



# Early Childhood Scholarships

Interim Joint Committee on Families & Children

Wednesday, June 21, 2023

# Presenter

---

- Dr. Bridget Murray
- Childcare program owner for 25 years
- Interdisciplinary Early Childhood Education (IECE) program coordinator at Henderson Community College since 2000



# Scholarship History



Kentucky Invests in Developing Success

## Kentucky's Early Childhood Initiative Summary

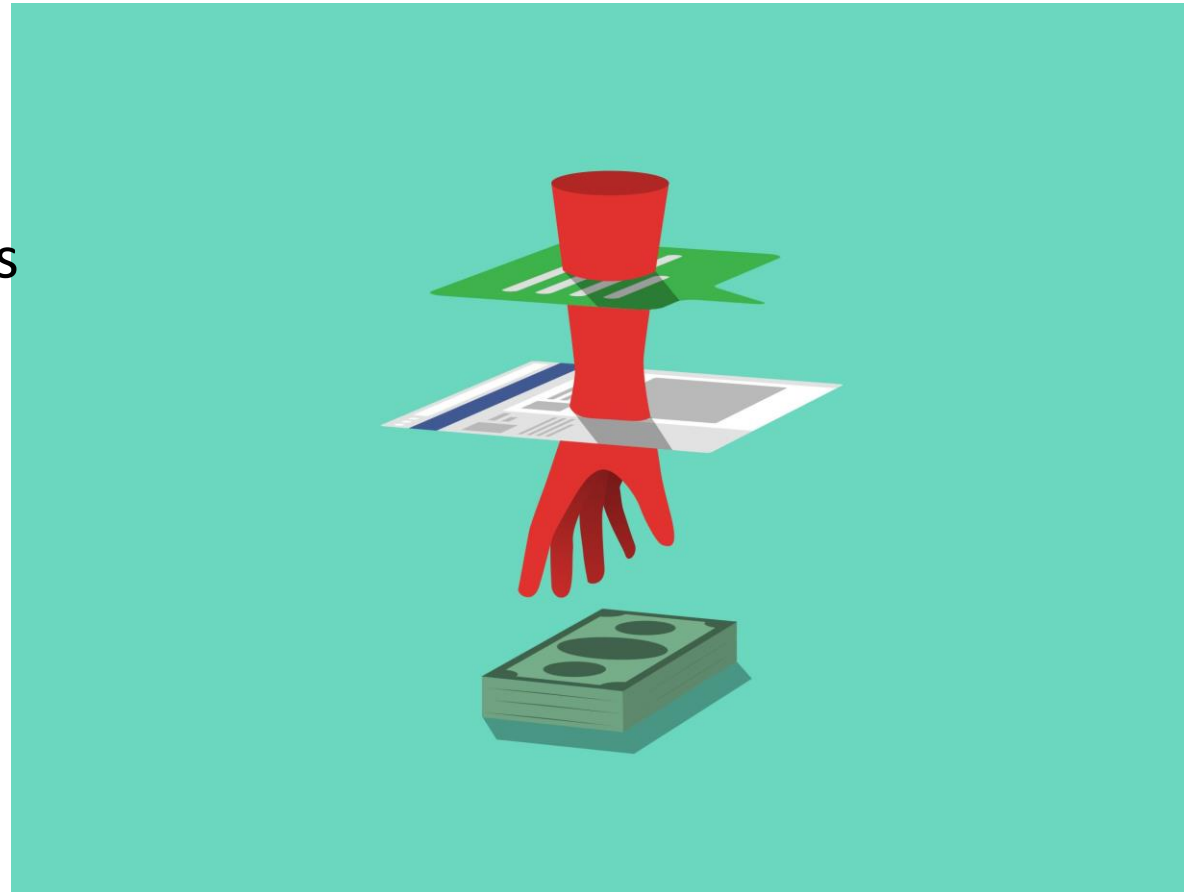
In order to reach the goal that **all young children in Kentucky are healthy and safe, possess the foundation that will enable school and personal success, and live in strong families that are supported and strengthened within their communities**, 25% of Kentucky's Phase I Tobacco Settlement dollars will fund the early childhood initiative.

**Scholarship Fund for Child Care Providers:** To provide a scholarship fund, administered through the Ky. Higher Education Assistance Authority, to those who work in child care at least 20 hours per week. The funds assist personnel in moving through a credentialing system that begins at entry level and proceeds through post-secondary education. **FACT:** Quality of child care is closely associated with the education and training levels of the child care providers. Early care and education personnel are among the most poorly paid individuals in the workforce and therefore need assistance and incentive to increase their educational achievement and to permit workers to move up the career ladder in early childhood. Contact: Albert Fox – 502/564-8341 or Lee Chance – 502/564-2524

# Change in Funding Stream

---

In 2016, the Tobacco Settlement Dollars were no longer allocated to the Kids Now Initiative.



[This Photo](#) by Unknown Author is licensed under [CC BY-SA](#)

Division of Child Care made the decision to use the civil penalties to fund scholarships. Civil penalties are assessed when a childcare program has a licensing violation.

A \$1000 civil penalty will cover tuition for less than 2 courses at the AAS level.

# Scholarship Comparison

In 2021, when the ARPA funded college scholarship was designed, it met the needs of most childcare workers. Regulation changes were approved for KHEAA to administer the program.

Kids Now Scholarship	ARPA Funded Scholarship
Scholar must be working in a regulated childcare program at least 20 hours per week.	Scholar must be working in a regulated childcare program at least 20 hours per week.
All scholars are required to complete the FAFSA.	All scholars are required to complete the FAFSA.
Scholars can complete an Associate or Bachelor level early childhood degree.	Scholars can complete an Associate or Bachelor level early childhood degree. Directors or administrators from regulated childcare or Head Start can complete a Master's degree in early childhood.
Preschool Assistants in public school are eligible for the scholarship.	Preschool Assistants in public school are not eligible for the scholarship due to the federal funding for childcare only.
Head Start staff are not eligible for funding.	Head Start staff are eligible if they work in a program that is state licensed and their employer does not offer any tuition assistance.
Limited to 9 credit hours per semester, if enrolled in more hours the scholarship could not be used.	No limit on credit hours
\$1800 per year, tuition only. Covers approximately 3 courses per year.	Up to \$6,305 for master's degree. (Approximate AAS tuition and fees per semester \$2280-\$3240)
Employer pays \$50 toward books.	Employer pays \$50 toward books.
Scholars are eligible for \$100 related expense stipend if all classes are completed with at least a grade of C.	Scholars are eligible for \$100 related expense stipend if all classes are completed with at least a grade of C.

# Who are IECE students?

Traditional students entering from high school	Many have completed child development coursework. Some have earned a CDA credential
Staff from licensed childcare centers (public and private) and homes	Some have completed a CDA credential Seeking certificates, AAS, or bachelor's degree
Owners and Directors	May be seeking CDA credential, Director's Credential, AAS, bachelor's or master's degree
Preschool assistants	Currently employed in the school system working with IECE certified teachers and many intend to earn degrees to become lead teachers
Head Start staff	May be seeking CDA credential, AAS, or bachelor's degree
Non-traditional students	Many have experience as a parent or with private care for children
Second career students	Some students have associate or bachelor's degree in another field but are now working in an early childhood setting

# Good News

---

- The enrollment in the IECE program increased by 57% when the new scholarship became available
- Large increase in the number of students seeking the Director's Credential
- Over 50% of the IECE students enrolled for fall will be utilizing the scholarship
- The number is likely to increase for spring as new students are encouraged to seek employment in childcare to be eligible for the scholarship

# Current Scholarship

---

## Positives

- Removed the credit hour barrier
- Covers tuition and fees
- Staff employed at least 20 hours per week in regulated family childcare, center-based (public and private) are

## Areas for

## Improvement

- All Head Start staff and Public Preschool Assistants should be eligible for 2- and 4-year degree scholarships to increase their knowledge and support for the at-risk children in their programs





# Outcomes

- Parents have quality childcare options
- Educators are qualified to support the needs of children and families
- Children are prepared for future learning



*Thank you for your  
support of  
Kentucky's children.*

- Bridget Murray, Ed.D
- [bridget.murray@kctcs.edu](mailto:bridget.murray@kctcs.edu)
- 270-831-9679