CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Smart Start
May 1, 2015 to June 30, 2017

Legislative Authority
Public Act 14-41

RFP
810

Due Date
December 19, 2014

MYRA JONES-TAYLOR, PH.D.
COMMISSIONER

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Part I. Program Information and Requirements

Purpose
Smart Start is intended to serve the following purpose as specified in Public Act 14-41:

"To reimburse local and regional boards of education for capital and operating expenses related to establishing or expanding a preschool program under the jurisdiction of the board of education for the town."

Background
The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC) is committed to providing children greater access to high-quality preschool programs in an effort to reduce the achievement gap between the state's poorest students and their wealthier peers. Research shows that access to high-quality preschool programs provides important foundational skills needed for academic and lifelong success. Expanding preschool services to high-need children will increase opportunities for promoting children's development and school readiness. Through Smart Start, more children can be engaged in high-quality preschool experiences that address the whole child including the developmental domains of cognition, science, mathematics, creative arts, language and literacy, physical health and development, social and emotional development, and social studies.

Grantees are able to propose expanding current preschool programs to include additional children or to develop new preschool programs. Funding must be used to support enrollment in preschool programs that are at minimum school-day and school-year in duration (i.e., a minimum of 6 hours/day and 180 days/year).

Local Education Agencies (LEAs) demonstrating unmet need are considered eligible and are invited to submit applications for Smart Start (see Appendix D).

This grant is intended to serve additional children who would not otherwise be able to enroll in a preschool program.

Conditions for Funding

LEAs funded through this grant must:

- Locate proposed preschool classroom(s) in a public school or in a space maintained by an early care and education and child development provider, pursuant to an agreement between the board of education and the provider;
- Hold accreditation and be in good standing with the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), be approved and/or in good standing with the federal Head Start program, have documentation that they are in the process of obtaining accreditation from NAEYC or have a plan to ensure that the program will be accredited within three years of receiving funding through Smart Start;
- Comply with annual interim quality measures while seeking accreditation (Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale);
- Submit a letter of support for establishing or expanding a preschool program by the local or regional School Readiness Council, if any, for the school district.
- Have class sizes that do not exceed 18 children;

- Demonstrate evidence of cooperating and coordinating with other governmental and community programs to provide services during periods when the preschool program is not in session; and
- Demonstrate how they will prioritize enrollment of children with special needs and children who are dual language learners.

Priority for funding will be given to boards of education that:

- Demonstrate the greatest need for the establishment or expansion of a preschool program;
- Allocates at least sixty percent of the spaces to children who are members of families that are at or below seventy-five percent of the state median income, or fifty percent of the of the spaces to children who are eligible for free and reduced price lunches; and
- Offer a full-day kindergarten program to all children.

LEAs may utilize other funding streams that may be available locally and/or privately. LEAs may also collect family fees for services provided through Smart Start (see Appendix E).

Each classroom proposed for funding must be taught by an individual who is an employee of the board of education and holds certification pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 10-145b with an endorsement in early childhood education or early childhood special education as follows:

- 112 Integrated Early Childhood/Special Ed., Birth - K
- 113 Integrated Early Childhood/Special Ed., N/K through grade 3
- 001 PreK-Grade 8
- 002 PreK – Grade 6
- 003 PreK-Grade 3
- 008 PreK-K
- 065 Comprehensive Special Education PreK-Grade 12

The LEA must guarantee that any classroom that has been renovated using Smart Start funds will remain in use as a pre-kindergarten classroom for the duration of the Smart Start funding period for operating expense.

Eligible Applicants (P.A. 14-41 (b)(1))

LEAs are eligible to apply if they either:

- Have been determined through a statewide needs assessment conducted by the Connecticut Health and Educational Facilities Authority (CHEFA) on behalf of the OEC to have an unmet need for additional preschool spaces for high-needs 3- and 4-year-olds in their community.

  (Refer to Appendix D for a list of eligible LEAs.)

OR,

- Have not been determined eligible as a result of the statewide needs assessment conducted on behalf of the OEC, but can demonstrate an unmet need. Any LEA not found to have an unmet need based on the statewide needs assessment must submit a justification with supporting documentation demonstrating unmet need. Evidence of need requires significant documentation as well as a statement by the Chief Elected Official and Superintendent of Schools about the unmet need.

Grant Period

Following approval, the OEC anticipates the funding of Smart Start for a five-year period based on the availability of funds. The funding will be allocated in two parts:

1) Capital expenses (not to exceed $75,000 per classroom) for costs related to renovation of an existing public school in year one of the grant; and

2) Operating expenses for years two through five of the grant (not to exceed $5,000 per child, OR in an amount not to exceed $75,000 for each preschool classroom; annual operating costs cannot exceed $300,000 per town).

Operations funding will be awarded for a period not to exceed six years. The LEA is responsible for entering the budget on an annual basis using the ED114 Prepayment Grant System.

Funding Year	Capital Expenses for Renovations	Operations
2014-2015	Up to $75,000 per classroom	Not Available
2015-2016	Up to $75,000 per classroom	$5,000/child = $75,000/classroom (maximum of $300,000)
2016-2017	Up to $75,000 per classroom	$5,000/child = $75,000/classroom (maximum of $300,000)
2017-2018	Up to $75,000 per classroom	$5,000/child = $75,000/classroom (maximum of $300,000)
2018-2019	Up to $75,000 per classroom	$5,000/child = $75,000/classroom (maximum of $300,000)
2019-2020	Up to $75,000 per classroom	$5,000/child = $75,000/classroom (maximum of $300,000)
2020-2021	Up to $75,000 per classroom	$5,000/child = $75,000/classroom (maximum of $300,000)
2021-2022	Up to $75,000 per classroom	$5,000/child = $75,000/classroom (maximum of $300,000)
2022-2023	Up to $75,000 per classroom	$5,000/child = $75,000/classroom (maximum of $300,000)
2023-2024	Up to $75,000 per classroom	$5,000/child = $75,000/classroom (maximum of $300,000)
2024-2025	Not Available	$5,000/child = $75,000/classroom (maximum of $300,000)

Funds Available

The amount of $15,000,000 is anticipated to be available for capital expenses for funding year 2014-2015. $10,000,000 per year is anticipated to be available for capital expenses per year thereafter for nine years.

The amount of $10,000,000 is anticipated to be available for operating expenses for funding year 2015-2016. $10,000,000 is anticipated to be available for operating expenses per year thereafter for nine years.

New applicants for Smart Start funds may be considered on an annual basis.

Successful applicants are required to submit updated narrative reports, budgets and budget justifications to the Office of Early Childhood every two years. The applicant will be responsible for entering the budget on an annual basis using the ED114 Prepayment Grant System.

All grants shall be awarded within the limits of available funding. Should all available funds not be obligated the OEC reserves the right to reissue this application.

Part II: Application Requirements

THE FOLLOWING FORMAT IS REQUIRED FOR ALL APPLICATIONS. THE OEC WILL NOT ACCEPT MODIFICATIONS, ADDITIONAL PAGES, ATTACHMENTS OR APPENDICES.

Cover Sheet
The format for the cover sheet appears on page 15 of this document. The cover sheet must be signed by the Superintendent of Schools, the Chief Elected Official and the Chairperson of the local board of education. The cover page must identify the amount of funding requested for capital improvements and/or operating expenses as well as the number of proposed classrooms and number of additional preschool children to be served as a result of Smart Start funding.

Proposal Abstracts
Separate abstracts are required for requests that include funding for both capital improvements and operating costs. The abstracts must include how the applicant plans to meet the purpose of the Smart Start and provide high-quality preschool programing. The following information must be included:

Capital Improvements

- Key features of the capital improvements and program operations;
- Specific capital improvements planned (including specific information about capital improvements necessary to meet NAEYC program accreditation standards); and
- Number of classrooms to be created through Smart Start.

Operations

- A letter of support for establishing or expanding a preschool program by the local or regional School Readiness Council, if any, for the school district;

- Total number of additional preschool children to be served as a result of Smart Start;
- NAEYC accreditation/demonstration of commitment to secure NAEYC accreditation within three years of operation or Head Start approval;
- How Smart Start will contribute to the district's efforts to create a coherent pre-Kindergarten to 3rd Grade continuum;
- Plans for recruitment and prioritization of children who are dual language learners (DLL) or identified with special needs and projections of how many children from the categories will be served;
- Plan for hiring and retaining qualified staff including a teacher for each classroom that meets the requirements detailed in the conditions for funding on page two of this application;
- Evidence of cooperation and coordination with other governmental and community programs to provide services during periods when the preschool program is not in session (e.g. after school, winter and summer breaks, etc.);
- Plans for charging tuition using the required sliding fee scale (see Appendix E) or a statement that the program will not charge tuition; and
- Evidence of collaboration with other governmental and community programs to make appropriate referrals for other services as needed.

Program Data

Please complete the following table

Program address	Number of classrooms	Number of children	Hour per day	Days per year
John C. Mead School, 75 Ford Street, Ansonia CT 06401	1	15	6	181

Accreditation/Head Start Approval Information

Are you accredited by NAEYC or a federal Head Start grantee? If yes, complete the following information:

NAEYC ID#	Valid until date	Are you aware of and planning to meet NAEYC's renewal timeline?	Have you submitted Intent to Renew?	Have you submitted Renewal Materials? If yes, indicate date.	Has the program been denied candidacy, or deferred or denied accreditation by NAEYC?	Are you a Federal Head Start grantee?	If you are a Federal Head Start grantee what is your annual funding month?
723162	12/1/2017	Yes	No	No	No	No	N/A

If not currently accredited or a federal Head Start grantee complete the following information:

Have you enrolled (Step 1) with NAEYC?	Have you applied (Step 2) for accreditation? If yes, indicate candidacy date.	If not currently enrolled, planned enrollment date?	If not currently enrolled, planned application date?
N/A			

Proposed Services and Activities

Part I: Capital Improvements
Describe the facility and capital improvements planned in order to meet NAEYC and/or Head Start Program Standards. Include a timeline detailing when the planned improvements are to take place as well as specific reference to the NAEYC Standards and Accreditation Criteria and/or Head Start program standards that are being addressed. Note that educational environments include both indoor and outdoor space used by children. New construction will not be considered for this grant program.

Applications for capital improvements will not be considered unless an approved operations plan (Part II of this application) is submitted.

Part II: Operations
Describe the staffing patterns that will enable services to be provided in accordance with NAEYC and/or Head Start Program Standards. Identify all proposed staff/positions (e.g. teachers, paraprofessionals, classroom aides) to be funded through Smart Start and the proposed rates of pay.

The plan must include the hours and days of operation, as well as how the program will coordinate with other governmental and community programs to provide services during periods when the preschool program is not in session. Please address plans for collaboration with other agencies and services to meet the needs of the children you propose serving.

Describe how the program will address the cycle of intentional teaching (learning standards, curriculum and assessment), including use of the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS), and aligned student assessments appropriate for the developmental level and intended purpose. Describe how the LEA proposes to actively engage and form partnerships with families in order to support children's learning.

Describe the need for programming for children with identified special needs and those who are dual language learners. Provide detail about how the program will recruit and include children with special needs and those who are dual language learners. Include a description of how you will ensure the number of children with special needs does not exceed the proportion of children with special needs in grades K through 12. Describe specific efforts to meet students' unique needs.

Provide information about family fee collection if the program intends to charge tuition using the approved sliding fee scale (see Appendix E). Please provide information about other funding sources for the program.

Reporting and Evaluation
Each local or regional board of education receiving Smart Start funding shall submit an annual report, in a format prescribed by the Office of Early Childhood, regarding the status and operations of the preschool program.

Budget Forms
Use the appropriate form(s) on pages 23 through 24 to indicate how the grant funds will be expended for each year of funding. A grantee (fiscal agent) with delegate agencies must provide a composite budget that includes proposed expenditures for the delegate agencies. Such fiscal agent must complete individual budget justification sheets and attach for each delegate agency represented in the composite budget.

Applicants must provide budget amounts for the periods of: May 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016 for capital improvements and July 1, 2015, through June 30, 2016 for operating expenses. **The OEC does not permit grantees to use more that 5 percent of the total budget for administrative costs.** Administrative costs are reflected on budget lines 111A.

The alignment of the budget with the purpose and scope of Smart Start is one of the criteria for award consideration.

Budget Justification
Provide a detailed explanation by code number of the line item expenditures in each budget. Separate budgets for capital expenses and program operations are required.

Statement of Assurances
The Statement of Assurances must be signed and included with this application and certified on the Cover Sheet by the applicant agency.

Affirmative Action Packet
In accordance with the regulation established by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, each applicant is required to have a completed Affirmative Action Packet on file with the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood (OEC). This grant application contains the "Affirmative Action Certification Form" certifying that an Affirmative Action Plan is on file with OEC. The individual authorized to sign on behalf of the applicant must sign and return the Affirmative Action Certification Form and submit such form with the grant application.

Date of Board Acceptance
If it is not possible to obtain board approval prior to December 19, 2014, please submit the application by this date. Send official board approval no later than January 9, 2015.

Part III: Application Process

Obligations of Grantees
All bidders are hereby notified that the grant to be awarded is subject to contract compliance requirements as set forth in C.G.S. Sections 4a-60, 4a-60a and Sections 4a-68j-1 et seq. of the Regulations of the Connecticut State Agencies.

The grantee must submit periodic reports of its employment and sub-contracting practices in such form, in such a manner and in such time as may be prescribed by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities.

Freedom of Information Act
All of the information contained in a proposal submitted in response to this Request for Proposal (RFP) is subject to the Freedom of Information Act Sections 1-200 et seq. (FOIA). The FOIA declares that, except as provided by federal law or state statute, records maintained or kept on file by any public agency (as defined in the statute) are public records and every person has the right to inspect such record and receive a copy of such records.

Management Control of the Program and Grant Consultation
The grantee must have complete management control of this grant. While the OEC staff may be consulted for their expertise they will not be directly involved in the expenditure and payment of funds.

Updating of information
The applicant is required to provide updates of any changes in program administration and copies of all reports relating to findings, deficiencies or investigations by Head Start, the CT Department of Public Health or local health department, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the CT Department of Children and Families or any agency or organization reviewing the program or program staff.

- Self-reporting of information (including accompanying documentation) must be received by the OEC program manager within 72 hours of any significant incident or report.

Definition of Terms

- The following definitions should be considered when drafting the application:
- *School day*: programming provided for a minimum of 6 hours
- *School year*: programming provided for a minimum of 180 days
- *Children with special needs*: children who have an Individual Education Program (IEP)
- *Dual language learners*: children who are acquiring two or more languages simultaneously. The term encompasses other terms frequently used e.g. Limited English Proficient (LEP), bilingual, English Language Learners (ELL), children who speak a language other than English (LOTE)
- *Capital improvement*: a structural improvement or restoration of some aspect of a property that will improve the property's ability to function as a pre-Kindergarten

classroom based on NAEYC Standards and Accreditation Criteria or Head Start program standards (includes furnishings/equipment with a ten year life).

- *Unmet need*: a documented deficit of center-based pre-Kindergarten programs for 3 and 4 year-olds.

Due Date

An electronic copy of the grant application must be received by 4:00 PM on December 19, 2014. Additionally, original signature pages as well as a copy of the application on a CD must be received by 4:00 PM on December 19, 2014. Original signatures must be received by the due date **IRRESPECTIVE OF POSTMARK DATE**. Faxed copies of the signatures will not be accepted.

Mailing and Delivery Information

Mailing Address:	Delivery Address:
Andrea Brinnel, Smart Start Manager CT Office of Early Childhood PO Box 2219 Hartford, CT 06145-2219	CT Office of Early Childhood 165 Capitol Avenue, Room G-17 Hartford, CT 06106 oec@ct.gov

Review of Proposals and Grant Awards

The OEC reserves the right to make grant awards under this program without discussion with applicants. Therefore, applicants should submitt proposals that present the project in the most favorable light from both technical and cost standpoints.

The Smart Start Manager will be available to answer questions concerning this RFP at andrea.brinnel@ct.gov or 860-713-6771. A bidder's conference will be held on November 3, 2014 from 9:00 to 11:30 AM in Room 307 A/B of the State Office Building located at 165 Capitol Avenue in Hartford. The conference will also be live streamed in Conference Room 3 at The Connecticut State Department of Education Middletown offices located at 25 Industrial Park Rd. If attending the live streaming in Middletown, please enter through the rear entrance. Attendees will be required to sign in with security.

The OEC will review and rate proposals according to the Review Criteria in this RFP. The OEC intends to annouce grant awards by May 2015.

Other Program Requirements

The OEC may conduct announced and unannounced on-site monitoring visits of any grant awardees.

The OEC requires LEAs that receive funding under this grant to submit annual and monthly activity reports and attend meetings as scheduled by the OEC.

Annual reports must be submitted to the OEC, on or before August 15 following the end of the funding year.

Within 60 days after the close of the fiscal year, each grantee must file a financial statement of expenditures with the OEC on such forms as prescribed by the OEC.

LEAs receiving Smart Start funding (for capital improvements and/or operations) are required to participate in evaluations conducted by or on behalf of the Office of Early Childhood.

SMART START GRANT

Application Checklist

	Yes	No
Proposal Abstract for Capital Improvements		✔
Budget for Capital Improvements		✔
Budget Justification Sheet for Capital Improvements		✔
Proposal Abstract for Operating Expenses	✔	
Budget for Operating Expenses	✔	
Budget Justification for Operating Expenses	✔	
NAEYC Accreditation/Head Start Approval or Evidence of Application	✔	
Letter of support from School Readiness Council (if applicable)	✔	
Statement of Assurances	✔	
Affirmative Action Packet	✔	

Scoring Rubric

1. Applicant meets basic requirements

All basic requirements must be met to be considered for funding.

	Yes	No
Letter of support from School Readiness Council (if applicable)		
Additional preschool spaces are proposed.		
NAEYC accredited or have a detailed plan to achieve NAEYC accreditation or Head Start approved.		
Unmet need is documented through statewide needs assessment or through the provision of specific data.		
Program is able to demonstrate a plan for proportional enrollment of children: • With special needs (proportionate to K-12 enrollment) • Who are dual language learners		
All teachers have required certification.		
Proposed class size does not exceed 18.		
Expenditures for administrative costs in the proposed budget do not exceed 5 percent.		

2. Overall Proposal:

The proposal is able to demonstrate the LEA's ability to provide a high-quality preschool program for 3- and 4-year-olds.

	Points Awarded	Possible Points
Offers full-day kindergarten to all age eligible children		5
Allocates at least sixty percent of the spaces to children who are members of families that are at or below seventy-five percent of the state median income, or fifty percent of the of the spaces to children who are eligible for free and reduced price lunches and has a recruitment plan.		10
Staffing patterns are appropriate		5
Describes a cycle of intentional teaching and use of Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (planning and implementation/observing and assessing).		10
Describes efforts to engage families.		5
Use of appropriate child assessments and appropriate use of assessment data.		10
Includes plan for Smart Start as a part of a Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 3 continuum.		5
Describes collaborative and coordinating efforts with local agencies and organizations to provide services when school is not in session.		5
		(55)

3. Program Evaluation

There is a plan to use the child and program evaluation data for continuous program improvement		10
Plans for program evaluation include data collection methods and tools (e.g. ECERS, CLASS, parent surveys, etc.).		10
		(20)

4. Budget

Proposed capital expenditures are tied to specific NAEYC and Head Start program standards.		5
Proposed expenditures for capital improvements are appropriate and cost effective.		5
Proposed expenditures for program operations are appropriate.		5
Budget justifications for capital improvements provide detailed information on how the funds are to be spent.		5
Budget justifications for program operations provide detailed information on how the funds are to be spent.		5
		(25)

TOTAL

Possible Points	Points Scored
100	

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
SMART START APPLICATION
GRANT PERIOD
June 30, 2015 to June 30, 2020

GRANT COVER PAGE

School District Ansonia Public Schools
Contact Name Eileen Ehman
Address 42 Grove Street Ansonia, CT 06401
Telephone Number 203-736-5095
Contact E-mail Address eehman@ansonia.org

*It is the responsibility of the grantee to provide up-to-date contact information. In the event of any changes, contact information must be reported to the Smart Start Manager within five business days.

I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Chairperson, Board of Education _____ Date _____

Superintendent of Schools _____ Date _____

Chief Elected Official _____ Date _____

Number of Classrooms	Total Number of Children
1	15

Total Funds Requested	Capital Improvements	Annual Operating Expenses
$ 75,000	$ 0	$ 75,000

Proposal Abstracts

Provide a one-page abstract that contains a summary for each of the funding requests. There should be a separate abstract for capital expenses and a separate abstract for operations. Use space provided.

Capital Improvement Abstract

N/A

Operations Abstract

Ansonia Public Schools is seeking funding for one Smart Start classroom for John C. Mead School, which is presently serving 601 students in Grades K-6. Unmet need has been documented recently through a statewide assessment, which included Ansonia as a community in need of additional high-quality pre-school programming. (See Appendix D in RFP.) The proposed Smart Start class will be placed in one of the classrooms of the new, four-classroom addition that will use portable-style structures. This addition is scheduled to be completed in the summer of 2015.

The Smart Start class hours will be 8 a.m.-2 p.m. daily and will follow the Ansonia Public School calendar of 181 school days. The class will be comprised of 15 children who have not been served by a preschool program. The Smart Start classroom will represent the district's proportion of children enrolled with special needs: Three (or 20%) students will have special needs, while 12 (or 80%) will be regular education children. We plan to add three non-Smart Start children who have special needs, for a total class of 18 children, ages 3 and 4.

Ansonia Public Schools will give priority to students with special needs and those who are dual language learners. The district works closely with the Birth to Three Program that services special needs children in our region. Based on current data, we anticipate 18 referrals for the 2015-16 school year. Students who are dual language learners will be identified through our registration process, which includes questions about home language and spoken language, and we will conduct a screening to confirm that the child is a dual language learner. Currently, about 3% of Ansonia's students are dual language learners, and in September 2014, we added a Bilingual Education program at Prendergast School, a K-Grade 6 school.

We will also allocate at least 50% of the Smart Start spaces to children who are eligible for free or reduced price meals. These students will be identified through our registration process, which requires parents/guardians to complete the Child Nutrition Program application. The 2012-13 Strategic School Profile lists Ansonia's rate of students eligible for free/reduced price meals as 67.2%; currently, the rate is nearly 70%. Therefore, meeting the state's 50% minimum requirement will be attainable, and we anticipate exceeding it.

The new Smart Start classroom will be staffed with one certified early childhood/special education teacher; a non-certified, lead teacher with a minimum of an associate's degree in early childhood education; and a non-certified Pre-K classroom support assistant with experience in special education classes. All three will be employees of Ansonia Public Schools. The school district contracts with Kelly Services and Delta T to provide substitute staff, when the need arises.

Since 1998, Ansonia has provided a high-quality preschool program for 3- and 4-year olds, through the School Readiness Program. In 2004, when the Ansonia School Readiness Program became an entitlement grant (due to the district's new Priority School District status), the percentage of children entering kindergarten with a preschool experience was 33%. In 2013, that percentage had increased to 78%. Currently, the School Readiness program is serving 148 children who are enrolled in one of four locations in Ansonia: 87 in the Ansonia Public Schools Pre-K program, 23 at Julia Day Nursery, 18 at TEAM Childcare Services, and 20 at the Valley YMCA. The Ansonia Public Schools Pre-K program is NAEYC-accredited through December, 2017. Therefore, this Smart Start classroom will become a satellite location and will come under the umbrella of the existing accreditation.

Smart Start students will benefit from a long-standing collaboration among the existing Pre-K sites, in order to ensure that families and children have access to early care and education during times when the Smart Start classroom is closed. In addition, Ansonia Smart Start children will be eligible for services offered to all Ansonia students, from Pre-K to Grade 12, including the summer school programs operated by the school district,

Tuition, using the approved Office of Early Childhood sliding fee scale (Appendix E of RFP), will be charged to all Smart Start families. The district's Central Office will be responsible for the collection of fees and all correspondence regarding fees. Staff and operational costs of the Smart Start classroom will be covered by the Smart Start Grant, tuition, and local budget and/or entitlement grants for Ansonia Public Schools.

The Ansonia School Readiness Council has signed a letter of support for expanding Ansonia's preschool program (Attachment #1), and the Ansonia Board of Education voted at its Dec. 3, 2014 meeting to support the district's application for the Smart Start Grant program (Attachment #2).

Documentation and Evaluation

Describe the methods and procedures used to evaluate the program, classroom and children's progress. Describe how the data gathered will be used for continuous program improvement as well as planning for instruction, including strategies for sharing progress and communicating with families. Use space provided as necessary.

The new Ansonia Smart Start class will benefit from strong and clearly established evaluation procedures in the school district, as well as in its Pre-K Program. The Ansonia Public Schools Pre-K program is NAEYC-accredited through December, 2017; therefore, this Smart Start classroom will become a satellite location and will come under the umbrella of the existing accreditation.

The Ansonia Smart Start class will utilize the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS) and the Connecticut Preschool Assessment Frameworks as its foundational documents to support the development of children and their progress in an ongoing cycle of intentional teaching. These documents are closely aligned with the district's Pre-k curriculum in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science and Technology. The Smart Start staff will write weekly Learning Experience Plans that integrate all of these resources and children's interests to provide experiences in the areas of cognitive, physical, personal and social and creative development. Staff members will observe, assess, plan and implement with intentional practice to create an environment of growth over time, and toward learning outcomes.

The Smart Start class will follow the Pre-K program's Improvement Plan Policy, which outlines the procedural steps: 1) assessments occur three times a year; 2) families are involved in planning and implementing assessments, via open house, home visits, and conferences; and 3) assessment tools must identify children's interests and needs; describe the developmental progress and learning of children; arrange for referral and development screenings (when necessary); improve curriculum and adapt teaching practices and the environment; be sensitive to family cultures, children's abilities and disabilities, and home language; and demonstrate development in all areas of learning (cognitive, social-emotional, physical, and creative).

For the students with special needs in the Smart Start class, programming will be monitored via the Early Childhood Outcomes assessments, which are required: 1) when a student enters and exits Ansonia Public Schools' preschool special education programs; (2) when IEP goals and objectives are set; and 3) when reviewing student progress on a trimester basis aligned with the district's report card calendar. The Unique Learning system will also be purchased to utilize with students with disabilities. This adapted curriculum includes built-in assessments: CFAs and benchmarks. This data will lend itself to providing educators with the information needed to make data-based decisions, which will drive instruction.

Through formal and informal communication methods, the district will form partnerships with families to support children's learning. Parent involvement is strongly encouraged through the Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) and/or the Parent Advisory Board (PAB). These committees provide parents with the opportunity to discuss the education of their children, health and safety in the classrooms, events that would benefit the program, and policies for review.

The Smart Start classroom staff will participate in many of the best practices of Ansonia's Pre-K program regarding documentation and communication with parents. A Monday Memo will be prepared by staff and provided to every family at the start of each week, informing parents about what students will be learning during the week. It also will provide suggestions for home-school connections.

Staff will greet children and/or parents each morning, providing daily opportunities for informal communication about the child's progress. "All About My Day" reports may be completed and sent home with the child, to help the parent better understand their child's day. Monthly newsletters from the school and the Pre-K program will include information about the Smart Start classroom. Bulletin boards will display children's work and upcoming events. Emails will be sent on a regular basis, providing information about program events, meetings or emergency changes. The district's website and Facebook page will also be utilized to share information.

Documentation and Evaluation (continued)

All Smart Start families will be invited to the Mead School Open House in September, when parents will learn more about the program/curriculum for the year. Home Visits will be conducted in the Fall. The teachers will schedule a time to meet with parents/guardians and the child to discuss progress and set goals for the rest of the year. Parents will be informed of the assessment plan that the program uses. The Early Learning Development Standards and the Connecticut Preschool Assessment Frameworks (PAF) are used as the basis for planning learning experiences, observing and documenting child progress, and implementing teaching strategies. The assessment plan includes the purpose, procedures, timeline and the way(s) the assessment will be shared among families and used in the program. Families will also be notified of the results of the Early Screening Inventory (ESI), which is conducted within the first 45 days of school.

Halfway through the school year, Smart Start parents will be asked to complete the NAEYC Family Survey, which will allow them to respond anonymously to quality program criteria and their experience(s). The results of the survey will be shared with families in late Spring, and Smart Start staff will meet to discuss the strengths and weaknesses in the survey, in order to make program improvements. They use an Action Plan to describe the action steps, person(s) responsibility, results indicator(s), and timeline for continuous program improvement. Twice a year, in January and June, families are provided written documentation, The Child's Profile, of how their child is progressing.

Conferences will be held in the Spring in the Smart Start classroom. Teachers will share information on the child's progress during the year, and parents will be able to see their child's portfolio. The portfolio will contain art, pictures, written observations, etc. that the teacher will save throughout the year. If any family needs translation services, the Ansonia Public Schools will utilize its collaboration agreement with Valley Regional Adult Education to identify a translator. The program may also utilize existing staff to communicate with families.

Ansonia has a very strong Transition to Kindergarten timetable, which is overseen by a committee of Ansonia Public Schools staff, local agencies and community providers, and the Smart Start class will follow it. The timetable is revised each year to ensure that the goal of promoting a smooth and successful transition for children and families – from preschool to kindergarten – is met. Parents of Pre-K children receive a written outline of the transition process. Each fall, Ansonia Pre-K staff members meet with kindergarten staff to discuss children's portfolios. Additional meetings are held with special education staff, in order to allow for adequate planning time to meet the needs of the children.

During the winter, Pre-K staff members visit kindergarten classrooms to become familiar with any changes in teachers, classrooms or expectations. A kindergarten registration kick-off event is held in one of the district's two elementary schools. Registration efforts continue through the spring and summer with assistance from community preschools, the public library and other agencies. Each spring, a professional development program is held, with invitations sent to all Pre-K programs and school district staff. Preschool teachers complete a PreSchool Information Sheet for each child transitioning to kindergarten.

A Kindergarten Screening is held with each transitioning child, and the child is given a "Going to Kindergarten" book to read with his/her parent. The screening monitors academic success from Pre-K to kindergarten, assessing the child's skill level in language and literacy; mathematical thinking; personal and social development; physical development; and the arts. In early June, a Kindergarten Orientation is hosted at each elementary school, providing the parent and child with a ride on a school bus, a visit to a classroom, and the opportunity to meet teachers and principals.

For the past two years, all children entering kindergarten in Ansonia have been provided with full-day kindergarten – and this structure will continue and be further strengthened, thanks to funding from the Alliance District Grant, Title I and the local budget. Starting with the 2015-16 year, 10 additional instructional days will be added to the schedule for all incoming kindergarten children, in order to ease the transition to full day kindergarten. The program will be taught by Ansonia primary grade-level teachers.

Inclusion of special populations and collaboration

Describe how the program will prioritize enrollment of children who are dual language learners and/or have special needs. Describe how the program will collaborate with other agencies and organizations to provide services for children. Use space provided as necessary.

Ansonia Public Schools works closely with the Birth to Three Program that services children in our region. Based on current data, we anticipate 18 referrals from the Birth to Three Program for the 2015-16 school year. For the past three years, the most notable area of growth in Ansonia Public Schools special education population has been in the Pre-K age group. Since the 2012-13 year, the school district has been assigning students to the ACES Village School in North Haven, due to the lack of space and available placements within our district programs.

The Smart Start classroom will provide much-needed programming for this growing population, and our district intends to utilize the new classrooms in the addition to service children with special needs.

As stated in the Operations Abstract, Ansonia Public Schools will give priority to students with special needs and those who are dual language learners. The district's collaboration with the Birth to Three program, numerous childcare partners in the region, and our detailed registration process will meet this priority.

Recruiting children with special needs and dual language learners will follow a parallel plan that is in place for the School Readiness Program. The School Readiness Council – which is comprised of 20 community, district staff, and parents – has representation from the key childcare service providers in Ansonia and the region. Referrals come from these agencies, as well as through the many outreach efforts made by the School Readiness Program and the school district. Ansonia Public Schools will issue press releases and brochures to the key childcare service providers and pediatricians, notifying families about the Smart Start Program. The Ansonia Public Schools' website and Facebook page will promote recruitment efforts. An automated calling system for all public schools students and staff will be utilized as well. Staff will attend family fairs, baby fairs and health fairs to promote Smart Start.

Registration for the Smart Start classroom will be assigned to the Ansonia Public Schools' registration secretary, who works in Central Office as a 12-month employee.

If approved for Smart Start funding, Ansonia Public Schools will also recruit future students at the annual "Kick-Off to Kindergarten Registration" event, sponsored in late January by the School Readiness Council. The 12th annual event is scheduled for January 2015, and all newly enrolled children will receive a voucher for a free Ansonia Public Schools' uniform shirt, free book and bag, and free pancake breakfast. Twenty community agencies participate each year, and nearly 200 people attend on average. We will add Smart Start registration to this well-established event, if Ansonia becomes a Smart Start district.

Ansonia Public Schools and its Smart Start Program will collaborate with Ansonia and regional agencies and organizations to provide services for children, thanks to the collaborative agreements already in place through the Ansonia School Readiness Program. Ansonia has established linkages and agreements with Valley Regional Adult Education and TEAM, Inc., for education and training; the Ansonia Library to assist parents in utilizing the library's services; Parent Child Resource Center in Derby for mental health services; and Naugatuck Valley Health Department for public health services. The Ansonia School Readiness Program provides timely and updated information to 2-1-1 Connecticut regarding child care, and our district will keep 2-1-1 Connecticut apprised of potential Smart Start openings. The program also has identified local health care resources for dental, vision and hearing screenings for children. The building principal and the Smart Start classroom teacher will become members of the Ansonia School Readiness Council, in order to ensure open communication and strong collaboration.

Inclusion of special populations and collaboration (continued)

Ansonia Public Schools and its Pre-K Program has a clear procedure for making referrals when there is a sudden change in the child, a learning concern, or multiple behavioral issues with a child. The teacher or staff will speak with the school's social worker or guidance counselor, as well as with the child's parent or guardian. The teacher, support staff and parent will review and agree to a plan of action for the child. If the plan does not work, a referral will be made for additional services, with parental consent and a release of information form.

At the start of each school year, the families of Ansonia Smart Start children will be provided with a written Alternate Plan of Care notice. The notice will include a school calendar, where alternative care is available, and how the parent fee will be paid. Parents will be required to sign the Alternate Plan of Care notice, indicating if they do or do not require alternate care, and the signed notice will be kept in the child's file. Smart Start staff will assist parents who require alternate care in obtaining the necessary documentation to attend the alternate program (including, but not limited to, current health record, emergency contact information, and special needs).

Collaboration with local and regional childcare providers and advocates is a vital component of Ansonia's work in the Pre-K field. For nearly a decade, Ansonia has been an active participant with the Graustein Memorial Fund Discovery initiative, which has produced a Community Plan for Ansonia children ages 0-8. The mission of the Plan is to ensure that this goal is met: "All children in Ansonia, birth through age 8, are safe, healthy and have the skills and behaviors to become lifelong learners." Committees focusing on Education, Health and Safety are working collaboratively to leverage all existing services and resources, as well as seek new, needed resources, in order to accomplish this mission. The Smart Start initiative is one of those new resources that will help meet the needs of Ansonia's underserved children.

<u>SAMPLE</u> BUDGET JUSTIFICATION
Year 1 & 2

Indicate costs of implementing Funding Years 2014-2015 and 2015-2016 by budget code. Refer to Budget Object Codes in application packet for code descriptions. A worksheet is provided following each Budget Form page. Use additional pages if needed.

A summary explanation must be provided for each line item expenditure noted in your budget. Examples are provided below.

Examples:

Code #	Description	Expenditure Explanation	
111B	INSTRUCTIONAL	3 hours per day for 39 weeks 8 hours per day for 13 weeks (total 1,105 hours) 1,105 hours @$14/hour x 1 teacher	$ 15,470
200	PERSONAL SERVICES-EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	FICA @ 7.68% of salaries: $1,925 Worker's Compensation 6.9% of salaries: $850 Health Insurance @ $3,525/staff/year: $4,288	$ 7,063

SMART START

FISCAL YEARS 2015-2016 **BUDGET FORM**

GRANTEE NAME: Ansonia Public Schools	TOWN CODE: 002
GRANT TITLE: **CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**	YEARS:
PROJECT TITLE: FUND: SPID: YEAR: 2015 PROG: CF1: CF2:	
GRANT PERIOD: 7/1/15 – 6/30/17	AUTHORIZED AMOUNT: $

CODES	**DESCRIPTIONS**	**BUDGET AMOUNT**	
		FY 14-15	**FY 15-16**
300	PURCHASED SERVICES/TECHNICAL SERVICES		
400	PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES, INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION		
500	OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES		
600	OTHER SUPPLIES		
700	PROPERTY		
800	OTHER OBJECTS		
	TOTAL	0	0

_____ ORIGINAL REQUEST DATE
_____ REVISED REQUEST DATE

_____
OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
PROGRAM MANAGER AUTHORIZATION

_____
DATE OF
APPROVAL

SMART START

FISCAL YEARS 2015-2016 **BUDGET FORM**

GRANTEE NAME: Ansonia Public Schools	TOWN CODE: 002
GRANT TITLE: **OPERATIONS**	YEARS: 2015-2017
PROJECT TITLE: Smart Start Pre-K FUND: SPID: YEAR: 2015 PROG: CF1: CF2:	
GRANT PERIOD: 7/1/15 –6/30/17	AUTHORIZED AMOUNT: $

CODES	**DESCRIPTIONS**	**BUDGET AMOUNT**	
		FY 15-16	**FY 16-17**
111A	NON-INSTRUCTIONAL SALARIES		
111B	INSTRUCTIONAL SALARIES	61142	61142
200	PERSONAL SERVICES-EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	11085	11085
322	INSERVICE		
323	PUPIL SERVICES		
324	FIELD TRIPS		
325	PARENTAL ACTIVITIES		
330	EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES	500	500
340	OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES		
400	PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES		
510	STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES		
530	COMMUNICATIONS		
580	TRAVEL		
600	SUPPLIES	2273	2273
700	PROPERTY		
	TOTAL	75000	75000

_____ ORIGINAL REQUEST DATE
_____ REVISED REQUEST DATE

_____
OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
PROGRAM MANAGER AUTHORIZATION

_____
DATE OF
APPROVAL

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Indicate costs of implementing FY 15-16 and FY 16-17 by budget code. Refer to Budget Object Codes in application packet for code descriptions. Use additional pages if needed.

A summary explanation must be provided for each line item expenditure noted in your budget. You are only allowed to use the budget codes that have been assigned. **Please note that budget codes available differ for capital improvements and operating expenses.** You are required to complete a separate budget justification for each funding year and for each funding category (capital improvements and operating expenses).

Code #	Description

OPERATIONS BUDGET JUSTIFICATION

Indicate costs of implementing FY 15-16 and FY 16-17 by budget code. Refer to Budget Object Codes in application packet for code descriptions. Use additional pages if needed.

A summary explanation must be provided for each line item expenditure noted in your budget. You are only allowed to use the budget codes that have been assigned. **Please note that budget codes available differ for capital improvements and operating expenses.** You are required to complete a separate budget justification for each funding year and for each funding category (capital improvements and operating expenses).

Code #	Description
111B	Non-certified Pre-K lead teacher salary, based on $21/hr. x 7 hrs/day x 185 days, $27,195.
111B	Non-cert. classroom support asst. salary, based on $15/hr. x 5.8 hours/day x 181 days, $15,747.
111B	33% of $55,000 annual salary for special education teacher, based on master's step 2, 185 days, $18,200.
200	Employee benefits for non-certified Pre-K lead teacher, based on single-person coverage, $7,800.
200	FICA for two non-certified staff members, .0765 x $42,942 = $3,285.
330	License for Unique Learning System (for curriculum and assessments), $500 per classroom.
600	Art supplies, books, manipulatives, and general operating supplies for classroom, $2,273.

APPENDIX A: Budget Object Codes

This list is a description of the budget codes. The list is provided to help you in designing budgets for operating expenses and capital improvements.

111A Non-Instructional
Amounts paid to administrative employees of the grantee not involved in providing direct services to pupils/clients. Include all gross salary payments for these individuals while they are on the grantee payroll including overtime salaries or salaries paid to employees of a temporary nature.

111B Instructional
Salaries for employees providing direct instruction/counseling to pupils/clients. This category is used for both counselors and teachers. Include all salaries for these individuals while they are on the grantee payroll including overtime salaries or salaries of temporary employees. Substitute teachers or teachers hired on a temporary basis to perform work in positions of either a temporary or permanent nature are also reported here. Tutors or individuals whose services are acquired through a contract are not included in the category. A general rule of thumb is that a person for whom the grantee is paying employee benefits and who is on the grantee payroll is included; a person who is paid a fee with no grantee obligation for benefits is not.

200 Personal Services - Employee Benefits
Amounts paid by the grantee on behalf of the employees whose salaries are reported in objects 100 or 111A and 111B. These amounts are not included in the gross salary, but are in addition to that amount. Such payments are fringe benefit payments and, while not paid directly to employees, nevertheless are part of the cost of personal services. Included are the employer's cost of group insurance, social security contribution, retirement contribution, tuition reimbursement, unemployment compensation and workmen's compensation insurance.

300 Purchased Professional and Technical Services
Services which, by their nature, can be performed only by persons or firms with specialized skills and knowledge. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided. Included are the services of architects, engineers, auditors, dentists, medical doctors, lawyers, consultants, teachers, accountants, etc.

322 In-service (Instructional Program Improvement Services)
Payments for services performed by persons qualified to assist teachers and supervisors to enhance the quality of the teaching process. This category includes curriculum consultants, in-service training specialists, etc., who are not on the grantee payroll.

323 Pupil Services (Non-Payroll Services)
Expense for certified or licensed individuals who are not on the grantee payroll and who assist in solving pupils' mental and physical problems. This category includes medical doctors, therapists, audiologists, neurologists, psychologists, psychiatrists, contracted guidance counselors, etc.

324 Field Trips
Costs incurred for conducting educational activities off site. Includes admission costs to educational centers, fees for tour guides, etc.

325 Parental Activities
Expenditures related to services for parenting including workshop presenters, counseling services, baby- sitting services, and overall seminar/workshop costs.

330 Employee Training and Development Services
Services supporting the professional and technical development of school district personnel, including instructional, administrative, and service employees. Included are course registration fees (that are not tuition reimbursement), charges from external vendors to conduct training courses (at either school district facilities or off-site), and other expenditures associated with training or professional development by third-party vendors.

340 Other Professional Services
Professional services other than educational services that support the operation of the school district. Included, for example, are medical doctors, lawyers, architects, auditors, accountants, therapists, audiologists, dieticians, editors, negotiations specialists, paying agents, systems analysts, and planners.

400 Purchased Property Services
Services purchased to operate, repair, maintain, and rent property owned or used by the grantee. These services are performed by persons other than grantee employees. While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.

500 Other Purchased Services
Amounts paid for services rendered by organizations or personnel not on the payroll of the grantee (separate from Professional and Technical Services or Property Services). While a product may or may not result from the transaction, the primary reason for the purchase is the service provided.

510 Student Transportation Services
Expenditures for transporting pupils to and from school and other activities. Included are such items as bus rentals for field trips and payments to drivers for transporting handicapped children.

530 Communication
Services provided by persons or businesses to assist in transmitting and receiving messages or information. This category includes telephone and voice communication services; data communication services to establish or maintain computer based communications, networking, and Internet services; video communications services to establish or maintain one-way or two-way video communications via satellite, cable, or other devices; postal communications services to establish or maintain postage machine rentals, postage, express delivery services, and couriers. Include licenses and fees for services such as subscriptions to research materials over the Internet software, both 'downloaded' and 'off-the-shelf,' should be coded to objects 650 or 735.

580 Travel
Expenditures for transportation, meals, hotel and other expenses associated with staff travel. Per diem payments to staff in lieu of reimbursement for subsistence (room and board) are also included.

600 Supplies
Amounts paid for items that are consumed, worn out, or deteriorated through use, or items that lose their identity through fabrication or incorporation into different or more complex units or substances.

700 Property
Expenditures for acquiring fixed assets, including land or existing buildings, improvements of grounds, initial equipment, additional equipment, and replacement of equipment.
In accordance with the Connecticut State Comptroller's definition equipment, included in this category are all items of equipment (machinery, tools, furniture, vehicles, apparatus, etc.) with a value of over $1,000.00 and the useful life of more than one year and data processing equipment that has unit price under $1,000.00 and a useful life of not less than five years.

800 Debt Service and Miscellaneous
Amounts paid for goods and services not otherwise classified above.

APPENDIX B: Affirmative Action Plan

IF A CURRENT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN IS ON FILE WITH THE CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD, COMPLETE THE STATEMENT WRITTEN BELOW AND SUBMIT AS PART OF THE PROPOSAL.

IF A CURRENT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN IS NOT ON FILE, COMPLETE THE AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PACKET AND SUBMIT AS PART OF THE PROPOSAL.

CERTIFICATION THAT A CURRENT AFFIRMATIVE ACTION PLAN IS ON FILE

I, the undersigned authorized official, hereby certify that the current Affirmative Action Plan of the applying organization/agency is on file with the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood. The Affirmative Action Plan is, by reference, part of this application.

_____ _____

Signature of Authorized Official Date

Carol Merlone, Ed.D.

Print Name of Authorized Official

APPENDIX C: Statement of Assurances

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
STANDARD STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES
GRANT PROGRAMS

PROJECT TITLE: Smart Start Pre-K

THE APPLICANT: Carol Merlone, Ed.D. HEREBY ASSURES THAT:

Ansonia Public Schools
(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

A. The applicant has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive the proposed grant;

B. The filing of this application has been authorized by the applicant's governing body, and the undersigned official has been duly authorized to file this application for and on behalf of said applicant, and otherwise to act as the authorized representative of the applicant in connection with this application;

C. The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this grant will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant;

D. The project will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and in compliance with regulations and other policies and administrative directives of the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood;

E. Grant funds shall not be used to supplant funds normally budgeted by the agency;

F. Fiscal control and accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of all funds awarded;

G. The applicant will submit a final project report (within 60 days of the project completion) and such other reports, as specified, to the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, including information relating to the project records and access thereto as the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood may find necessary;

H. The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood reserves the exclusive right to use and grant the right to use and/or publish any part or parts of any summary, abstract, reports, publications, records and materials resulting from this project and this grant;

I. If the project achieves the specified objectives, every reasonable effort will be made to continue the project and/or implement the results after the termination of state/federal funding;

J. The applicant will protect and save harmless the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood from financial loss and expense, including legal fees and costs, if any, arising out of any breach of the duties, in whole or part, described in the application for the grant;

K. At the conclusion of each grant period, the applicant will provide for an independent audit report acceptable to the grantor in accordance with Sections 7-394a and 7-396a of the Connecticut General Statutes, and the applicant shall return to the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood any moneys not expended in accordance with the approved program/operation budget as determined by the audit;

L. REQUIRED LANGUAGE (NON-DISCRIMINATION)
References in this section to “contract” shall mean this grant agreement and to “contractor” shall mean the Grantee.

(a) For purposes of this Section, the following terms are defined as follows:

i. "Commission" means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities;
ii. "Contract" and “contract” include any extension or modification of the Contract or contract;
iii. "Contractor" and “contractor” include any successors or assigns of the Contractor or contractor;
iv. "Gender identity or expression" means a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose;
v. “good faith" means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations;
vi. "good faith efforts" shall include, but not be limited to, those reasonable initial efforts necessary to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements and additional or substituted efforts when it is determined that such initial efforts will not be sufficient to comply with such requirements;
vii. "marital status" means being single, married as recognized by the state of Connecticut, widowed, separated or divorced;
viii. "mental disability" means one or more mental disorders, as defined in the most recent edition of the American Psychiatric Association's "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders", or a record of or regarding a person as having one or more such disorders;
ix. "minority business enterprise" means any small contractor or supplier of materials fifty-one percent or more of the capital stock, if any, or assets of which is owned by a person or persons: (1) who are active in the daily affairs of the enterprise, (2) who

have the power to direct the management and policies of the enterprise, and (3) who are members of a minority, as such term is defined in subsection (a) of Connecticut General Statutes § 32-9n; and

x. "public works contract" means any agreement between any individual, firm or corporation and the State or any political subdivision of the State other than a municipality for construction, rehabilitation, conversion, extension, demolition or repair of a public building, highway or other changes or improvements in real property, or which is financed in whole or in part by the State, including, but not limited to, matching expenditures, grants, loans, insurance or guarantees.

For purposes of this Section, the terms "Contract" and “contract” do not include a contract where each contractor is (1) a political subdivision of the state, including, but not limited to, a municipality, (2) a quasi-public agency, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 1-120, (3) any other state, including but not limited to any federally recognized Indian tribal governments, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 1-267, (4) the federal government, (5) a foreign government, or (6) an agency of a subdivision, agency, state or government described in the immediately preceding enumerated items (1), (2), (3), (4) or (5).

(b) (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, mental retardation, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut; and the Contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to insure that applicants with job-related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, mental retardation, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by the Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (2) the Contractor agrees, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the Contractor, to state that it is an "affirmative action-equal opportunity employer" in accordance with regulations adopted by the Commission; (3) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which the Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which the Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission, advising the labor union or workers’ representative of the Contractor’s commitments under this section and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (4) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-56, 46a-68e and 46a-68f; and (5) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor as relate to the provisions of this Section and

Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56. If the contract is a public works contract, the Contractor agrees and warrants that he will make good faith efforts to employ minority business enterprises as subcontractors and suppliers of materials on such public works projects.

(c) Determination of the Contractor's good faith efforts shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following factors: The Contractor's employment and subcontracting policies, patterns and practices; affirmative advertising, recruitment and training; technical assistance activities and such other reasonable activities or efforts as the Commission may prescribe that are designed to ensure the participation of minority business enterprises in public works projects.

(d) The Contractor shall develop and maintain adequate documentation, in a manner prescribed by the Commission, of its good faith efforts.

(e) The Contractor shall include the provisions of subsection (b) of this Section in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes §46a-56; provided if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.

(f) The Contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this Section as they exist on the date of this Contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this Contract and any amendments thereto.

(g) (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sexual orientation, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or the State of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation; (2) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities advising the labor union or workers' representative of the Contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (3) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56; and (4) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to

pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor which relate to the provisions of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56.

(h) The Contractor shall include the provisions of the foregoing paragraph in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56; provided, if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.

M. The grant award is subject to approval of the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood and availability of state or federal funds.

N. The applicant agrees and warrants that Sections 4-190 to 4-197, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes concerning the Personal Data Act and Sections 10-4-8 to 10-4-10, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies promulgated there under are hereby incorporated by reference.

I, the undersigned authorized official; hereby certify that these assurances shall be fully implemented.

Superintendent Signature: _____

Name: *(typed)* Carol Merlone, Ed.D.

Title: *(typed)* Superintendent of Schools

Date: _____

APPENDIX D: Unmet Need

The following communities have been identified by the Office of Early Childhood as having an unmet need for high-quality preschool in their communty:

Ansonia
Ashford
Avon
Barkhamsted
Beacon Falls
Berlin
Bethel
Branford
Bridgeport
Bristol
Brookfield
Brooklyn
Burlington
Canton
Cheshire
Chester
Clinton
Colchester
Coventry
Cromwell
Danbury
Darien
Deep River
Derby
Durham
East Granby
East Haddam
East Hampton
East Hartford
East Haven
East Lyme
East Windsor
Easton
Ellington
Enfield
Farifield
Farmington
Glastonbury
Granby
Greenwich
Griswold (and Jewett City)
Groton
Guilford
Haddam
Hamden
Kent
Killingly
Killingworth
Lebanon
Ledyard
Lyme
Madison
Manchester
Marlborough
Meriden
Middlebury
Middlefield
Middletown
Milford
Monroe
Montville
Naugatuck
New Britain
New Canaan
New Fairfield
New Hartford
New London
New Milford
Newington
Newtown
North Branford
North Haven
North Stonington
Norwich (Taftville)
Old Saybrook
Orange
Oxford
Plainfield
Plainville
Plymouth
Pomfret
Portland
Preston
Prospect
Putnam
Redding
Ridgfield
Rocky Hill
Salem
Seymour
Sharon
Shelton
Simsbury
Somers
South Windsor
Southbury
Southington
Stafford
Stamford
Sterling
Stonington
Stratford
Suffield
Thompson
Tolland
Torrington
Trumbull
Vernon (and Rockville)
Wallingford
Waterbury
Waterford
Watertown
West Hartford
West Haven
Westport
Wethersfield
Willington
Wilton
Winchester (and Winsted)
Windham
Windsor
Windsor Locks
Wolcott
Woodbury
Woodstock

If your community is not listed above, you may apply for Smart Start funding by providing detailed evidence of unmet need in your community. Include specific data as well as the methodology used by the community to determine unmet need for preschool.

APPENDIX E: Approved Sliding Fee Scale

Use the following link to access the OEC Administered State-Funded Progam General Policy. Programs that choose to charge a parent fee must use the slding fee scale that has been approved for use by School Readiness programs and Child Day Care contractors.

http://www.ct.gov/oec/lib/oec/earlycare/smart_start_fee_shedule.pdf

ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

42 GROVE STREET **ANSONIA, CT 06401**
(203) 736-5095 **FAX: (203) 736-5098**

December 18, 2014

Andrea Brinnel, Smart Start Manager
CT Office of Early Chldhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Room G-17
Hartford, CT 06106

Re: Smart Start Grant

Dear Andrea:

On behalf of Ansonia Public Schools, I am submitting our Smart Start Grant application for 2015-2017. The enclosed application includes the original signature pages, as well as a copy of the application on a CD.

I want to note that we are experiencing a technical glitch with the Adobe software, regarding the content of page 26 (Operations Budget Justification). When opening the document, you may not be able to view any content on this page until you select the "Sign Document" button, then "Add Text", and click on the page. Miraculously, the text appears for this page.

Hopefully, this glitch does not replicate on your end!

Thank you for this opportunity.

Sincerely yours,

Eileen Ehman
Grants Manager

Enclosure

Part V: Application Form

Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
SMART START APPLICATION
GRANT PERIOD
June 30, 2015 to June 30, 2020

lm 2/18/15

GRANT COVER PAGE

School District Ansonia Public Schools
Contact Name Eileen Ehman
Address 42 Grove Street Ansonia, CT 06401
Telephone Number 203-736-5095
Contact E-mail Address eehman@ansonia.org

email sent

*It is the responsibility of the grantee to provide up-to-date contact information. In the event of any changes, contact information must be reported to the Smart Start Manager within five business days.

I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Chairperson, Board of Education	12-15-2014 Date
Carol Mulone, Ed.D. Superintendent of Schools	12-14-14 Date
Chief Elected Official	12-15-14 Date

Number of Classrooms	Total Number of Children
1	15

Total Funds Requested	Capital Improvements	Annual Operating Expenses
$ 75,000	$ 0	$ 75,000

Proposal Abstracts

Provide a one-page abstract that contains a summary for each of the funding requests. There should be a separate abstract for capital expenses and a separate abstract for operations. Use space provided.

Capital Improvement Abstract

N/A

APPENDIX C: Statement of Assurances

STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES

CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
STANDARD STATEMENT OF ASSURANCES
GRANT PROGRAMS

PROJECT TITLE: Smart Start

THE APPLICANT: Carol Merlone, Ed.D. HEREBY ASSURES THAT:

Ansonia Public Schools
(insert Agency/School/CBO Name)

A. The applicant has the necessary legal authority to apply for and receive the proposed grant;

B. The filing of this application has been authorized by the applicant's governing body, and the undersigned official has been duly authorized to file this application for and on behalf of said applicant, and otherwise to act as the authorized representative of the applicant in connection with this application;

C. The activities and services for which assistance is sought under this grant will be administered by or under the supervision and control of the applicant;

D. The project will be operated in compliance with all applicable state and federal laws and in compliance with regulations and other policies and administrative directives of the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood;

E. Grant funds shall not be used to supplant funds normally budgeted by the agency;

F. Fiscal control and accounting procedures will be used to ensure proper disbursement of all funds awarded;

G. The applicant will submit a final project report (within 60 days of the project completion) and such other reports, as specified, to the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood, including information relating to the project records and access thereto as the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood may find necessary;

H. The Connecticut Office of Early Childhood reserves the exclusive right to use and grant the right to use and/or publish any part or parts of any summary, abstract, reports, publications, records and materials resulting from this project and this grant;

I. If the project achieves the specified objectives, every reasonable effort will be made to continue the project and/or implement the results after the termination of state/federal funding;

J. The applicant will protect and save harmless the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood from financial loss and expense, including legal fees and costs, if any, arising out of any breach of the duties, in whole or part, described in the application for the grant;

K. At the conclusion of each grant period, the applicant will provide for an independent audit report acceptable to the grantor in accordance with Sections 7-394a and 7-396a of the Connecticut General Statutes, and the applicant shall return to the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood any moneys not expended in accordance with the approved program/operation budget as determined by the audit;

L. REQUIRED LANGUAGE (NON-DISCRIMINATION)
References in this section to "contract" shall mean this grant agreement and to "contractor" shall mean the Grantee.

(a) For purposes of this Section, the following terms are defined as follows:

i. "Commission" means the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities;
ii. "Contract" and "contract" include any extension or modification of the Contract or contract;
iii. "Contractor" and "contractor" include any successors or assigns of the Contractor or contractor;
iv. "Gender identity or expression" means a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose;
v. "good faith" means that degree of diligence which a reasonable person would exercise in the performance of legal duties and obligations;
vi. "good faith efforts" shall include, but not be limited to, those reasonable initial efforts necessary to comply with statutory or regulatory requirements and additional or substituted efforts when it is determined that such initial efforts will not be sufficient to comply with such requirements;
vii. "marital status" means being single, married as recognized by the state of Connecticut, widowed, separated or divorced;
viii. "mental disability" means one or more mental disorders, as defined in the most recent edition of the American Psychiatric Association's "Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders", or a record of or regarding a person as having one or more such disorders;
ix. "minority business enterprise" means any small contractor or supplier of materials fifty-one percent or more of the capital stock, if any, or assets of which is owned by a person or persons: (1) who are active in the daily affairs of the enterprise, (2) who

have the power to direct the management and policies of the enterprise, and (3) who are members of a minority, as such term is defined in subsection (a) of Connecticut General Statutes § 32-9n; and

x. "public works contract" means any agreement between any individual, firm or corporation and the State or any political subdivision of the State other than a municipality for construction, rehabilitation, conversion, extension, demolition or repair of a public building, highway or other changes or improvements in real property, or which is financed in whole or in part by the State, including, but not limited to, matching expenditures, grants, loans, insurance or guarantees.

For purposes of this Section, the terms "Contract" and "contract" do not include a contract where each contractor is (1) a political subdivision of the state, including, but not limited to, a municipality, (2) a quasi-public agency, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 1-120, (3) any other state, including but not limited to any federally recognized Indian tribal governments, as defined in Conn. Gen. Stat. Section 1-267, (4) the federal government, (5) a foreign government, or (6) an agency of a subdivision, agency, state or government described in the immediately preceding enumerated items (1), (2), (3), (4) or (5).

(b) (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, mental retardation, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by such Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or of the State of Connecticut; and the Contractor further agrees to take affirmative action to insure that applicants with job-related qualifications are employed and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their race, color, religious creed, age, marital status, national origin, ancestry, sex, gender identity or expression, mental retardation, mental disability or physical disability, including, but not limited to, blindness, unless it is shown by the Contractor that such disability prevents performance of the work involved; (2) the Contractor agrees, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the Contractor, to state that it is an "affirmative action-equal opportunity employer" in accordance with regulations adopted by the Commission; (3) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which the Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which the Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission, advising the labor union or workers' representative of the Contractor's commitments under this section and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (4) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-68e and 46a-68f and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §§ 46a-56, 46a-68e and 46a-68f; and (5) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor as relate to the provisions of this Section and

Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56. If the contract is a public works contract, the Contractor agrees and warrants that he will make good faith efforts to employ minority business enterprises as subcontractors and suppliers of materials on such public works projects.

(c) Determination of the Contractor's good faith efforts shall include, but shall not be limited to, the following factors: The Contractor's employment and subcontracting policies, patterns and practices; affirmative advertising, recruitment and training; technical assistance activities and such other reasonable activities or efforts as the Commission may prescribe that are designed to ensure the participation of minority business enterprises in public works projects.

(d) The Contractor shall develop and maintain adequate documentation, in a manner prescribed by the Commission, of its good faith efforts.

(e) The Contractor shall include the provisions of subsection (b) of this Section in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes §46a-56; provided if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.

(f) The Contractor agrees to comply with the regulations referred to in this Section as they exist on the date of this Contract and as they may be adopted or amended from time to time during the term of this Contract and any amendments thereto.

(g) (1) The Contractor agrees and warrants that in the performance of the Contract such Contractor will not discriminate or permit discrimination against any person or group of persons on the grounds of sexual orientation, in any manner prohibited by the laws of the United States or the State of Connecticut, and that employees are treated when employed without regard to their sexual orientation; (2) the Contractor agrees to provide each labor union or representative of workers with which such Contractor has a collective bargaining Agreement or other contract or understanding and each vendor with which such Contractor has a contract or understanding, a notice to be provided by the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities advising the labor union or workers' representative of the Contractor's commitments under this section, and to post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment; (3) the Contractor agrees to comply with each provision of this section and with each regulation or relevant order issued by said Commission pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56; and (4) the Contractor agrees to provide the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities with such information requested by the Commission, and permit access to

pertinent books, records and accounts, concerning the employment practices and procedures of the Contractor which relate to the provisions of this Section and Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56.

(h) The Contractor shall include the provisions of the foregoing paragraph in every subcontract or purchase order entered into in order to fulfill any obligation of a contract with the State and such provisions shall be binding on a subcontractor, vendor or manufacturer unless exempted by regulations or orders of the Commission. The Contractor shall take such action with respect to any such subcontract or purchase order as the Commission may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance in accordance with Connecticut General Statutes § 46a-56; provided, if such Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the Commission, the Contractor may request the State of Connecticut to enter into any such litigation or negotiation prior thereto to protect the interests of the State and the State may so enter.

M. The grant award is subject to approval of the Connecticut Office of Early Childhood and availability of state or federal funds.

N. The applicant agrees and warrants that Sections 4-190 to 4-197, inclusive, of the Connecticut General Statutes concerning the Personal Data Act and Sections 10-4-8 to 10-4-10, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies promulgated there under are hereby incorporated by reference.

I, the undersigned authorized official; hereby certify that these assurances shall be fully implemented.

Superintendent Signature: Carol Merlone, Ed.D.

Name: *(typed)* =Carol Merlone

Title: *(typed)* Superintendent of Schools

Date: 12-14-14

Attachment 1

Ansonia School Readiness Program
"school readiness... it's everybody's business"
115 Howard Avenue
Ansonia, CT 06401
203-736-5052

December 2, 2014

Andrea Brinnel, Smart Start Manager
State of Connecticut
Office of Early Childhood
165 Capitol Avenue, Room G-17
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Ms. Brinnel:

On behalf of the Ansonia School Readiness Council, we are writing this letter of support for expanding the Ansonia Public Schools' preschool program.

Ansonia Public Schools has been offering preschool education for 16 years through the state's School Readiness Grant Program. The School Readiness Council was formed in 1998, with broad representation from the community, city government, the school system and parents. Ansonia's program began with 14 children and two accredited program sites and is currently serving 148 children with four program sites, three of which are accredited.

Ansonia is well suited to become one of the state's first Smart Start classroom sites. There is a strong Transition to Kindergarten plan, for children and families, that results in a seamless enrollment and a smooth and successful move from the early childhood programs.

Sincerely yours,

Reina Marasco

Reina Marasco, Co-Chair
Ansonia School Readiness Council

Michele Holovach

Michele Holovach, Co-Chair
Ansonia School Readiness Council

Attachment 2

ANSONIA PUBLIC SCHOOLS
BOARD OF EDUCATION

MINUTES

PLACE: ANSONIA CITY HALL **DATE:** 03 DECEMBER 2014 **TIME:** 6:15 P.M.

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER BY: PRESIDENT William Nimons

I. OPENING

A. Pledge of Allegiance

B. Roll Call

MEMBERS OF THE BOARD	PRESENT	ABSENT	LATE
MR. ROBERT CARUSO		X	
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI	X		
MRS. ARETTA KOTALIS	X		
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS, President	X		
MR. CHRISTOPHER PHIPPS	X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY	X		
MR. VINCENT SCARLATA	X		
TOTAL	6	1	0

III. PUBLIC SESSION

1. Mark Boland, 12 Bassett Street, explained that his son is in eighth grade and wishes to attend the Sound School. Since Ansonia does not participate in the Sound School he is asking if Ansonia could be put on the list. It is the only school around that offers aquaculture. Superintendent Merlone said Ansonia participates in Nonnewaug School and we have for years. The Board of Education (BOE) has voted to keep Nonnewaug as their VOAG school because we have students attending. This has come before the BOE and they have kept to their decision. Dr. Merlone said Mr. Gaskins, business manager, has spoken to Mr. Boland regarding this. Mr. Boland said yes and he did bring up a lot of good points. Dr. Merlone said we have to participate in one VOAG school and reiterated that Ansonia participates in Nonnewaug. Mr. Boland said you can participate in more than one. We are the only town in the surrounding area that is not on the list. He has the name and number of the individual from the Sound School and this individual has agreed to come and do a presentation. Dr. Merlone said the reason we choose one school is because there is a fee. We are always under financial constraints. The minimum we have to select is one school which is what we do. Mr. Boland said he has read that the state kicks in the extra money. Dr. Merlone said the state kicks in a minimum and the city has to pick up the rest. Mr. Boland said he believes that is the opposite. Since you have people coming every year he does not understand why Ansonia does not participate. Dr. Merlone said we do not have people coming every year; we have had people come in the past. Mr. Phipps asked if we currently have students at Nonnewaug. Dr. Merlone said yes. Mr. Gaskins said he does not know the count offhand. Ms. DiGiorgi explained that we cannot afford to be members in all the schools. Mr. Nimons said we will research and get back to you. Dr. Merlone asked Mr. Boland to call her and she and Mr. Gaskins will set up a meeting with the individual from the Sound School. We will share the information with the BOE and make a decision collaboratively and get back to you.

2. Superintendent Merlone, 8 Shortell Drive, wished to share great news. She said it is an honor and pleasure to acknowledge one of Ansonia's very own administrators as the State of Connecticut's Assistant Principal of the Year, Mr. Sherrod McNeill. There was applause from the audience. Dr. Merlone said when she observes Mr. McNeill in action she is so proud to say that she sees a young man with a strong character, great morals and integrity, one who does not adjust to mediocrity but challenges it in a very respectful but disciplined way. She added that she sees an administrator committed to high expectations. He is one who always puts forth a devoted effort in whatever the task calls for. The Superintendent went on to say that Mr. McNeill is a realist. He recognizes the pockets of excellence in

E. New SDE Smart Start Grant

DISCUSSION: Dr. Merlone explained that a memo was given to her by Mrs. Ehman requesting the endorsement for the submission of the New SDE Smart Start Grant. This grant will provide $75,000 a year for five years to be used for operational funding for a Smart Start classroom for 15 and no more than 18 PreK students. We are hoping to get the portables and put one of these classrooms in one of the portable classrooms. We do have approval from the State Department to put one of these classrooms in a portable classroom. Mr. Nimons asked, what happens if we do not get the portables?

MOTION: To support the New SDE Smart Start Grant.

	MOTION	YES	NO	ABSTAIN
MR. ROBERT CARUSO				
MS. FRANCES DIGIORGI	2	X		
MRS. ARETTA KOTALIS		X		
MR. WILLIAM NIMONS, President		X		
MR. CHRISTOPHER PHIPPS		X		
MR. CARMEN PITNEY	1	X		
MR. VINCENT SCARLATA		X		
TOTAL		6	0	0

DISCUSSION: The Superintendent explained that the slots were offered by the State of Connecticut so that we could increase the number of PreK students whose family falls under a sliding scale to be in full day PreK. That is the initiative so the PreK students will have the background knowledge and language development before they enter kindergarten. Mr. Phipps asked about the $75,000 funding for capital improvements. Dr. Merlone said we will not need to renovate the classrooms if we put them in the portable. We may need to renovate if we do not get the portable classrooms. Mr. Nimons asked if we were applying for both. Dr. Merlone said yes and that she would keep the Board posted.

V. INFORMATION ITEMS

A. Assistant Superintendent's Report

DISCUSSION: Mr. Wilson, assistant superintendent, said he would like to take a moment to address several concerns that were brought up at our last meeting regarding NWEA. After hearing that a parent was awaiting a reply from Central Office and not receiving one, he said he was naturally concerned. So he reached out to the parent, Mrs. McDermott, and arranged a meeting where they could sit down and answer some of her questions. She agreed to come in which he was very grateful for. At that meeting she stated that she did not specifically call or email him, but rather waited for further clarification on the NWEA at a future BOE meeting. Mr. Wilson went on to say that during the conversation that he shared with Mrs. McDermott, NWEA works with 44 public school districts in Connecticut and 7,400 districts nationwide. In discussing several of her concerns that only Alliance districts use NWEA, to which during his research in contacting the people at NWEA, several high performing districts use NWEA, Ridgefield, Darien, and Greenwich just to name a few. Communication is critical to success and as a result of concerns shared at this meeting, each of our building administrators is now addressing and informing their parents about the NWEA at their of their respective buildings, per Dr. Merlone and his initiative. Mr. Wilson said he was happy that Mrs. McDermott agreed to come in, talk to her and to clear up any miscommunications about NWEA, clarifying it for her was enlightening for both himself and Dr. Merlone and the fact that our building principals are now sharing with all parents to eliminate any gray area. It is very important to us and Mr. Wilson again thanked Mrs. McDermott for coming in. Also, Mr. Wilson said Mrs. McDermott agreed to be part of our District Data Team, when available, when her work schedule allows, and thanked her for that. The District Data Team is comprised of teachers, administrators, community members, parents, and state representatives. The major focus of our work this year is on the District Improvement Plan. Our District Improvement Plan is a three-year action plan which must be approved in June of this year and our District Data Team is working on that currently. Each of the members has been broken up in different committees. The committees are based on five touchstones that we utilized in our last District Improvement Plan. To name the touchstones: guarantee challenging, engaging and intentional instruction; ensure curricular pathways to success; provide whole-child student supports; create high-performance school cultures; and develop data-driven, high-reliability district systems. While these are diverse, it shows that our population at these meetings is also diverse. So to have input from these various stakeholders is important to make these decisions. When we make these decisions underneath these touchstones we think that the District Improvement Plan is something that is not only easy to follow but can be followed and can be aligned to the other practices we currently have. Mr. Wilson added that the NWEA testing window for the winter assessment opens tomorrow officially for all elementary schools and for middle and high school at the end of this week and early next week is when it is scheduled. He said he will have those results at the January BOE meeting to share.

Smart Start 2015-2017: RFP 810
Requested Additional Information
Ansonia Public Schools

Question: *What data will Ansonia Public Schools use for continuous program improvements and what tools and methods other than the family survey will be used?*

Answer: To ensure that the Ansonia Public Schools Pre-Kindergarten Program conducts assessments to support children's learning, using a variety of methods such as observations, checklists, and rating scales for all enrolled children, the program will follow these steps:

1. The program has a timeline associated with the assessments that occur four times throughout the year, beginning with the first assessment occurring within the child's first three months of enrollment.
2. The program involves families in planning and implementing assessments by holding an open house, conducting home visits, and conducting conferences.
3. The program has a variety of methods to communicate assessment information to families, including conducting home visits, individual conferences, sending home written documentation
4. The program uses assessment tools that will:
    - identify children's interests and needs
    - describe the developmental progress and learning of children
    - arrange for referral and developmental screenings when indicated
    - improve curriculum and adapt teaching practices and the environment
    - be communicated with families
    - plan program improvement
    - be sensitive to family cultures, children's abilities and disabilities, and home language
    - demonstrate development in all areas of learning (cognitive, social-emotional, physical, creative)

The Learning Experience Plan (LEP) includes (but is not limited to) at least three Connecticut Preschool Framework Standards. The planned activities should be written to challenge each child at his/her developmental level according to the standard(s) that are being used. Three standards are implemented into the LEP every week during a cycle that is 10 weeks long (covering 30 standards per 10 week cycle). Developmentally appropriate lessons are planned around the three standards for that week and are individualized on a Differentiated Strategies form to meet the student's interests and needs.

After the weekly plans are implemented, the classroom staff will meet to reflect and document those reflections. Staff will meet weekly to discuss the data collected from the weekly observations. The data (ex. the child is emerging or mastering the performance standards) will then be used with the Child Profiles and Classroom Profiles to reflect on children's outcomes. During the reflection, staff will have the opportunity to collaborate with the Early Childhood SRBI team to help problem solve and create a plan to ensure all individual preschool children's skills are being supported. The SRBI team meets on a monthly basis to identify children and their needs, plan and progress monitor. The data collected during these meetings is shared among staff at staff meetings so that the Program Improvement Plan can continue to be developed and revised, based on the most current needs/demands. Staff will also use the Child profiles and Classroom Profiles to help plan for professional development opportunities.