 49% or less Free and Reduced Priced Student Enrollment = Award decreases by 50%

**If the total budget to operate your Best in Class classroom is made up of 76% or more of tuition from families, your program is considered tuition dependent.*

Tier 2 calculation

- Part-time program (400-799 hours) = 50% of Tier 1 amount
- Full-time program (800 hours+) = 100% of Tier 1 amount

Distribution of Funds

Disbursement of funds is directly correlated with the Best in Class deliverables which are awarded four times throughout the funded year. Deliverables ensure each program meets the expectations of Best in Class.

See [Attachment A.1](#) to review the 2025-2026 deliverables. The business manager, director, administrator, and teacher are expected to complete the deliverables in each milestone.

Budget and Eligible Use of Funds

HHS will request a budget upon award and upon project closeout; a template will be provided. Best in Class requires awardees to invest a portion of their award into improvement of classroom environments.

New large group programs will be expected to budget a minimum of \$20,000 for classroom environments. New small group programs will be expected to budget a minimum of \$10,000. All returning programs will be expected to budget a minimum of 5% of their award for the classroom environment. **All** programs will be expected to work with their assigned Best in Class coach to create a purchasing plan after completing an environment needs assessment. See The Learning Environment section below for more information.

The awardee budget will also need to include evidence of matching/in-kind funds, equal to 15% of the award amount to demonstrate compliance with program requirement that each Best in Class award must be matched with cash match or in-kind match contributions equal to 15% of the total award.

The awarded funds will support the provision of quality early childhood experiences, including expenditures related to staffing, training, equipment, and supplies; as well as supporting families to participate in referral activities that result from screening. Awarded funds may not be used for construction.

Examples: Eligible uses of funds

Personnel Costs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Salary and benefits for teacher and assistant teacher/para• Qualified substitute teachers• Cost of background checks for new teachers
Health/Screening/Referral Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cost of vision, hearing, dental, & physical screenings• Gas cards for families to attend referral appointments
Professional Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Registration fees, food, lodging and transportation
Education Equipment & Supplies	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Instructional materials and supplies• Classroom furnishings• Classroom electronic/technology equipment• Curriculum Costs• Playground equipment and supplies
Other Operating Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Classroom maintenance and cleaning supplies• Computer support for classroom• Family engagement activities• Safety equipment and supplies• Advertising and outreach• Snacks and meals

Tuition

Programs are not required to charge tuition. Programs that charge tuition to families must follow the Best in Class Sliding Fee Scale, unless the tuition is less. The primary purpose of the ND Best in Class award is to offset the revenue difference.

- Families with household income of 61% to 100% of state median income will be subject to a maximum tuition charge per child of 3% of household income.
- Families with household income of 100% to 150% of state median income will be subject to a maximum tuition charge per child of 5% of household income.
- Families with household income greater than 150% of state median income will be subject to a maximum tuition charge of 7% of household income, not to exceed the maximum CCAP rate for preschool age.

2025-2026 Best in Class Sliding Fee Scale

% of HH inc	1%			3%			5%			7%		
	60% of SMI			100% of SMI			150% of SMI			>150% SMI		
Household Size	Annual Income	Co-pay capped at 1% of household income		Annual Income	Co-pay capped at 3% of household income		Annual Income	Co-pay capped at 5% of household income		Annual Income	Co-pay capped at 7% of household income	
		Max fee (full time)	Max fee (part time)		Max fee (full time)	Max fee (part time)		Max fee (full time)	Max fee (part time)		Max fee (full time)	Max fee (part time)
2	< \$50,222	\$ 42	\$ 42	\$50,223 - \$83,703	\$ 209	\$ 209	\$83,704 - \$125,554	\$ 523	\$ 523	>= \$125,555	\$ 1,040	\$ 866
3	< \$62,038	\$ 52	\$ 52	\$62,039 - \$103,397	\$ 258	\$ 258	\$103,398 - \$155,096	\$ 646	\$ 646	>= \$155,097	\$ 1,040	\$ 866
4	< \$73,855	\$ 62	\$ 62	\$73,856 - \$123,092	\$ 308	\$ 308	\$123,093 - \$184,638	\$ 769	\$ 769	>= \$184,639	\$ 1,040	\$ 866
5	< \$85,672	\$ 71	\$ 71	\$85,673 - \$142,787	\$ 357	\$ 357	\$142,788 - \$214,180	\$ 892	\$ 866	>= \$214,181	\$ 1,040	\$ 866
6	< \$97,489	\$ 81	\$ 81	\$97,490 - \$162,481	\$ 406	\$ 406	\$162,482 - \$243,722	\$ 1,016	\$ 866	>= \$243,723	\$ 1,040	\$ 866
7	< \$99,705	\$ 83	\$ 83	\$99,706 - \$166,174	\$ 415	\$ 415	\$166,175 - \$249,261	\$ 1,039	\$ 866	>= \$249,262	\$ 1,040	\$ 866
8	< \$101,920	\$ 85	\$ 85	\$101,921 - \$169,867	\$ 425	\$ 425	\$169,868 - \$254,800	\$ 1,040	\$ 866	>= \$254,801	\$ 1,040	\$ 866
9	< \$104,136	\$ 87	\$ 87	\$104,137 - \$173,560	\$ 434	\$ 434	\$173,561 - \$260,340	\$ 1,040	\$ 866	>= \$260,341	\$ 1,040	\$ 866
10	< \$106,351	\$ 89	\$ 89	\$106,352 - \$177,252	\$ 443	\$ 443	\$177,253 - \$265,879	\$ 1,040	\$ 866	>= \$265,880	\$ 1,040	\$ 866

* If household receives funding from Child Care Assistance (CCA), Co-pay requirements of CCA supersede Best in Class (BIC) fee schedule, unless BIC fee is less than families CCA Co-pay.
 **SMI = "State Median Income"

Enrollment / Randomized Selection Process

Awarded programs will follow program requirements that outline the selection of children for enrollment in the awarded Best in Class section. All children must have reached the age of four before Aug. 1st of the current program year. Each Best in Class section will establish an enrollment set-aside of 50% to assure inclusion of children who may not otherwise have an opportunity to participate in a high-quality early childhood experience before kindergarten.

Set aside qualifications:

- Household income is less than or equal to 60% of state median income. Income is determined by utilizing categorical eligibility established via other federal programs (ex. SNAP, CCAP, Free/Reduced Meals) or via documentation provided by the family.
- The family is experiencing homelessness per [McKinney-Vento Definition](#)
- Children who have an Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Non-Categorical Delay (NCD). A Non-Categorical Delay is when a disability is not clearly identified, but delays are evident, and the child is receiving services.
- Child who is in Foster Care.

- The Child Information Form collects the information needed for the program to prioritize children who meet the 50% set aside slot criteria. The Child information Form found on the website should be completed by each family at the time of application for a four-year-old program to determine eligibility. [Best in Class | Health and Human Services North Dakota](#)
- If a program has more applicants in the set-aside pool than it has set-aside slots available, students will be selected through a randomized selection process within the set-aside pool.
- Any students not selected in the first-round of the randomized selection (i.e., set-aside pool) will then be included in the non-set-aside pool.
- Students in the non-set-aside pool will then be selected for enrollment based on a randomized selection protocol.

Staffing & Ratio Requirement

Large Group Size 11-20 Staffing must include a minimum of two adults – a qualified teacher and an auxiliary teacher – who must always be present. If either staff is absent, a qualified substitute must be present.

Small Group Size 8-10 Staffing requires a minimum of one qualified teacher – who must always be present. If the teacher is absent, a qualified substitute must be present.

Best in Class requires participants to follow the ratio of one staff member to every 10 children and a maximum of 20 children.

Teaching Staff Qualifications

	Licensed Child Care	Head Start Grantee	Local Education Agency Public/Private
Lead Teacher	Must meet Bright & Early of ND Step 3 or 4 lead teacher qualifications	Must meet Head Start teacher qualifications	Must have the credentials to teach preschool through the ND Education Standards & Practices Board
Auxiliary Teacher (para, aide, assistant)	Must meet Bright & Early of ND Step 3 or 4 auxiliary teacher qualifications	Must meet Head Start auxiliary teacher qualifications	Must meet Paraprofessional requirements held by the school

Change in Staff

A "Change in Staff" form must be completed and given to a Best in Class coach alerting them to the change in staff. The BIC coach will work with the staff and admin/director to create an action plan identifying the expectations while the staff is on leave, or the position is vacant. This action plan must be submitted and signed off by the coach, teacher and administration prior to the lead teacher going on leave.

Staff Turnover

Best in Class understands unknown circumstances which happen results in turnover of teachers. Once a qualified replacement is hired an orientation meeting will be scheduled with a coach to determine the next steps and create an individualized professional development plan. All lead teachers must be trained and reliable in Teaching Strategies GOLD® in 90 days. If the lead teacher is working towards her reliability in GOLD® when a checkpoint is due, the program is expected to identify a staff member reliable in GOLD® to observe, document and finalize checkpoint ratings. All three checkpoints are required to be completed to receive payments and to continue participating in Best in Class.

Long Term Substitutes

Best in Class requires substitutes to follow all the requirements of deliverables. This includes implementing comprehensive research-based curriculum, attending coaching visits and finalizing checkpoints (IRR reliable staff).

Family Participation

Best in Class is committed to partnering with families to support children's early learning, development, and well-being. We recognize that parents are their children's first teachers, and we encourage families to be engaged in their child's learning at home and in his or her early care and education program because it positively impacts health, development, and educational outcomes.

Family Enrollment Packet Best in Class requires programs to disburse Family Enrollment Packets to all families which includes the program design and releases of information. Best in Class Family Enrollment Packet includes:

- Welcome Letter to Families
- Child Information Form
- Health Screening Permission Form

Family Engagement is a required component of Best in Class. The Best in Class coaches will work with awarded programs to identify a minimum of 10 hours of family engagement opportunities and submit the Family Engagement Form as evidence to meet milestone requirements.

Family engagement includes:

- Monthly communication via newsletter, communication app, or other.
- Sharing children's development and learning two times per year via family conferences.
- Family engagement activities. (Sample list will be provided)
 - Must include at least one kindergarten transition activity that involves the families.

Attendance

Regular attendance ensures children benefit from participating in a Best in Class program and is a good measure of family engagement. It also establishes a routine that will benefit children and support their success in school and as lifelong learners.

Best in Class End of the Year- Family Survey

Best in Class participants will be provided with a link to the Best in Class-End of the Year- Family Survey for parents/guardians to provide feedback on their experience with Best in Class. Teachers will be asked to distribute the link to parents/guardians and strive for a 50% or higher completion rate.

Snacks & Meals

Children who maintain a consistent healthy eating pattern are more likely to excel socially and academically. Best in Class programs that operate a full day schedule must include a designated snack and mealtime. Programs that operate a half day schedule (three or more hours), must include a designated snack time. If the program provides snacks or meals, it must be healthy. If families provide snacks or meals, a policy outlining guidelines must be established to promote healthy eating. Best in Class meals and snacks must align with [Nutrition Standards for CACFP Meals and Snacks](#) and [A Guide to Smart Snacks in School](#).

Health Screening & Referrals

Best in Class awarded programs are required to offer health screenings and referrals for each child enrolled. Best in Class coaches will help coordinate health screenings with community partners as needed. Award funds may be used to ensure screenings are completed.

The Health Screening Permission form must be signed for each child and on file before screenings may be completed. Screenings are to be completed no sooner than six months prior to the first day of attendance and no later than November 30th. If documentation of a child's well visit from a physician, dentist, or eye doctor is provided within 12 months of the first day of attendance, this may serve in place of screenings.

Physical Health Screenings includes measuring a child's height, weight, blood pressure, and calculating body mass index (BMI).

Vision Screenings includes, but is not limited to, checking for visual acuity. The screening is a way to find out if a comprehensive (complete) eye exam is needed.

Hearing Screenings includes using an audiometer to measure hearing.

Oral Health Screenings are completed by using a flashlight and small mouth mirror to look for any signs of dental disease. The screenings are not dental examinations.

Developmental Screening

As part of Best in Class, each program will complete a developmental screening using an approved tool to pinpoint developmental progress and catch delays in young children – paving the way for meaningful next steps in learning, intervention, or monitoring. If the child is already on an IEP, a developmental screening is not needed. Suggested screening tools include, Ages & Stages Questionnaire Third Edition (ASQ-3), Brigance Early Childhood Screen II or III, or Developmental Indicators for the Assessment of Learning, Third or Fourth Edition (DIAL-3, 4).

Program Monitoring and Evaluation

Best in Class participants will be monitored to ensure the fiscal, operations, and programming are being implemented with fidelity. New programs will receive an onsite monitoring visit during their first year. Returning programs may be included in a random selection of onsite monitoring.

Data Collection

Awarded programs are required to enroll all students into the North Dakota State Automated Reporting System (STARS) and Teaching Strategies™. It is important to ensure the individual child profiles in STARS align with Teaching Strategies, most importantly the date of birth and if the child is on an IEP. Reviewing and updating the child profiles is considered a program deliverable for each milestone.

Programs **must** enter each child's STARS State ID into Teaching Strategies as an "Identifier". Guidance and technical assistance will be provided to support the access and on-going reporting needs of each program. Best in Class programs will participate in ongoing program study to support long-term child outcomes.

The Learning Environment

Best in Class programs shall provide high quality learning environments that align to the Best in Class Environment Standards. Having a developmentally appropriate learning environment and adequate free

choice time promotes the implementation of play throughout the day. Play provides benefits for cognitive, social, emotional, physical, and moral development for children from all socio-economic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2006; Elkind, 2007) (Zigler, E. & Bishop-Josef, S., 2006)

The Best in Class Environment Standards are a list of materials and equipment that support developmentally appropriate, high quality hands-on learning experiences for children. The Environment Standards are designed to ensure that all learning experiences and environments are delivered with intentionality to promote strong child outcomes aligning with the North Dakota Early Learning Standards. Best in Class requires all programs to follow the Environment Standards and work with their coach to purchase items they may need.

- Purchasing materials and equipment to meet BIC Environment Standards will be a priority use of awarded funds and on-going throughout the year.
 - Review the Best in Class Environment Standards located on Best in Class website
 - Complete an Environment Needs Assessment with the current materials and equipment available.
 - The coach will conduct an onsite informal environment observation of classrooms to determine any additional needs.
 - The coach and teacher will collaborate to create a prioritized purchasing list based on needs and budget, which will then be submitted to administration for approval.
 - Program purchases materials.
 - The coach and teacher will work together to create a plan to implement new materials into the environment.
 - All programs will complete Environment Standards Checklist and submit as evidence to meet milestone requirements.

[North Dakota Early Learning Standards and Curriculum](#)

The [Early Learning Standards](#) promote the understanding of early learning and development; provide a comprehensive set of expectations for children's development and learning; and guide the design and implementation of curriculum, assessment, and instructional practices with young children.

Best in Class programs shall use the ND Early Learning Standards to guide and inform their planning and facilitation of comprehensive, developmentally appropriate, high-quality learning experiences for children and in their work with families.

Best in Class programs are **required** to use a **comprehensive research-based curriculum** that aligns to the ND Early Learning Standards. Teaching Strategies Creative Curriculum will be provided to all programs. Professional Development will be accessible and highly recommended to support teachers in implementing Creative Curriculum.

Programs that choose not to implement Teaching Strategies Creative Curriculum are required to provide evidence that the curriculum being used aligns to the North Dakota Early Learning Standards. Evidence may be available from the curriculum publisher.

[Assessment](#)

Best in Class programs are required to use Teaching Strategies GOLD®, a formative assessment tool, for observations and assessment under the HHS contract and cannot use a private license while participating in Best in Class.

Teaching Strategies™ GOLD® guides the appropriate alignment of the standards with teacher's instruction. Assessment informs professionals' practices. Full implementation of GOLD® is expected through the assessment cycle: teachers observe children throughout the day, document their development/skills, and use the information to plan instruction.

Programs will be required to implement ongoing assessment of their children and complete three GOLD checkpoints throughout the school year (Fall 9/1-11/30, Winter 12/1-2/28, Spring 3/1-5/31). Teachers must collect enough documentation, with preliminary levels, to accurately support assessment of each child's knowledge, skills, and abilities.

Best in Class recommends when assessing, objectives need at least two pieces of quality documentation for an accurate assessment rating at checkpoint. Coaches can give further guidance and support as some objectives may need more (or less) documentation, to help support the instructional process for child outcomes.

Professional Development

Lead Teachers must complete a minimum of 15 hours of early childhood specific professional development face-to-face or virtually by June 1st of the contracted year.

First year Best in Class teachers must complete Teaching Strategies™ Introduction to GOLD®. Best in Class participants will have access to Teaching Strategies Quorum e-learning platform. This offers training to support implementation of curriculum, assessment, and many other early childhood specific courses.

Interrater Reliability Teachers are required to obtain Interrater Reliability Current certification through Teaching Strategies by November 15th to ensure accurate completion of Teaching Strategies GOLD checkpoints. If the lead teacher is working towards her reliability in Gold® when a checkpoint is due, the program is expected to identify a reliable staff in Gold® to observe, document and finalize checkpoint ratings. All three checkpoints are required to be completed to receive payments and to continue participating in Best in Class.

- Completion of Interrater Reliability takes a minimum of five hours
- Teachers will be required to recertify every three years.

Fidelity Focus: Best in Class Coaches offer professional development opportunities monthly to all participants. The topics are specific to program requirements and coaching content. Fidelity Focus training brings teachers together to learn and grow from other early childhood educators. The professional development schedule is released in August for the upcoming school year. Teachers are highly encouraged to participate and may use these trainings hours towards the 15-hour requirement.

Auxiliary Teachers are highly recommended to complete early childhood specific training if they will be assisting with the assessment process.

Children with Special Needs and Individualized Education Plan

Best in Class awardees must plan for children with disabilities to ensure that materials and equipment are available to support children with differing abilities.

Children who are identified as having a disability should receive services and staffing in accordance with their IEP. Best in Class teachers should have a copy or access to all IEPs for the children in their classroom. Teachers should attend all IEP meetings and work directly with the Local Education Agency (LEA) to ensure progress is

being made towards meeting IEP goals for any child with a current IEP in place. Licensed child care programs can access inclusion support services from USpire ND to include getting connected to your LEA.

Program Supports

Coaching

All Best in Class participants will receive onsite and virtual coaching from a Best in Class coach using the Practice-Based Coaching model to ensure consistency across all programs. Best in Class coaches support teachers in all components of the Best in Class program including, but not limited to, environment and materials, Teaching Strategies curriculum and GOLD assessment, professional development, family engagement, and health screenings and referrals. Coaching will include observation, dialogue, inquiry/reflection, goal setting and action planning to maximize child outcomes and provide quality experiences for children.

Best in Class Coaching Visits

Participation Level	Frequency of Visits
New participant and/or new program	4 Onsite (minimum) & Virtual
Returning Participant	2 Onsite (minimum) & Virtual

*** Coaching visit frequencies may vary based on the needs of the program.*

Health and Safety

Research shows that children thrive in a healthy and safe environment. The Best in Class awardee is expected to provide a healthy and safe environment by following the Best in Class Health and Safety Standards. In the first year, upon completion of a Health and Safety Self-Assessment, programs will receive an on-site visit from a health specialist and one virtual follow up visit. The health specialist will share best practices for health and safety related topics. All Best in Class teachers will be required to attend a one hour- Health and Safety Training annually.

Health Specialist Visits

Participation level	Number of visits
New Program	Attend Health and Safety Training, One Onsite Visit, and One Virtual Visit
New Participant, Returning program	Attend Health and Safety Training, and One Virtual Visit
Returning participant	Attend Health and Safety Training

*** Health Specialist visit frequencies may vary based on the needs of the program.*

Attachment A.1: Best in Class Program Deliverables

Milestone #1: Planning Deliverable

Due: September 30th

Payment: 30% of Awarded Funds

- Submit a Four-year old program calendar (includes days scheduled and days off, start and end dates and Best in Class operating hours)
- Teacher completes coaching requirements – Verified by Coach
 - Attends orientation (All Teachers)
 - Environment Self-Assessment (New Teacher)
 - Action Plan (Returning Teacher)
- Submit a preliminary budget using program budget template, including documentation of required matching/in-kind funds, to Best in Class Program Administrator
- Completion of entering child and program level data entry in STARS & Teaching Strategies (program & child unique ID)
- Submit a classroom roster, including children’s first and last name
- Submit proposed Family Engagement Form (minimum 10 hours being offered)

Milestone #2: Implementation

Due: December 31st

Payment: 35% of Awarded Funds

- Teacher completes coaching requirements – Verified by Coach
 - Fall data reflection form (All Teachers)
 - Assessment Cycle (New Teacher)
 - Action Plan (Returning Teacher)
- Teacher completes or has current Interrater Reliability (IRR) - verified by coach
- Submits Environment Standards Checklist – Verified by Best in Class program administrator
- Submit Best in Class Screenings Spreadsheet
- Teacher completes and finalizes Fall Checkpoint (November 30)
- Submit a classroom roster, including children’s first and last name

Milestone #3: Implementation

Due: March 31st

Payment: 30% of Awarded Funds

- Teacher completes coaching requirements – Verified by coach
 - Winter Data reflection form (All Teachers)
 - Action plan (All Teachers)
- Teacher completes and finalizes Winter Checkpoint (February 28)
- Submit In-Kind Matching Spreadsheet
- Submit a classroom roster, including children’s first and last name

Milestone #4: Award Close-out

Due: May 31st

Payment: 5% of Awarded Funds

- Teacher demonstrates meeting Health & Safety Requirements – Verified by Best in Class program administrator
- Teacher completes coaching requirements – Verified by coach
 - Action Plan (All Teachers)
- Submit Professional Development Form (teacher completes 15 hours of PD)
- Administrator and teacher complete Best in Class end of the year survey
- Share Best in Class “End of the Year” family survey link to families, strive for a 50% completion rate
- Monitoring visit completed (completed between October and May 1st)
- Submit Final Budget Form
- Submit Final Family Engagement Form
- Teacher completes and finalizes Spring Checkpoint (May 31)
- Submit a classroom roster, including children’s first and last name