

2026

 **First Children's Finance**

Celebration of Success City of Eagle Lake



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Rural Child Care Innovation Program (RCCIP)

Sunsetting Goals & Project Updates

Celebration of Success

Through the RCCIP, the City of Eagle Lake Core Team has identified four (4) goals to address child care challenges. Below is a list of goals that the team focused efforts on within the implementation phase, along with project updates as provided by the core team lead upon the sunset of this process.

GOALS AND OTHER UPDATES



SMART Goal:

Goal 1: Form a child care committee that forms connections, provides support, and shows appreciation.

Project Team Members: John Whittington, Sarah Deutsch, Beth Rohrich, Erica Tummers, Tori Breiter

Goal Update: The Child Care Committee coordinated the collection of donated items to assemble appreciation bags for local child care providers. Committee members met to organize, assemble, and distribute the bags. Each appreciation bag included a survey to gather feedback from providers. Four surveys were returned with feedback for how the committee can further support childcare providers. The committee plans to continue to identify new opportunities and implement targeted strategies to strengthen support for individuals within the industry.



SMART Goal:

Goal 2: The core team will explore and compile a hub of resources to help both providers and families.

Project Team Members: Sarah Deutsch, Beth Rohrich, Tori Breiter, Erica Tummers, Garrett Lieffring, Michelle Lechner, Kate Hengy-Gretz

Goal Update: The core team has compiled a hub of resources to help both providers and families. This information will be posted on the City of Eagle Lake website and updated as needed.



SMART Goal:

Goal 3: We will explore facilities for the purpose of creating more child care capacity.

Project Team Members: John Whittington, Erica Tummers, Ryan Vesey, Sarah Deutsch, Audra Nissen Boyer, Anthony White

Goal Update: The core team continues to work closely with individuals and businesses interested in developing local child care programs, providing guidance and ongoing support throughout the process. Most recently, the team supported the opening of Little Eagles Child Care, which introduced two half-day preschool programs to the community and expanded capacity to serve 20–24 preschool-aged children. The core team also remains actively engaged in supporting and championing efforts to establish additional child care programming within Eagle Lake School.



SMART Goal:

Goal 4: Identify five key items providers need to pay for regularly and find funding solutions for them.

Project Team Members: John Whittington, Ryan Vesey, Garrett Lieffring, Brian Hughes, Anthony White

Goal Update: The Child Care Committee undertook an initiative to engage and show appreciation for local child care providers while gathering feedback to better understand their needs. Through outreach efforts, the committee collected input regarding professional

development interests, operational challenges, and areas where additional support could be beneficial. Responses highlighted interest in accessible training opportunities, assistance with industry-related requirements and expenses, and broader recognition of providers' contributions. The Core Team will continue working to coordinate next steps based on the feedback received and explore opportunities to provide targeted support.



Other Updates:

The core team collaborated to apply for and successfully secure a grant aimed at strengthening provider retention and increasing the availability of new child care slots. The team is utilizing the funds to offer a forgivable loan program to support both existing and new child care providers.

PROJECT RECOMMENDATIONS

The City of Eagle Lake is a rural area with a long history of community partnership in bringing needed services to the area. Eagle Lake has a committed Core Team of individuals who are heavily invested in the child care landscape of their community. First Children's Finance recommends that the Core Team engage in the following activities:

- 1

Always run financials before committing to a project – look for a broad base of support. Having an accurate understanding of enrolment numbers, staffing needs, and tuition rates are needed to create sustainability in the current child care climate.

First Children's Finance offers financial modelling and financial analysis consultations.
- 2

Continue to engage the community in this project.

Community investment to support new and existing child care businesses are critical to maintaining quality programs.
- 3

Continue to involve and support existing providers.

Ongoing support to all types of existing child care in the area should be considered to retain the existing providers. Efforts should be made to ensure current child care providers continue to feel supported and have access to resources they need to stay in the field.
- 4

Remain committed to this process and flexible to adjust your plan.

Roadblocks will happen. This does not mean that SMART goals need to be rewritten. Regroup to identify any new action steps that need to be created to keep your ideas and solutions moving forward. As long as you are able and have committed taskforce members, keep building, supporting, and growing child care in your local area.

For More Information:

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Scan to view the full City of Eagle Lake CSAP

Visit ruralchildcare.org/communityinformation to view all action plans