

**Best in Class Frequently Asked Questions April 2022**

*The following questions were submitted during the Q & A learning session.*

**Q: We want to apply for two rooms of 9 students, one morning and one afternoon session. Last year we were advised against this and instead applied for 1 room of 18. Is that still the suggestion?**

A: Grant applications are being accepted for both group sizes.

**Q: Do you have a method for knowing if household income is 60% or less than the state median income? We want to connect this to free/reduced lunch status, but F&R is based on being 130% (free) or 185% (reduced) of the poverty level...so I don't think that's connected to state median income.**

A: Yes, we will supply you with a worksheet that families can complete to identify the household income or if a child has a delay or disability. Below is a chart outlining 60% of the State Median Income.

Family Size	Household Income 60% of State Median Income
2	\$42,467
3	\$52,460
4	\$62,452
5	\$72,444
6	\$82,437

**Q: Where can we get a copy of the worksheet?**

A: It will be posted on the Best in Class website.  
<https://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/childfamily/bestinclass.html>

**Q: Would we need to change the curriculum that we already use?**

A: No, the curriculum used needs to align with the ND Early Learning Standards. All programs that are awarded the grant will receive Creative Curriculum. It is a wholistic curriculum that looks at all areas of development and learning; social emotional, language, literacy, cognitive, physical, math, and English language acquisition (for dual language learners).

**Q: If a small school and have only 9, does the income threshold still apply?**

A: Each grantee is expected to set aside 50% of the slots for children at or below 60% state median income **OR** have an identified disability or developmental delay. A group size 9 would be asked to fill 5 slots with children meeting the set aside requirements. A group size 18, 9 slots.

**Q: Is this grant for just one year of funding?**

A: Yes, this is a yearly competitive grant.

**Q: Can we use the curriculum the rest of our school is already using?**

A: The curriculum used needs to align with ND Early Learning Standards. Creative Curriculum is available at no cost to grantees.

**Q: Is this the second year of the BIC program? Did the grantees from last year have to apply again this year?**

A: Yes, this is the second year North Dakota is offering Best in Class grants. The grantees from 2021-2022 had the option to complete an Interest Application for 2022-2023 to see if they are eligible for another year.

**Q: Is this a competitive grant? How many will be awarded? Do you know how much money for BIC there is this year?**

A: Yes, this is a competitive grant. The state accepted interest applications from current grantees and can support additional programs in year two. The number of programs that can be supported with this competitive grant will be based on the group size and hours of operation of successful applicants.

**Q: When thinking group size, would I only use the children that are 4 already?**

A: All children must be four-years old by August 1, 2022 to be enrolled in an awarded Best in Class group.

**Q: When filling out the application, do we use projected number of 4-year-olds to current 4 years old?**

A: You should count/project the children who will be four-years old by August 1, 2022. We would encourage you to ask for a birth certificate to verify the age of child being enrolled.

**Q: For income eligibility do we need to know how many children meet the threshold at enrollment?**

A: Yes, we will supply you with a worksheet to help you identify families. You do not need to know how many children will meet this threshold when applying for the grant.

**Q: What happens if we don't meet the 50% set aside slot requirement, do we not get the grant?**

A: You are expected to hold spots and recruit children who meet the eligibility requirements for the 50% set aside slot requirement. DHS is partnering with Brown University to target market families that might not think they can afford to participate in early childhood experiences to help you meet that target. Grantees will work with their coach if they experience challenges in meeting this requirement to be fully enrolled at the beginning of the school year.

**Q: We are a small school, what if we have a projected enrollment of 16 for next year? Would we not meet the large group requirement and be required to have two sections instead?**

A: One option is to collaborate with surrounding small communities to fulfill the group size of 18. Another option is to have one group size of 9 participating in Best in Class and the second group size not participating in Best in Class.