

Budget Proposal Narrative

2023 Strategic Budgeting Process

Please carefully review the [Call for Proposals](#) with particular attention to the evaluation criteria before beginning this application. Criteria should be addressed throughout the proposal narrative.

Section 1: Proposal Title and Department Contact

Proposal Title: **Child Development Center – Expand Capacity & Affordability**

Division: **Enrollment & Student Services**

College/Unit: **WWU Child Development Center**

Department Contact: **Linda Beckman & Carolyn Mulder**

Section 2: Proposal Summary and Problem Statement

Check the most relevant box (one selection only).

Priority Program and Service Areas:

- Graduate Programs
- Inclusive Student Success

Identified Structural or Legacy Funding Needs (to be used sparingly and in conjunction with Division VP)

- Core Infrastructure, Safety, and Regulatory Compliance
- Remaining funding needs from partially funded prior request
If checked, please identify original funding request amount and actual funding received in narrative section
- Other [Click here to enter text](#)

Statement of Purpose (One Page or Less):

What are the challenges or opportunities being addressed? How will the new investment(s) in this proposal address this challenge or opportunity? What are the expected outcomes if this proposal is funded?

CHALLENGES: WWU's Child Development Center (the CDC) is a high-quality early learning program meeting national standards and is state licensed for 59 children aged 2-5 years in four classrooms. It has not grown in over 50 years despite the University's enrollment nearly doubling in that time with an increasing number of low income/Pell Grant eligible and first-generation students as well as traditionally underrepresented faculty and staff, many of whom are likely to need childcare. The Center holds 30% of its capacity for children of students who are parents (18 spaces) with the remaining 70% (41 spaces) available for children of faculty/staff. Space constraints and limited subsidies prevent the CDC from serving more low-income families and students who are parents and who cannot attend college due to childcare needs. The CDC provides service nearly year-round but has

been operating with minimum permanent staffing levels. Its program offerings are limited, only serving the 2-5-year age range and offering no drop-in care, and only limited part-time spaces.

The CDC has an exceptionally long waiting list (150 and growing) which means the center could triple in size and still not meet demand. In addition to the childcare shortage at WWU, there is a critical shortage of services in Whatcom County which is now identified as a “childcare desert.” According to a 2021 childcare study conducted by the United Way and WWU, by 2025, Whatcom County will need to increase ages 0-5 childcare capacity by 5,817 slots to meet demand. Statewide, the shortage is real and unaffordable for many: Childcare prices for licensed centers in Washington State rose 55% during the COVID pandemic; prices for independent childcare rose by 83%.

Many of our faculty, staff and students are left with the challenge of figuring out alternatives to meet their childcare needs. It is a significant problem for recruiting and retaining faculty, staff and students. New employees are often thrilled to hear that WWU has a high-quality childcare program, only to find out that they would be so low on the waiting list that there is no hope to get in and must try to piece together alternative care in a County with a severe shortage of childcare. The high cost of living in the PNW adds to the fiscal strain for families needing affordable childcare.

OPPORTUNITY: The CDC is well positioned to **EXPAND CAPACITY by 50% or 28 children** by leveraging its existing management, operational and curricular structure in addition to shared use of the playground and kitchen facilities. The CDC received a one-time grant of \$250,000 from Sen. Murray’s Congressionally Directed Spending line to plan and implement a small-scale facility expansion. The funding will enable the CDC acquire a modular childcare classroom building, expanding capacity from four classrooms to six by Fall or Winter 2023-24. The expansion is planned to enable the CDC to extend services to 12- or 18-month-olds rather than starting at 2 years. Additional childcare tuition will help fund 3 new teaching staff and operations. However, approximately \$71K in permanent supplemental funding is needed for the 4th teacher position.

The current proportion of State/Institutional dollars funding the current program for 59 children is approximately 11% (\$99,000) with the primary other revenue sources of faculty/staff/student childcare tuition payments (\$662,000), a small amount of USDA revenue, and an annual allocation from the Associated Students (\$108,500 in Services & Activity Student Fees) that supports discounted tuition for students. This AS allocation is in some jeopardy given reduced fee revenue from lower enrollment; an increase cannot be requested for expansion. The CDC utilizes 5,020 sq ft within the Fairhaven residence halls and is not charged rent, effectively receiving a significant in-kind subsidy from the Housing & Dining Auxiliary System which is funded with room, board and other student fees.

The proposal requests institutional support of \$74K to fund one of the four additional permanent teaching positions. Other additional costs would include student employees and program operations to be covered by childcare tuition and available state childcare subsidies. Various other grant funds are also being requested for one-time set up costs.

The CDC is a critical resource for the Woodring College of Education Early Childhood Education (ECE) program, serving as a learning laboratory for future teachers. Woodring College of Education, Early Childhood Education (ECE) program currently offers ‘in kind’ support to the center through professional development which is mutually beneficial to the ECE BAE program students and to the

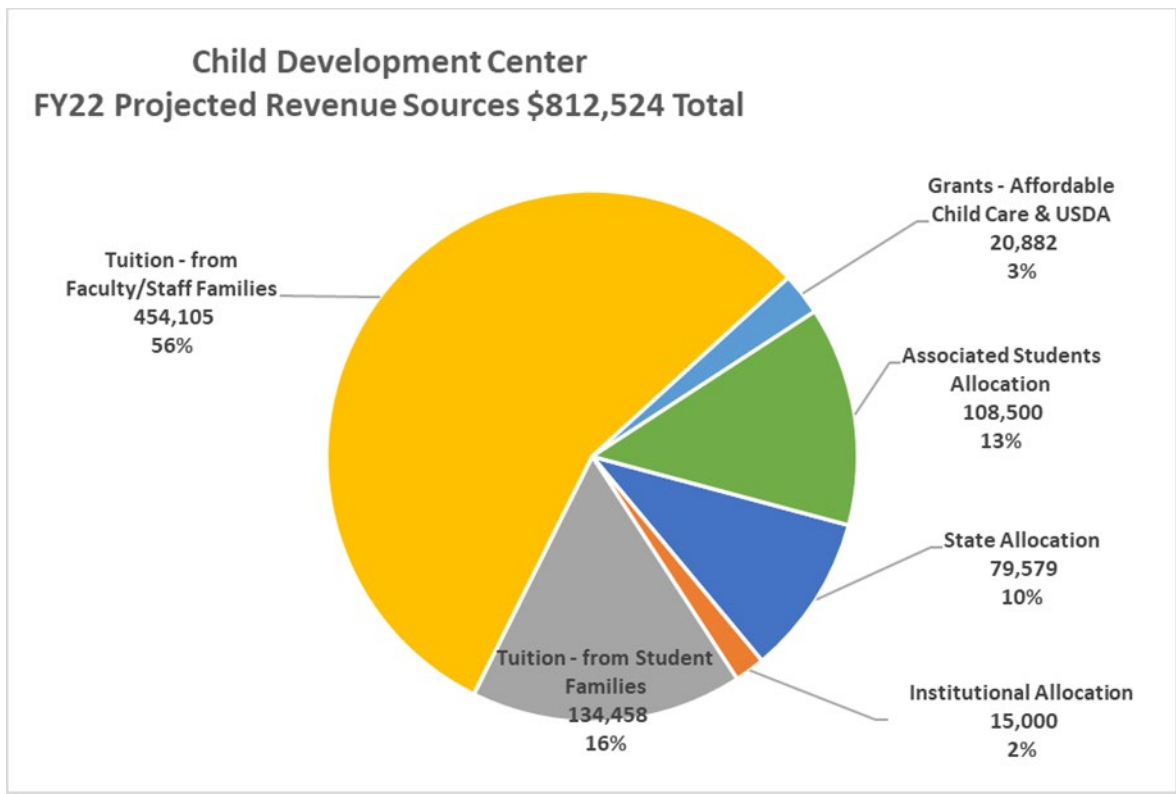
teachers in the CDC. Expansion of the CDC would mean that some student teachers would not have to leave the area for their practicum work, enhancing student retention in a program that directly supports a critical need in Washington State. Additional student employment opportunities would be provided through on campus expansion as well.

Summary of Proposed New Investments:

Summarize the new investments included in this proposal (total monetary amount, number of FTE and type of positions, and other expenses). Explain the need for any goods and services or professional contracts.

The institutional request is for 0.96 FTE Early Childhood Program Specialist 3 Teacher (11.5 months) at a cost of approximately \$74K. The expansion from 4 to 6 classrooms will require hiring 2 lead teachers and 2 assistant teachers plus student employees, operational costs, etc. Approximately 75% of this cost can be covered with increased revenue from childcare tuition, so the University's investment of \$74K will be highly leveraged. These funds support not only an important service for faculty, staff and student recruitment and retention, but because the CDC operates as a practicum site for Woodring College it is also an important academic resource.

Accessibility requires sufficient capacity AND affordability. The CDC's cost to run the program even without paying all facility costs totaled over \$800,000 in FY22 and with rising costs are projected to total nearly \$900,000 in FY23. This is an average of over \$13,000 per child. The program relies heavily on fees from families. State and institutional funding comprise only 11% of all revenues at \$99,000. Student parents are offered a sliding scale based on income. These discounted rates for students are funded with some direct grant funding and a significant \$108,500 allocation from the Associated Students using Services & Activities Fees that all WWU students pay. This subsidy averages \$6,000 per student child per year. There is no sliding scale for faculty/staff children.



With increased space and incremental hires of teachers, the existing high quality accredited program could be leveraged to provide additional care with economies of scale. CDC expansion would also leverage other resources, such as state and federal childcare subsidies for low-income families. It would support WWU’s academic program by providing increased capacity for student practicums and “learning labs” through partnership with WWU’s Woodring College of Education.

As demand and costs increase, these cannot all be passed on in the form of higher childcare fees, especially for those families with higher financial need who are already struggling with high housing costs in this area. The pandemic has made the already dire childcare shortage/affordability issue into a crisis that’s affecting equity, economic recovery and the future of young adults and children. Childcare is being seen as an important public good with high societal payback. The number of studies, task forces, funding proposals and partnerships is at an all-time high with the call to action strong. Most of these funding sources are one-time investments for expansion, however. Timing is right for Western to position its CDC for growth because we can take advantage of funding opportunities for dollars that will leverage a relatively small investment by the institution.

Western can position itself to be part of the childcare solution for its faculty, staff, and students...and exhibit leadership as an institution committed to making higher education accessible to atypical and historically underrepresented students. The CDC and Woodring’s Early Childhood Education program can be key contributors, tackling these regional and community issues with willing partners.

Impact of New Investment on ADEI and Sustainability:

Please provide data or an analysis to support this request and illustrate the anticipated impact of this investment, including in advancing accessibility, diversity, equity, inclusion, and sustainability.

With increased capacity, WWU can significantly expand access to postsecondary education for underserved students who are parents and whose access to affordable childcare is the primary barrier to obtaining a college degree. An expanded CDC with many new childcare slots will also enable more low-income parents to obtain high quality childcare that will have positive generational affects and enable them to have better access to available state and federal childcare subsidies. These subsidies could help to establish a tuition scale that will benefit the ALICE families (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed) who earn above the federal poverty level and are ineligible for subsidy, but do not earn enough to afford housing, childcare, food, transportation, and health care in our community. WWU has not yet been able to compete for CCAMPIS grant funding because the CDC lacks sufficient capacity to accommodate a large enough number of low-income student parents. These other subsidies are critical because student financial aid awards are often insufficient to meet full student cost of attendance, requiring students to take out additional loan debt to cover childcare costs. This proposal is all about diversity, equity and inclusion not only for faculty/staff and student parents, but it is often the children of low income, marginalized families that don't have access to quality childcare and are then at a disadvantage when they enter K-12.

Expanding the CDC's capacity will also leverage the expertise of WWU's nationally recognized Early Childhood Education program faculty and provide more classrooms (a resource in high demand) for hosting practicum and internships for pre-service teachers. Expanded partnership between the CDC and WWU's College of Education would result in more well-prepared teachers entering the field of early learning in the State of Washington, which would result in far-reaching benefits for our youngest learners across the state who experience optimal learning opportunities facilitated by state-of-the-art teachers. Students from additional disciplines, including nursing, psychology, and special education, also are served by the CDC when students request observations as they learn about child development and learning.

- If funded the CDC would be in a position to gain additional grant funding to expand, increasing the number of children served by 50%, including an increase in the number of children from low-income families and Pell Grant-eligible student parents.
- Partnerships with state and federally subsidized programs such as ECAEP and Head Start could be pursued.
- Ultimately, funding this proposal would increase in the number student parents attending WWU and provide the financial and family support to retain them.
- Sufficient staffing with continued partnership with Woodring's ECE would result in enhanced design of CDC programming to better meet the diverse needs of current and future families served by the CDC.
- Expansion would increase utilization of the "learning lab" partnership with WWU's College of Education, with more Early Childhood Education student teachers working with children enrolled in the CDC.
- Student employment positions with the CDC would increase, providing valuable work experience and financial support.
- Faculty and staff recruitment and retention would be enhanced, particularly for diverse and underrepresented candidates who may have young families.

Section 3: Performance Outcomes and Risk Mitigation

Expected Outcomes and Evaluation of Success:

Please explain how the success of the proposal will be measured, if funded. What metrics might indicate that the intended impact was achieved? How can the expected outcomes be directly tied to the investment being proposed?

Specifically, provide the targets and explain which method(s) will be used to track progress (refer to the Provost's [Overall Metrics to track progress toward University's Strategic Plan](#)), estimated return on investment (such as enrollment increases or efficiencies), divisional KPI's, recruitment and retention especially specifics for historically marginalized populations.

One basic measure of the return on investment will be the numbers of families who can be served in comparison with documented demand as well as recruitment and retention of families with childcare needs. The WWU Child Care Demand Study (2022) clearly indicated the need for expansion of services, with expected results of greater recruitment and retention of faculty, staff AND students if their childcare needs could be met at a reasonable cost. More than 70% of the WWU survey respondents currently have at least one child under six years of age, and others are planning families. 70% of all respondents were interested in enrolling the WWU's Child Development Center (~203), and an additional 16% answered "maybe" (~46). Out of the 70%, 27% are on the waitlist (~55) and 46% previously tried to enroll (~93).

Some don't put their name on the waitlist because they know they would be too far down to receive a spot. Currently WWU offers childcare for ages 2-5. Of those interested in WWU childcare, the ages at which they'd want to enroll their child included 22 Infant (to 1 yr), 147 Toddler (1-3 yrs), and 108 Pre-K (4-5 yrs.) The survey indicated a very strong need to serve households with a foster child (99), children under 5 who require special support (161) and respite care (208).

The highest-ranking change in services/programs was "expanded capacity in the current WWU Fairhaven location", with cost and expanded hours a close second ranking. Diverse curriculum, diverse representation, quality/early achievers, language learner support also ranked high.

The CDC is a critical resource for the Woodring College of Education Early Childhood Education (ECE) program, serving as a learning laboratory for future teachers. Expansion of the CDC would mean that some student teachers would not have to leave the area for their practicum work, enhancing student retention in a program that directly supports a critical need in Washington State.

WWU's nationally recognized Early Childhood Education (ECE) program embeds principles of teacher research throughout teacher preparation. Its primary partner has been the CDC, providing preschool internships and other field experiences. The CDC partners with ECE faculty in ways that result in CDC teacher professional development and collaborative curricular planning. The CDC's model program provides critical opportunities for students to apply what they are learning to their practice, and conduct inquiry studies with young preschool age children as well as engage in case studies to study child development utilizing the CDC's program. Unfortunately, the twenty students in a university course cannot all be placed at the CDC due to its size and lack of infant care programs; only 4-6 ECE

student teachers can utilize the Center as a learning laboratory at any one time. Expansion of WWU's childcare program would significantly expand the capacity for these high-quality student experiences. The students also serve as unpaid interns each spring when they engage in their daily student teaching experiences.

The state/institutional investment will be leveraged with other sources as available, growing the program to meet multiple demands. Specific areas of measurement over time will include:

Increased Access and Sustainability to higher education for parents requiring infant and toddler care, before and after school or drop-in care, disability access, and affordable full and part-time care, and/or close proximity to bus routes and affordable housing.

Increased Diversity through sliding scale fees subsidized by S&A fees, state, and federal grant funding (DCYF/ECEAP/Head Start), student scholarships for underrepresented populations

Increased Student Retention and Success scaffolded by quality, conveniently located care for pre-school-age children, allowing student parents to focus on their studies.

Student, Faculty and Staff wellbeing and retention scaffolded by high-quality care for their young children, allowing Western's employees to support students with focus and integrity, and creating a more sustainable community of engaged, productive citizens.

Increased Infrastructure to provide lab and work opportunities for students, faculty, and staff seeking clinical study sites, practicums, and internships by expanding facility to accommodate a larger population of children of diverse age groups and abilities.

Family and Community Engagement made possible through critical site design, including elements such as a resource room, family and community common space, private meeting and nursing spaces, dual generation programming, high walkability, easy access to public transportation, classrooms for adult and community education.

Academic Excellence supported by additional work and study opportunities under the supervision of experienced, knowledgeable, well-taught early educators, and professors from the Woodring College of Education.

Impact on Recruitment, Retention, and Satisfaction of Diverse Faculty, Staff, and Administrators:

For proposals that include personnel resources, explain how the proposal improves recruitment, retention, and satisfaction of diverse faculty, staff, and administrators.

Clearly WWU has households with high care needs that likely impact recruitment & retention. While it's difficult to project the number of students we could recruit & retain if we could offer affordable & available childcare, or the number of faculty and staff we could recruit... anecdotal evidence confirms this is a major stumbling block, particularly because there is a critical shortage of childcare in the community as well.

The University is committed to hiring diverse faculty staff and administrators, many of whom will require childcare. The ability to provide quality care on campus is a key element in recruitment and retention. In the document, "Conversation with Staff Leaders" that was presented to the WWU Board of Trustees in December 2021 by the representatives of the faculty and staff organizations, concerns

regarding childcare availability and affordability were emphasized. Childcare prices for daycare centers in Washington State rose 55% during the COVID pandemic; prices for independent childcare rose by 83% during the same period. Whatcom County is also currently identified as a “childcare desert.”

The CDC is an accredited, high quality, diversity and equity focused program that educates children and their families/parents through a high level of partnership and communication. Faculty and staff parents consistently express their satisfaction and appreciation for the high level of care and educational quality provided for themselves and their children.

Risk to Desired Outcomes:

What might occur to prevent the desired outcomes even if funding is obtained? How will these risks be mitigated? Beyond new funding, what other criteria or external factors need to occur in order for this proposal to be successful (e.g., economic or demographic factors, etc.).

The market for early childhood educators and administrators is experiencing a shortage so is very competitive. Western’s programs are well-regarded which will attract candidates, but sufficient funding is critical to recruit and retain these employees.

To expand capacity most quickly, WWU is planning to acquire a modular building to be placed in the parking lot adjacent to Fairhaven College and the current Child Development Center & Playground. There are some unknowns regarding cost to install the modular building, but the water/sewer/data/power infrastructure is nearby and likely will be cost-effective to tap into. We are working with WWU’s Capital Development Office, HKP Architects from Mt Vernon (with childcare facility/program experience) and has secured estimates from a modular leasing company. So, the elements are in place for a Fall 2023/Winter 2024 expansion.

We have the \$250,000 federal grant to fund furnishings for the classrooms, design & infrastructure work for the modular, and a portion of the funds needed to acquire the modular unit. Other grant sources would fund the remaining one time cost. Funding will be needed for construction of more permanent facility expansion when WWU’s Housing System renovates/rebuilds portions of the Fairhaven Residence Halls (their next major project.) WWU will request funds from the County and will continue to request additional federal funding for future permanent expansion and may submit an Intermediate Capital Request to the State of WA in the next cycle. The CDC’s work with HKP Architects will position the program to integrate with WWU’s upcoming Strategic Capital Planning process which will include auxiliaries. Donor funding for some elements of expansion will be sought from those who’ve been positively impacted by the program in the past and from those who understand the need.

Timing of these funding sources should align well with expansion goals, but flexibility and partnership approaches to space use will be key.

The CDC already has a high-quality accredited program... this as well as existing management experience can be leveraged. Licenses for a new expanded space would need to be secured, but the childcare industry is eager to work with providers to increase capacity so licensing approval is expected to be in place well before opening Fall/Winter.

Anticipated Consequences if Proposal is Not Funded:

What are the anticipated consequences of not funding this proposal?

WWU is already experiencing the loss of qualified faculty and staff candidates for whom childcare is a part of their relocation decision-making or for whom the financial reality is that staying home to care for a child makes more sense than continuing WWU employment.

The very demographic that could benefit most from higher education might be unable to attend/complete their education at WWU without affordable and available childcare, potentially creating a generational cycle of impact. The WWU CDC needs to offer more childcare openings to serve lower-income families in order to qualify for some of the direct subsidies.

Every additional child that receives quality early learning as they are in critical stages of development improves the pipeline of youth and students who are ready to learn, have developed social and resilience skills, and an experiential understanding of the value of diversity, equity and inclusion as they interact with others.

Operations run on a thin margin of cyclic and reduced appointment staff and rely heavily on student employees and fill-in staff. Burnout presents a high risk to retaining quality teaching staff, and there is little time for curricular development, yet the skeletal group of well-educated teachers are passionate, committed, and have been managing to work together to keep the quality program intact through the past difficult several years. The pandemic has caused a shortage in qualified teacher and administrative candidates, resulting in substitute or temporary teachers being very difficult to recruit. Consequently, the program has had to rely on increased numbers of student employees during the disruptions of COVID operations. This funding request for one permanent teacher is critical to the overall operations and ability to expand within licensing requirements.

Section 4: Process and Development

Describe Collaborations and Stakeholder Engagement:

What stakeholders were involved, and in what role/capacity? Which groups were engaged and at what stages? How were concerns addressed? What process have you followed to identify unintended consequences that may result from this proposal? Is the issue being addressed a broader issue across the university?

Woodring College of Education – Early Childhood Education faculty have been key supporters and contributors as its program is intimately connected with the CDC and this proposal. There is mutual benefit on many levels.

Representatives from WWU’s CDC and Woodring’s Early Childhood Education program have developed close working relationships with local partners, all working to address the childcare shortage in this area and to support quality early learning.

The Opportunity Council and Bellingham Chamber of Commerce created the Center for Retention and Expansion of Child Care Center Northwest (C-RECC NW) and are working with developers to shell in childcare facility spaces at the ground level of several new apartment buildings across town. WWU has been considering bidding to operating one of these facilities, but is still researching the investments, operational parameters and commitments needed there and comparing them to a more incremental expansion on campus. Regardless of the direction that is chosen, WWU will continue to support and partner with these new programs which share our values. As an example, their general “Desirable Provider Criteria include Strong commitment to diversity, equity and inclusion, work with WA Connections and/or ECEAP, and dual-generation programming.” These criteria are a perfect match with the values and mission of the CDC and will further advance the quality of childcare as well as the Woodring student practicum experience.

WWU’s Parent and CareGivers group has been involved in discussions with the CDC re: limited capacity and affordability issues, developing a demand survey, and passing on feedback from their members. This partnership is important and will continue as further planning ensues.

Conversations with Staff Leaders and several task forces at the local, state, and national levels have identified childcare as a crisis to be solved for the many impacts it is having on society and the economy, especially its disproportionate impacts from the pandemic.

Human Resources and many departments and colleges across campus have anecdotal evidence that childcare is a critical service for recruitment and retention of faculty and staff.

Student government members and other interested students – some with children of their own or commitment to early childhood education – have been in conversation with the CDC re: the needs and will be partners in requesting resources.

The students who need childcare services often have other “basic needs” for which several ESS departments are working to provide assistance. Financial aid, housing, food, etc. are often needs that require resolution, so coordination is valuable.

Describe which units (departments, colleges, etc.) will be involved.

Are there other potential partners across the university that could coordinate on a joint proposal? Is the issue being addressed a broader issue across the university?

Woodring College of Education’s Early Childhood Education Department, as noted above, has provided narrative to support grant requests for the CDC.

Human Resources is in support of this proposal given its importance on recruitment and retention, as well as the addition of an Assistant Director given the current skeleton staffing structure and the planned growth.

Associated Students and other student representatives are engaged in this effort to create more capacity to meet demand at rates and service offerings affordable to students.

Enrollment & Student Service’s Basic Needs workgroup serves students with childcare needs and would coordinate services as the program is able to expand (e.g. financial aid.)

Explain how this proposal will leverage resources or commitments from other sources:

Identify any current resources in place, any new commitments, or potential funding partnerships with external entities that have been identified. If exploration is currently underway, note any conversations with university development officers, funding agencies, the Vice Provost for Research, etc.

The CDC has submitted applications for CARES Act/Stimulus funding and funding through DCYF wherever possible to improve ADA accessibility, make repairs, assist with operational cost increases of the pandemic, etc. and has been successful in receiving funds, including incentives to recruit and retain staff. This has helped keep operations solvent at a time when there are many fiscal and service disruptions, positive COVID cases, flu and other illnesses and restrictive protocols. These funds are one-time, however, and do not provide the ongoing staffing or operational support needed to expand the program.

WWU made and received a one-time federal budget request of \$250,000 through Senator Murray’s Congressionally Directed Spending line with which we will fund the temporary facility portion of the expansion and do long term program planning. A larger amount (\$3 million) will be solicited again in the next federal budget cycle for capital costs of permanent expansion.

Donor funds for student scholarships and/or related support will be solicited as well.

Has your department previously submitted this proposal?

If so, briefly outline any significant changes and indicate the feedback received during that budget process.

Yes. A much larger request was submitted to WWU in the last request round, but was not put forward to the State as an institutional request. We’ve secured other funding sources for one-time expansion needs and have developed a more cost-effective near term expansion plan, so we’ve been able to reduce our State/Institutional ask from about \$300K down to \$74K with significant leverage from these other sources.

Describe any funding alternatives that have been explored.

Note both alternative approaches in addressing the problem, as well as alternatives to new funding (repurposing existing divisional funding or one-time fund use). If these alternatives are not being pursued, explain why.

The CDC has been exploring a partnership with the Opportunity Council and Bellingham Regional Chamber of Commerce’s “Center for Retention and Expansion of Child Care NW” who is working with commercial builders to create space on the ground level of new apartment complexes for childcare programs run by another entity. WWU could “bid” to run additional childcare services at a location near its campus. This space will become available in 2023 so the CDC could significantly expand its

capacity quickly. However, the complexities for staff, families and student employees of a split location with additional travel time and higher operational costs are proving more difficult to manage and all costs are still being researched. At this time, the slower growth approach modular classrooms at an adjacent on campus location may be a more efficient, manageable solution given the limited fiscal capacity of the university to assist with expansion. This WWU Operating request has been reduced from the prior biennial request of \$300K which included additional management and other costs, to a minimal \$74K for one lead teacher, which will be significantly leveraged with other funding sources.

If expansion into modulars on campus is the direction chosen, acquisition would happen for 2023-24 while planning ensues for more permanent construction/expansion on campus – likely in conjunction with Housing’s renovation of Fairhaven residence halls. This immediate expansion will include extension of services outside of the existing 2-5-year age range to 12 or 18 month olds, as well as work toward adding supplemental programs for drop-in, after school care, etc.

If Whatcom County could provide sufficient childcare services, it would be less important for the University to expand. But WWU’s CDC is significantly undersized for a campus this size and has an obligation to offer convenient, affordable quality care to support its faculty, staff and students.

Section 5: Fulfillment of WWU’s Strategic Plan’s Core Themes and Goals

Please explain how your proposal and the anticipated outcomes will advance the Core Themes and Goals of [WWU’s 2018-2025 Strategic Plan](#) and the strategic priorities set for this budget cycle. How does this allocation or withdrawal of funding advance or hinder access to Western, academic excellence, and/or inclusive achievement?

Core Themes

Advancing Inclusive Success

1) Advancing Inclusive Success

The population most needing affordable childcare is often diverse, underrepresented, low-income and needs affordable and reliable childcare solutions. Currently the availability of any childcare is very, very low in Whatcom County. WWU should not miss the opportunity to hire new faculty, retain students and sustain the conditions that allow a diversity of students and faculty parents, especially those of mid to low income range from participating in work and study at WWU. As federal and state supports for childcare expansion are enacted, WWU needs to be ready with the professional staff and physical spaces to take advantage of funding in order to meet the university’s commitment to degree attainment for historically marginalized groups.

Increasing Washington Impact

Young student parents will earn degrees, raise children who’ve had the benefit of quality pre-school education, and be valuable citizens in the State. The urgent need for more qualified early learning

teachers is noted in the Governor's *Results WA - Goal 1: World Class Education (1.1 Early Learning - Increasing pathways to support a diverse and qualified early care and education workforce. See: <https://results.wa.gov/measuring-progress/public-performance-reviews>).* By increasing the use of the CDC as a childcare center and as a teacher candidate learning lab, we will be producing more ECE and Elementary teachers and related professionals by leveraging current WWU assets to address a state employment crisis.

Enhancing Academic Excellence

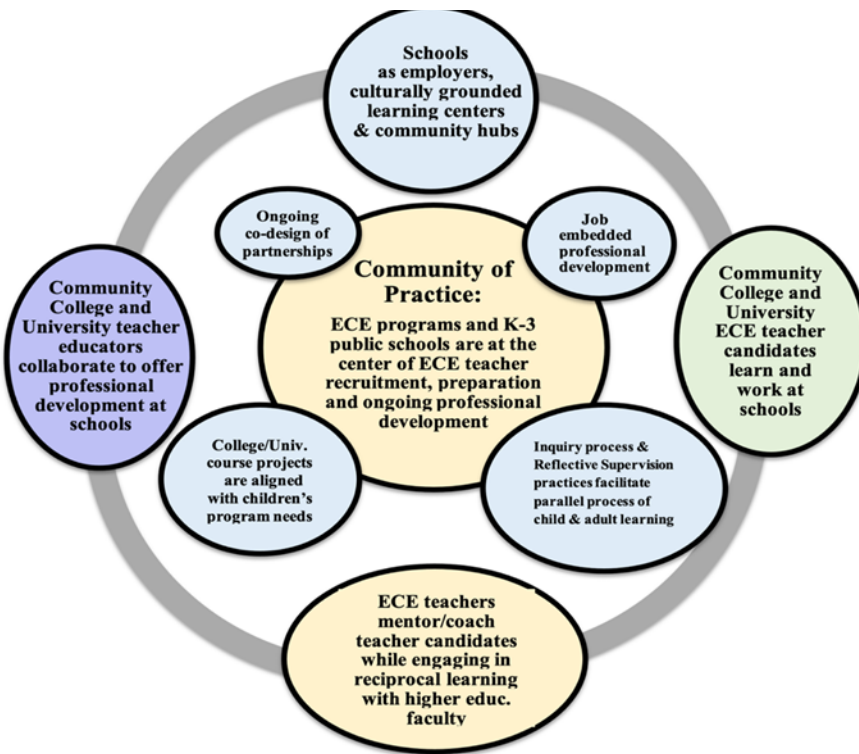
Woodring's Early Childhood Education program partnership with the CDC benefits all involved. The model used is co-created, mutually beneficial and will produce a higher quality CDC and more teachers and leaders in the Washington State education field.

Goals of a course with a field experience, practicum or internship are aligned with the professional development goals of the CDC, requiring a process of identifying dilemmas, problems or questions that are investigated through a cycle of inquiry.

- Teacher candidates are *mentored and coached by faculty and mentor teacher* in practicum or internship,
- Faculty work with both teachers and teacher candidates *collaboratively aligning course assignments with aspects of the classroom curriculum or program needs,*
- Goals of courses are aligned with professional development goals of the program which requires *reciprocity in shared professional development for all participants.*

Our reforms are contextually grounded and culturally relevant because they are learner, school, program and community driven. The mentor teachers in our partner schools are able to:

- Initiate and decide on the direction of their professional development within the context of practicum and internship projects in collaboration with teacher candidates,
- Receive individualized support from faculty based on their unique strengths and context,
- Offer individualized support to teacher candidates based on their knowledge and experience, and
- Engage in a reflective learning cycle with teacher candidates as they both learn together and apply new information to practice.



Goals

Western will provide a transformational education grounded in the liberal arts and sciences and based on innovative scholarship, research, and creative activity.

Woodring’s Early Childhood Education program is exemplary and its curriculum work with the CDC provides both parents and student teachers and staff teachers the opportunity to learn and develop programming that is innovative, creative and values driven. Case studies and research opportunities abound in the setting of the CDC. Past scholarly publications have offered students opportunities to study child development in action and take their learning to leadership positions in other early learning programs in the county, state, nationally and internationally.

Western will advance a deeper understanding of and engagement with place.

The CDC regularly incorporates the campus and natural environment into its teaching methods for children from which they and their families and the student teachers develop a deeper understanding of place. In Early Childhood Education, the idea of “place” is highly relational. The dynamic relations between place, identity, and community are explored at the CDC in a diverse university context which welcomes a growing racial, linguistic and other aspects of the diverse identities of our children, families, teachers and interns. Awareness and humility in exploring our human diversity, is central to the values of honoring equity and inclusion at the CDC.

WWU’s ECE teacher preparation program supports the CDC teachers and student interns to conduct quarter long inquiry projects each Spring quarter. Ways of engaging in a project approach, with

children as young as three, emphasizes how to support a sustainable, place-based community of diverse earners. The teachers and interns use the context of outdoor campus spaces to introduce children to the development of caring relationships with each other and with the surrounding natural elements of the garden and the forest. The CDC believes that young children are capable and active participants who are problem seekers, and problem solvers in their own surroundings. The child is viewed as a co-constructor of their own knowledge with their teachers and friends. Learning that takes place in outdoor spaces enhances both the children's and the teacher's powers of observation and their abilities to observe, problem solve, and reflect. Experts are invited who for these young children include, student- parent rock climbing enthusiasts, or professors of biology who generally learn a lot from the children's excited observations.

Western will foster a caring and supportive environment where all members are respected and treated fairly.

Dr. Eileen Hughes, (ECE Professor, Emeritus) who was pivotal in facilitating the CDC's current early childhood curriculum and inquiry- based learning and teaching, explains that it involves the interplay of listening, observing, conversing, feeling, thinking, and representing and are processes essential to teacher research and to the children's inquiry into the nature world. The connected experiences the children engage in facilitate the construction of understanding for deeper thinking to support children's cognitive development. Planting and caring for an herb garden, for example, stimulates the children's inclinations to nurture, which promotes stewardship and the development of social and cooperative skills. Family interests, knowledge and engagement with these projects has been reduced in the pandemic but the emphasis on outdoor learning has still allowed parents to view the outcomes. One example was the Spring 2021, Sound Project conducted by intern, Jillian Mercer. A conducted a quarter long investigation with the preschool children included:

"We explored the sounds created when striking glass jars filled with different amounts of water. The children noticed how the jars with less water had a higher pitch and the jars with more water has a lower pitch. While investigating the sounds, the children created observational drawings to document the difference in pitch of each jar.... Children also engaged in storytelling after holding a discussion on echolocation. We talked about how whales use echolocation to find things in the water. Each child created a story on their own focused on whales."

Western will pursue justice and equity in its policies, practices, and impacts.

Social justice is centered, in part, in economic justice, with more Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) who are parents and are being impacted by our under investment in child care at WWU. The pandemic has had disproportionate impacts: childcare needs have been exacerbated for lower income and underrepresented parents and families given the high cost and their inability to manage without

reliable and affordable childcare. Families who work full time, including those who are able to work and study remotely in their residences, cannot simultaneously care for their youngest children. Providing affordable childcare to those who need it will help to keep our faculty, staff and students moving toward their goals and not leaving the WWU community to move to more supportive childcare contexts. *Increasing WWU's investment in childcare is an investment in our students, staff and faculty and requires maintaining and building on our current quality CDC program and improving funding options that increase affordability of care.*

The WWU ECE academic program has 62% faculty of color and student cohorts in the last 3 years have ranged from 34-50% students of color. This is an asset in supporting work in cultural competency, diversity, equity and inclusion at the CDC.

In addition to WWU's strategic goals, this request responds to the [Governor's Results Washington](#) goal areas and statewide priorities.

https://results.wa.gov/sites/default/files/1.1PPR_OnePager.pdf

The most direct impact is to Goal 1 World Class Education which specifically includes a subsection for Early Learning that **“increases a variety of pathways (community-based training and other equivalents) to support a diverse and qualified early care and education workforce”** and to **“support current childcare staff, expand capacity in the industry, and support Washington families.”** This proposal addresses that goal in multiple ways... by providing high-quality early learning to young children, by allowing student parents to obtain a degree that will improve not only their lives but their children's as well, by enabling WWU to recruit talented and diverse faculty and staff who need childcare resources, by providing the “learning lab” for WWU's Early Childhood Education program to develop and graduate high quality teachers in the field, and to enhance the economic recovery of the area by allowing parents and families to gain an education and/or stay in the workforce rather than having to stay home to care for their children. The Governor's Early Learning project calls for progress in the short term and opportunity for longer term improvement. WWU's proposal to lease space to significantly increase its capacity in the short term while working to secure funding for a staged/longer term expansion on campus meets this directly. It also highly leverages existing resources because the administrative leadership is already well in place with a licensed, accredited childcare program that provides student teachers with practicum and internship experiences... a model program that has impact far beyond the childcare service alone. The Governor's project also expects additional funding sources beyond just state support. Never before has there been more national attention to the critical shortage of childcare resources and its wide-reaching impact for the fabric of society. Opportunities abound for grant funding to leverage state support for expansion to address the childcare crisis our nation faces.

Other Results Washington goals include a prosperous economy/economic recovery post-COVID with an equity lens. The CDC's clientele includes a high percentage of underserved, underrepresented and/or at risk. In addition, the CDC's very curriculum works to address issues of social equity and justice through early education.

Section 6: Space Planning, Capital, and Maintenance Considerations

Major Equipment of Software Needs

If the proposal includes new major equipment or software (>\$25K), please indicate its anticipated useful life, and associated operating costs such as service contracts or annual licenses.

The CDC has the technical and playground infrastructure in place to accommodate the addition of two more classrooms. An investment will be made in furnishings for those classrooms and continued incremental enhancement of the playground equipment for various ages of children. A secondary playground may be added if funds can be secured.

No major equipment or software would be funded with this request.

Space or Infrastructure Upgrades

Do you believe new space, space modifications, or infrastructure upgrades will be required? If so, please provide the following as best you can.

Please note that Capital Planning and Development will review and evaluate the request after the proposal is submitted to determine options.

Scope:

The CDC wrote and received a \$250,000 grant to help set up an additional temporary childcare location (likely leased modular unit space with the option to purchase after 3 years) and is continuing to apply for additional grant funding that will support further and more permanent capital and program expansion via federal/state/county opportunities.

The existing CDC houses the administrative, kitchen and teaching classroom functions of the program, and will be shared with the two additional modular classrooms. There is a strong desire for more permanent facility expansion on the Bellingham campus when funds and location can be identified, possibly to coincide with Housing's renovation of Fairhaven residence halls; planning of which will commence in the near term.

Square Footage:

The modular building, housing 2 classrooms, 2 bathrooms and a small office area will be about 1800 sq ft plus exterior ADA ramp and stairs.

Cost for capital component:

Grant funding will fund the cost of modular building acquisition.

Changes to the Use of Existing Space

If existing space is being repurposed, explain how the proposed activities will be accommodated within existing space. For how long? Who will need to approve the proposed new use of this space?

N/A.

Incorporation of Physical Accessibility and Cultural Inclusion

For proposals that include capital development or IT infrastructure, please explain how physical accessibility and cultural inclusion (beyond statutory requirements) will be resourced as foundational elements of project development.

The CDC educational curriculum is centered on ADEI and will continue to do so in a visible way. When new facilities are constructed, physical accessibility is a key design element to meet strategic objectives. The program curriculum teaches cultural inclusion and supports additional language learning/communication.

Proposal Title: Child Development Center – Expand Capacity & Affordability

Divison:
Department:
Department Contact:

	Description	Fiscal Year 2024					Fiscal Year 2025				
		FTE	Salary	Benefits	One-Time Costs	Total	FTE	Salary	Benefits	One-Time Costs	Total
Salary and Benefits											
Faculty Positions		-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	-	\$0	-
Professional/Exempt Positions		-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	-	\$0	-
Classified Positions		0.96	\$43,016	\$28,247	\$2,500	\$73,763	0.96	43,016	28,247	\$0	71,263
Student Salaries (Graduate Assistants, Hourly Student, etc)		-	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	-	-	-	\$0	-
Total Salaries and Benefits		0.96	\$43,016	\$28,247	\$2,500	\$73,763	0.96	43,016	28,247	\$0	71,263

	Description	Price per		Recurring	One-Time	Total	Price per		Recurring	One-Time	Total
		Units	Unit	Costs	Costs		Units	Unit	Costs	Costs	
Non-Personnel Expenses											
Supplies and Materials						\$0					\$0
Professional Service Contracts						\$0					\$0
Other Goods and Services, Memberships, etc.						\$0					\$0
Travel						\$0					\$0
Other						\$0					\$0
Capital Facility Expenses (New Space or Space Modifications)						\$0					\$0
Total Non-Personnel Expenses				\$0	\$0	\$0			\$0	\$0	\$0

	Description	Include?	Recurring	One-Time	Total	Recurring	One-Time	Total
			Costs	Costs		Costs	Costs	
University Indirect Costs								
Libraries** (Estimated at \$10k per faculty member)	\$10,000 per new faculty member	YES	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Academic Support Services/Student Support Services	3% of Recurring Direct Costs	YES	\$2,138	\$0	\$2,138	\$2,138	\$0	\$2,138
Institutional Support	2% of Recurring Direct Costs	YES	\$1,425	\$0	\$1,425	\$1,425	\$0	\$1,425
Plant Operation and Maintenance	3% of Recurring Direct Costs	YES	\$2,138	\$0	\$2,138	\$2,138	\$0	\$2,138
Graduate TA Waiver	Input amounts for new TA Positions	YES	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total Indirect Costs			\$5,701	\$0	\$5,701	\$5,701	\$0	\$5,701

	FTE	Head Count	Recurring Costs	One-Time Costs	Fiscal Year Total	FTE	Head Count	Recurring Costs	One-Time Costs	Fiscal Year Total
Total Proposal, All Direct and Indirect Costs	0.96	1.00	\$76,964	\$2,500	\$79,464	0.96	1.00	\$76,964	\$0	\$76,964