



For Immediate Release

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North Ed Receives \$80,000 Grant to Develop Child Care Workforce

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. – Northwest Education Services (North Ed) Early Childhood was recently awarded a share of \$1.2 million in Child Care Innovation Awards grant funding provided through the [Early Childhood Investment Corp.](#) (ECIC) that will be used to stabilize the region’s child care industry through workforce development.

North Ed Early Childhood was awarded \$80,000 to build a cohort of professionals by providing incentives focused on attracting and retaining workers in early child care positions. The project is targeted to begin in July 2022 and would cover Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska and Leelanau counties.

The grant money would be used to support individuals in the early child care industry with continued mentoring, employment and education placement, and further career pathway navigation. Funding would also be used to recruit, enroll and provide payment to 30 individuals as they complete the 120 hours of coursework needed to finish an accelerated three-week timeline to obtain their Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential.

“This project has the potential to quickly impact the number of knowledgeable and qualified early child care providers in our region, and we are immensely grateful for the funding provided through the Early Childhood Investment Corp.,” said Yvonne Donohoe-McCool, North Ed’s director of Early Childhood. “By removing financial barriers that exist for people seeking to work in early child care, and providing incentives to attract and retain those workers, we can take a crucial step to stabilize the region’s child care network and increase access to services for our families.”

Anyone with questions or who might be interested in enrolling in the accelerated CDA course may contact Allison Hayes at ahayes@NorthwestEd.org or 231.922.6437.

In addition to North Ed, partner agencies that are part of the core team working to further the initiative include:

- Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency Head Start
- Northwestern Michigan College
- Northern Early Childhood Support Network
- Northwest Resource Center – Great Start to Quality

- Great Start Collaborative
- TEACH

Availability of child care options is scarce throughout Michigan, leading Gov. Gretchen Whitmer in May to announce the Caring for MI Future initiative, a \$100 million plan to develop 1,000 new child care programs by the end of 2024.

An estimated 44% of Michiganders live in child care deserts, which is defined as when the ratio of children ages 0-5 to the number of licensed child care spots is greater than three, according to the [Michigan League for Public Policy](#).

The grant funding awarded to North Ed Early Childhood will assist in establishing pipelines by providing the support needed to develop the early child care workforce by tapping existing resources, such as North Ed Career Tech's Early Education program. The Early Education program offers area high schoolers foundational knowledge of working in the early childhood industry and an opportunity to work toward their CDA credential. The program is available to juniors and seniors from Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska and Leelanau counties. For more information on the program, visit the [Career Tech website](#).

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