



Smart Start Early Care and Education

2021-2022 Dedication to Education Bonus

Eligibility Requirements for Individuals

Please carefully read all information included in this handout to ensure you are submitting the appropriate documentation to qualify for the Dedication to Education Individual Bonus. **Bonus qualifications have changed**, and an additional Educational Enrollment bonus may be awarded to qualified applicants.

Bonuses Offered

- DTE Individual Bonus (Educational Attainment) and Educational Enrollment
- The *amount* of each bonus and the *number* of bonuses issued will be dependent upon total number of applications received and funds available
- Priority will be given to those working directly with children
- Applicants may be eligible for *both* the Educational Attainment bonus and the Educational Enrollment bonus

Educational Attainment

- Level I
 - Early Childhood Preschool Certificate or Infant Toddler Care Certificate or Early Childhood Diploma or CDA and/or
 - Level 2 - 7 on the NC Early Educator Certification (EEC)
- Level II
 - Associate, Bachelor’s or Master’s degree in Early Childhood Education or Child Development and/or
 - Level 8 - 13 on the NC Early Educator Certification (EEC)

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must be able to answer yes to each of the following criteria to qualify for the DTE Individual Bonus (Educational Attainment) and will be required to provide documentation to verify employment.

Criteria for DTE Individual Bonus- Educational Attainment	Met (yes/no/na)
Teachers/Caregivers: work directly with children under 5 years at least 20 hours/week	
Administrators: work onsite a minimum of 20 hours/week	
Work in licensed child care facility in New Hanover County	
Hourly wage of \$17 or less (annualized salary of \$35,360)	
Education in early childhood or child development beyond EDU 119 OR Early Care & Education Professional Certification Scale (EEC) level 2-13	
Not receiving award through Infant-Toddler Educator AWARD\$	
Not holding a B-K add-on endorsement <u>only</u>	

Educational Enrollment

- Applicants actively working towards an AS/AAS degree in early childhood or child development may qualify
- Applicants must meet qualifications for Level I bonus but not Level II bonus

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants must be able to answer yes to each of the following criteria to qualify for the Educational Enrollment bonus.

Criteria for Educational Enrollment	Met (yes/no)
Qualify for Level I DTE Individual Educational Attainment Bonus	
Completion of coursework towards AS/AAS degree in early childhood or child development	
Coursework completed between April 1, 2021 and March 31, 2022	
Coursework completed is an early childhood course (not general ed course) with ‘C’ or higher	

see reverse side for more details

Documentation Requirements

Education

- Copy of EEC card, certificate, or letter from NCICDP **OR**
- Copy of diploma clearly stating major of degree **OR**
- Copy of transcript (official or unofficial) clearly stating major of degree and date earned
 - *Transcript is required to qualify for Educational Enrollment bonus*
- **DO NOT** submit DCDEE Works documentation
- Certificates, diplomas, or degrees must be achieved by Friday, January 7, 2022

Employment

- Employment Verification completed by administrator on DTE Application
 - Administrators- please have AD or other admin complete this section
 - FCCH- complete this section on self

Income

- Paystub (within 30 days) clearly indicating hourly rate of pay/salary **OR**
- 2020 W2 clearly indicating gross salary **OR**
- 2020 tax documentation clearly showing salary
 - FCCH providers may submit Schedule C from your tax paperwork
- Please mark out SSN

Application Details

- Application submission **must** include education and income documentation
 - Do not submit extra documentation
 - Do not submit this handout with application
- Applications must be received or postmarked by **Friday, January 7, 2022, at 5:00pm**
- Submit applications by one of the following methods
 - Mail
 - Smart Start, Attn: Mindy Davis, 3534 S. College Rd. Suite F, Wilmington 28412
 - Hand Delivery
 - Smart Start office between 8:30am-4:30pm
- Emailed or faxed applications and documentation *will not* be accepted

Other

- **Please print clearly on all documentation**
- Incomplete applications will not be accepted
- Check your email (junk/spam) on a regular basis for communication about the DTE bonus
- All applicants will receive confirmation of their status of the DTE bonus by Friday, February 4, 2022
- Smart Start staff will verify employment and education of all eligible applicants prior to issuing the bonus. Employment may also be checked periodically after the bonus is granted in efforts to track teacher retention.
- Those who are eligible will be asked to provide documentation, including a signed contract and a W-9 tax form, for the bonus to be issued. This documentation will be provided by Smart Start.
- DTE bonus checks will be issued on or before Thursday, June 30, 2022