

Buell Foundation Capital Funding Guidance

The Buell Foundation's capital grants are limited to capital campaigns for licensed child care and early childhood education serving infant through preschool. Nonprofit organizations, public entities, faith-based organizations, and Native American Tribes in Colorado are eligible to apply. All capital funds are reserved for projects that:

1. Open new licensed child care and preschool slots through building purchases, construction, expansion, or renovations within the next 24 months; or
2. Include renovations to meet or maintain licensing requirements for early childhood education.

We support capital projects that:

- Prioritize access to a minimum of 10 hours of weekly child care and early childhood education for low-income families (eligible projects must intend for at least 15% of children served to come from low-income families, **defined using both the Federal Poverty Level and the local self-sufficiency standard**).
- Increase access to *quality* early childhood education (i.e., eligible projects should plan to achieve a Level 3-5 Colorado Shines rating within the first two years of operating).
- Demonstrate a viable five-year business plan, including thoughtful consideration for time required to fully staff and enroll the early childhood program.
- Have developed a thoughtful capital campaign with at least 25% of the total capital project budget committed in fundraising before Buell Foundation funds can be awarded. Note that additional context will be considered when reviewing funds raised to date, including anticipated bond measures or pending DOLA and USDA grants.

When making funding decisions, we prioritize:

- Projects serving rural or underserved populations (e.g., low-income families, teen parents, communities of color, etc.) where there are fewer individuals and institutions providing financial support for capital projects.
- Projects with evidence of engaging community members to inform project priorities and best meet community needs (e.g., a parent advisory board, focus groups with local families, etc.).
- Projects developed in collaboration with local stakeholders, such as the region's early childhood council, a family resource center, the school district, and/or elected officials.
- Projects with strong engagement and support from the organization's governing board.
- Projects that intend to leverage public funding as sustainable revenue sources once the program is operating (e.g., the Colorado Child Care Assistance Program and Universal Preschool Program).

We do not fund:

- Capital projects that do not directly support licensed child care or preschool.
- Capital projects for child care or preschool programs that do not have a demonstrated commitment to serving low-income families.
- Capital projects that exclusively construct or enhance playgrounds for early childhood programs *unless* the playground renovation is specifically needed to address a licensing violation.
- Capital projects specific to a privately leased facility that cannot commit to delivering child care or preschool to the community for a minimum of five years.
- Capital projects specific to a public facility that cannot commit to delivering child care or preschool to the community for a minimum of 10 years.
- Capital projects for whom the child care or preschool operator cannot commit to uphold the Buell Foundation's non-discrimination policy for all vendors, employees, and families served.