



Legislation Text

File #: 0620-2020, **Version:** 1

This ordinance authorizes Columbus City Council to enter into a grant agreement with the Columbus Early Learning Centers in support of the organization's Step-Up Family Funding program.

CELC a non-profit early learning center that serves over 300 children per year is seeking a grant in the amount of \$29,000.00 to be used as Step-Up Scholarships for families. A Step-Up Scholarship will allow families experiencing the effects of the benefits cliff or a lapse in funding to pay \$90.00 per week as they work to establish a stable, secure economic future; removing the significant barrier of high quality child care cost, allowing families to access the child care they need for employment and economic self-sufficiency. Our goal is to maintain children's enrollment at our centers, with their parent(s) being able to work and/or go to school continuously.

One of the biggest barriers to employment for those working in hourly wage jobs or entry level salaried positions is the prohibitively high costs of child care and the dearth of quality, accessible public providers. Parents are often left to choose between the lesser of two evils: low-quality care or forgoing needed pay to stay at home and care for a child themselves - which could push the family into poverty.

This lack of affordable childcare is one the largest barriers preventing CELC mothers from achieving economic self-sufficiency. In the January 2018 Spark Report, published by the Women's Fund of Central Ohio, the prohibitive cost of high-quality childcare continues to be a barrier for economic self-sufficiency for women in Ohio. To cover this basic need, federal, state, and local programs help subsidize the cost of childcare for our lowest income families. Gaps occur for many reasons such as; cuts in hours or being laid off from work, or a small raise that increases income to the point where families are responsible for 100% of their childcare costs and the pay increase does not cover that cost. Approximately 25%-40% of our CELC families experience this need for gap funding every year. The Step-Up Scholarships will provide opportunities and the ability for a family to create an opportunity for economic self sufficiency- while their children are being prepared for kindergarten, giving the child the chance to also succeed. With these dollars, CELC will be able to help between 8-20 families with reduced cost childcare services.

Fiscal Impact: Funding is available within the Neighborhood Initiatives subfund.

Emergency action is requested in order to immediately provide Columbus Early Learning Centers with the resources necessary to continue their Step-Up Family Funding program.

To authorize Columbus City Council to enter into a grant agreement with the Columbus Early Learning Centers in support of the organization's Step-Up Family Funding program; to authorize an appropriation and expenditure within the Neighborhood Initiatives subfund; and to declare an emergency. (\$29,000.00)

WHEREAS, One of the biggest barriers to employment for those working in hourly wage jobs or entry level salaried positions is the prohibitively high costs of child care and the dearth of quality, accessible public providers.

WHEREAS, Columbus City Council desires to enter into a grant agreement with the Columbus Early Learning Centers ("CELC") to provide financial assistance in order to help between 8-20 families with reduced cost childcare services; and

WHEREAS, an emergency exists in the usual daily operation of the city in that it is immediately necessary to authorize a grant agreement with CELC in order to avoid any delay in initiating funding for the program, for the preservation of the

public health, safety and welfare; now, therefore,

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF COLUMBUS:

SECTION 1. That Columbus City Council is hereby authorized to enter into a grant agreement with the Columbus Early Learning Centers in support of the organization's Step-Up Family Funding program.

SECTION 2. That the City Auditor is hereby authorized and directed to appropriate \$29,000.00 in the Neighborhood Initiatives subfund, fund 1000, subfund 100018, to Columbus City Council per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 3. That the expenditure of \$29,000.00 or so much thereof as may be needed pursuant to the action authorized in SECTION 1 of this ordinance, is hereby authorized in the Neighborhood Initiatives subfund, fund 1000, subfund 100018 per the accounting codes in the attachment to this ordinance.

SECTION 4. That for the reasons stated in the preamble hereto, which is hereby made a part hereof, this ordinance is hereby declared to be an emergency measure and shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage and approval by the Mayor, or ten days after passage if the Mayor neither approves nor vetoes the same.