

CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENTS OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

School Readiness General Policy

GP-09-03

(replaces SR-04-02)

Priority School Readiness Districts

TO: Mayors, Superintendents, School Readiness Council Chairs/Co-Chairs and Liaisons

FROM: Harriet Feldlaufer, Chief
Department of Education
Bureau of Early Childhood Education

Peter Palermino, Program Manager
Department of Social Services
Bureau of Assistance Programs

SUBJECT: Grantee Budget Guidance

This GENERAL POLICY has been revised with additional information, guidance and clarification on administrative costs, budget responsibilities and allowable budget line items for all School Readiness grantees and sub-grantees in Priority School Districts.

1. Grantee Level Budget

Under Section 10-16p (9) (g) of the Connecticut General Statutes (C.G.S.), School Readiness grantees are authorized to retain only the following:

- Administrative Costs: Each town shall designate a person to be responsible for the coordination, program evaluation and administration and to act as the Liaison between the town and the Departments of Education and Social Services. The town may use the greater of \$25,000, or up to five percent of the grant but no more than \$50,000 of the amount received, or if the town provides \$25,000 in local funding for early childhood education coordination, program evaluation and administration, the town may use up to 10 percent but no more than \$75,000 for such coordination, program evaluation and administration provided that no funds received by a town shall be used to supplant federal, state or local funding received by the town for early childhood education.

All other funds are to be allocated to Line 590 of the State Department of Education Budget Form ED 114 to be used for the funding of spaces unless prior approval has been issued by the State Department of Education.

2. Sub-Grantee Level Budget

- Program Allocation: Sub-grantees may use their allotted School Readiness funds in the budget line items that support the costs of their School Readiness program. The School Readiness Council (SRC) must consider and approve the proposed budget in relationship to the quality of the program provided as they review and approve applications during the

grant review process. Any budget revisions by the sub-grantee should be submitted for approval to the grantee.

- Collaborative/Centralized Services: In some communities SRCs, grantees, or sub-grantees may recommend collaboration in the provision of common services. Grantees may not require that sub-grantees purchase services from the grantee or any specific vendor. Sub-grantees may choose to collaborate with the grantee or other sub-grantees to purchase common services such as administration, management, program or professional development and evaluation with direct service dollars. This collaboration must be entered into voluntarily.

If it is determined that a grantee will contract for a common service or provide the service themselves and expect payment from sub-grantee(s), then each sub-grantee must make payment to the grantee directly for such services. Grantees may not withhold a portion of a sub-grantee's allocation for payment to its self or to a provider, for common services.

- Requirements for Program Improvement: Grantees may require programs to take corrective action or implement a plan for program improvement as a condition of their grant award or when a program deficiency is identified. Grantees must approve the plan of corrective action but may not require sub-grantees to purchase services from the grantee or to use a prescribed vendor that is contracted and or managed by the grantee.

Please adhere to the following guidelines:

- All grant spending and allocation decisions must be considered and approved by the SRC.
- Sub-grantees must receive the full space reimbursement that has been established by the state for the number of children to be served, unless the sub-grantee is bound by a CHEFA obligation.
- The grantee may not delay monthly payments to the sub-grantees without justification and state approval.
- SRCs should have a policy delineating the voluntary participation of the sub-grantees in funding the common activities or services managed by the grantee or its agent(s).
- SRCs should maintain documentation on the voluntary participation of sub-grantees and the process for options for sub-grantees to choose an alternative to meet program requirements that may be imposed by the grantee.
- Grantees cannot require sub-grantees to pay for a prescribed vendor that is under contract or managed by the grantee.
- Sub-grantees must voluntarily make direct payment to the grantee or to the contractor, vendor or service provider. Payments may not be subtracted from the sub-grantee's allocation and retained at the grantee-level for payment to itself or to another vendor for common services rendered.

- SRCs must establish guidelines regarding limits to sub-grantee administrative costs.

It is the responsibility of the SRCs and the Liaisons to share this information with their sub-grantees and ensure that each program is in compliance with the nonsectarian guidelines in order for sub-grantees to receive funding as a School Readiness program.

Questions concerning this GENERAL POLICY should be directed to:

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