
CONNECTICUT OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD

Smart Start
May 1, 2016 to June 30, 2018



Legislative Authority
Public Act 14-41

RFP
810

Due Date
October 30, 2015

**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 provide grants to 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.

Applicants for Smart Start funding may expand current preschool programs or create a new preschool program. Funding for Smart Start must serve additional children above the number of children being served by the applicant at the end of 2015-2016 school year. Funding must also 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).

To be eligible for Smart Start funding, boards of education must demonstrate having an unmet need for high-quality preschool in their community (see Appendix E).

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

Conditions for Funding

Boards of education 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 establishing the Smart Start classrooms be operated by the board of education;
- 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;
- have class sizes that do not exceed 18 children;
- 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;

- 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 vulnerable children (e.g. those with special needs, dual language learners, homeless, etc.).

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

- demonstrate the greatest need for the establishment or expansion of a preschool program;
- allocate 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 (SMI), or fifty percent of the spaces to children who are eligible for free and reduced price lunches; and
- offer a full-day kindergarten program to all children in their community.

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

Each classroom proposed for funding must be taught by an individual who is an employee of the board of education. The individual must hold a 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 board of education must guarantee that any classroom renovated using Smart Start funds will remain in use as a pre-kindergarten classroom as long as the board of education continues to receive funding for operations through Smart Start.

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

Boards of education are eligible to receive a grant 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 E for a list of eligible communities.)

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 board of education not found to have an unmet need based on the statewide needs assessment must submit a justification with supporting documentation demonstrating unmet need. Supporting documentation requires **significant evidence and specific data** demonstrating evidence of unmet need 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 with an option to re-apply for future funding 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.
- 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 board of education is responsible for entering the budget on an annual basis using the ED114 Prepayment Grant System.

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

Funds Available

\$10,000,000 per year is anticipated to be available for capital expenses for eight years. Funding for capital expenses is a one-time funding opportunity.

The amount of \$4,850,000 is anticipated to be available for operating expenses for funding years 2017 & 2018. \$10,000,000 is anticipated to be available for operating expenses per year thereafter for seven years.

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

Successful applicants are required to submit updated narratives, 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 RFP.

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 14 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 Narratives

Separate Narratives are required for requests that include funding for both capital improvements and operating costs. The Narratives must include how the applicant plans to meet the purpose of 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 specific NAEYC program accreditation standards (when possible, the specific NAEYC program accreditation standard should be cited for each project); and
- Number of classrooms to be created through Smart Start.

Operations

- For districts with a local or regional School Readiness Council, a letter of support for establishing or expanding a preschool program by the local or regional School Readiness Council, for the school district;
- Total number of preschool children to be served as a result of Smart Start (must be in addition to the number of preschool children enrolled by the board of education at the end of the 2015-2016 school year);
- NAEYC accreditation/demonstration of commitment to secure NAEYC accreditation within three years of operation or Head Start approval including relevant dates of such accreditation, approval or enrollment;
- How Smart Start specifically contributes to the district's efforts to create a high-quality, coherent preschool to 3rd grade continuum (e.g., horizontal/vertical/temporal alignment of professional development, curriculum, etc.);
- Describe the steps the district will take to recruit children who are from families with incomes at or below 75% of SMI or receive free or reduced lunch;
- Describe the steps the district will take to recruit and prioritize the enrollment of children who are dual language learners (DLL), identified with special needs, are homeless or have unstable housing, have an incarcerated parent(s), have a parent(s) on active military duty or are involved with DCF or in foster care. Include projections of how many children from these priority categories will be served;
- Describe how staffing patterns address applicable NAEYC and Head Start staffing criteria/guidance;
- Include a specific, detailed plan for planning, implementing, observing and assessing children in Smart Start classrooms. The plan should describe a cycle of intentional teaching and the use of the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards;
- Describe how appropriate child assessments and assessment data will be used to inform classroom instruction including specific measures and what is being assessed;
- Plan for how child and program evaluation data will be used for continuous program improvement. Plan should include data collection methods and tools to be used for program evaluation;
- Plan for hiring and retaining qualified staff including a teacher for each classroom that meets the requirements and holds a certification as detailed in the conditions for funding on page four of this application;
- Describe 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.) as well appropriate referrals for other services as needed. A plan on how this information will be shared with families should also be included. The district is not required to fund services when school is not in session;
- Plans for charging tuition using the required sliding fee scale (see Appendix F) or a statement that the program will not charge tuition; and
- Describe efforts to meaningfully engage families in reciprocal relationships in order to improve student outcomes.

Reporting and Evaluation

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

Budget Forms

Use the appropriate form(s) on pages 21 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: April 1, 2016 through June 30, 2017 for capital improvements and July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2018 for operating expenses. **The OEC does not permit grantees to use more than 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 (Appendix B).

Date of Board Acceptance

If it is not possible to obtain board approval prior to October 30, 2015, please submit the application by this date. Send official board approval no later than November 20, 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 preschool 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 preschool programs for 3- and 4-year-olds.

Priority Populations: Children in the following circumstances should be high priority for enrollment in Smart Start: poverty (children who are from families with incomes at or below 75% of SMI or receive free or reduced lunch), homeless, migrant, refugee, violence and neglect (DCF involved, in foster care), developmental delays, and/or challenging parental circumstances (teenage, incarcerated, in treatment for substance abuse, active military service).

Due Date

By October 30, 2015 at 4:00 pm the following must be received:

- An electronic copy of the grant application emailed to andrea.brinnel@ct.gov
 - Original signature pages
 - A copy of the application, in its entirety, on a CD-ROM
- 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

<p><u>Mailing Address:</u> Andrea Brinnel, Smart Start Manager CT Office of Early Childhood PO Box 2219 Hartford, CT 06145-2219</p>	<p><u>In-person Delivery Address:</u> CT Office of Early Childhood 165 Capitol Avenue, Room G-17 Hartford, CT 06106 (Monday through Friday 8:00 to 4:30)</p>
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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 submit 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 August 20, 2015 from 9:00 to 10:30 AM in room 307 A/B at the Connecticut State Department of Education Hartford offices located at 165 Capitol Avenue. Please RSVP to andrea.brinnel@ct.gov if you plan to attend.

The OEC will review and rate proposals according to the Review Criteria in this RFP. The OEC intends to announce grant awards on or before April 2016.

Other Program Requirements

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

The OEC requires boards of education 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.

Boards of education receiving Smart Start funding (for capital improvements and/or operations) are required to participate in evaluations or data collection conducted by or on behalf of the OEC.

Part IV: Review Criteria

SMART START GRANT

Application Checklist

	Yes	No
Cover sheet with original signatures	x	
Program Data; Accreditation/Head Start Approval Information pages	x	
Proposal Narrative for Capital Improvements	x	
Budget for Capital Improvements	x	
Budget Justification Sheet for Capital Improvements	x	
Proposal Narrative for Operating Expenses	x	
Budget for Operating Expenses	x	
Budget Justification for Operating Expenses	x	
NAEYC Accreditation/Head Start Approval or Evidence of Application	x	
Letter of support from School Readiness Council (if applicable)	x	
Statement of Assurances	x	
Affirmative Action Packet	x	
Signed Verification of License Exempt Status	x	
Documentation of unmet need if not listed in Appendix E (if applicable)	NA	
CD-ROM with all application materials and supporting documents	x	

Part V: Application Form

**Connecticut Office of Early Childhood
SMART START APPLICATION
GRANT PERIOD
May 1, 2016 to June 30, 2018**

GRANT COVER PAGE

School District Plainville Community Schools
Contact Name Maureen Brummett, Ed.D.
Address 1 Central Square Plainville, CT 06062
Telephone Number (860) 793-3210x206
Contact E-mail Address brummettm@plainvilleschools.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 proposed Smart Start classrooms	Number of additional children proposed to be served by Smart Start
1	18

Total Funds Requested \$ 166, 497	Capital Improvements \$ FY 16-17=\$18,405 FY 17-18=\$0	Annual Operating Expenses \$ FY 16-17=\$74,046 FY 17-18=\$74,046
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All applications must be completed in Times New Roman 11 point font.

Program Data

Please complete the following table about proposed Smart Start classrooms.

Note that all Smart Start enrollment MUST be in addition to preschool enrollment at the end of the 2015-2016 school year.

Smart Start Program address	Number of Smart Start classrooms	Number of children to be served by Smart Start	Smart Start Hours per day	Smart Start Days per year
69 Linden St. School Plainville, CT 06062	1	18	6	180

Accreditation/Head Start Approval Information

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

NAEYC ID#	Date valid until:	Are you aware of and planning to meet NAEYC's renewal timeline?	Have you submitted Intent to Renew? If yes, indicate date.	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 in what month do you receive your funding?
NA							

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

Have you enrolled (Step 1) with NAEYC? If yes, date and NAEYC ID #.	Have you applied (Step 2) for accreditation? If yes, indicate candidacy date.	If not currently enrolled, indicate planned enrollment date?	If not currently enrolled, indicate planned application date?
12/2014/ #285807	no		May 2018 Candidacy date

Is full-day kindergarten offered to ALL students? x Yes No (check one)

All proposed teachers will have required certification. x Yes No (check one)

The district is listed in Appendix D as having an unmet need. x Yes No (check one. If no, please be sure to provide significant documentation demonstrating the community's unmet need for additional preschool spaces.)

Section I: Capital Improvements

Capital Improvement Narrative

History of Plainville School District PreK-3 Continuum

Plainville Community Schools has been committed to building a high quality PreK-3 continuum of educational services for many years. Until our recent expansion in 2014, our program consisted of three integrated preschool programs for purposes of providing mandated special education services. This program typically served 30 special needs preschool students ages 3-5 and 25 typical role model students annually. Each preschool classroom has an early childhood certified teacher and at least one paraprofessional. Historically, the Plainville Community Preschool Program has provided both full and half day programming as determined by the Planning and Placement Team. Most students attend four half days per week, Tuesday –Friday. In 2010 the district partnered with a local preschool provider, the Plainville Early Learning Center, and was awarded School Readiness funds that established 18 full day, school year preschool seats for three and four year old Plainville residents. This program is housed at Toffolon Elementary School within the Plainville School District.

In 2011, we began to offer full day Kindergarten in every school. In 2014, the district partnered with Penny's Playground and was awarded supplemental School Readiness funds for 10 additional full day, full year preschool seats in that facility. During the 2014-15 school year, the Plainville Community Preschool was expanded to offer 60 new 4-year-old seats in three additional classrooms for Plainville residents who are identified as at risk of early school failure. The risk was determined during our monthly screening for preschool aged Plainville residents using the Dial-4 screening tool. Prior to these additional seats being offered, at risk children were turned away and often remained at home or in daycare settings. Plainville Community School District was able to staff these positions by reallocating three teachers due to declining enrollment in the district. Previously awarded grant monies from the Community Foundation of Greater New Britain were used to purchase start up supplies such as furniture and curricular items. Space was provided and will continue to be provided by the district at each elementary school (Toffolon, Linden St, and Wheeler) so students can attend their neighborhood school. As indicated by State Department of Education Measures, we are identified as a district in need of more high quality preschool programming (see Smart Start Grant, Appendix D, Unmet Need). Despite all of the aforementioned program improvements, our census data indicates we have approximately 182 students in our community who will be entering Kindergarten in Fall 2017. Our current capacity only allows for about 150 students to attend our program on a half-day schedule. It is important to note that each school maintains one AM Intensive Preschool session for students with significant disabilities. These Intensive Preschool classes typically enroll less than 8 students due to the significant needs of this special education population. Maintaining appropriate class sizes for our Intensive programs in each elementary school does reduce the number of PreK seats we can offer district wide.

In spite of our recent expansion, at least ten parents annually have informed us that they cannot enroll their child in our program, as they require full day programming due to childcare and other issues. It is our intention to use Smart Start grant funding to create one full day, school year preschool program at Linden St. School for 4-year-old students. This will be in addition to our current six preschool classrooms district wide. If funding is received in enough time for us to order classroom materials and furniture, this program will be ready by September 2016. Additionally, we have been desirous of NAEYC accreditation for many years, but have lacked the funds to make the necessary facilities and programmatic changes. It is our intention to expand our PreK programming at Linden St. School and seek NAEYC accreditation at all three preschool sites in our school district. Linden St. School has already identified a classroom that can be used for the additional full day PreK session. Grant funds will be requested to provide appropriate furniture, equipment, and curricular supplies (NAEYC standard 9.A.05)

NAEYC Accreditation Progress

During a recent visit by representatives from the Office of Early Childhood (OEC), Deborah Flis, Andrea Brinnel, and Sandra Fowler, all our facilities were judged very close to NAEYC standards. One universal concern was the lack of appropriate shelving in all the classroom bathrooms. Currently our bathroom shelving is freestanding and inappropriately accessible to children. Grant funds would be used to install bathroom wall shelving in accordance with NAEYC standard 9.C.03 in the newly created full day PreK classroom. Board of Education funds will be requested to install appropriate bathroom shelving in the other six existing preschool bathrooms. Most of the other concerns identified by OEC (outlet plug covers, securing electrical and blind cords) have already been corrected. The district will comply with interim quality measures (Early Childhood Environmental Rating Scale) while seeking accreditation.

The Board of Education and Parent Teacher Associations have already supported the addition of PreK playgrounds at all three elementary schools in the Plainville Community School District. However, the NAEYC visitors informed us that our fencing around the playground at Linden St. School will need to be refinished as it is rusting and poses a safety hazard. Grant funds will be requested to repair the fencing in accordance with NAEYC standard 9.B.02.

In December of 2014, we registered with the NAEYC Institute. Over the past year, our PreK teachers and administrators have reviewed all the applicable standards and understand the work we need to accomplish. If Smart Start funding is received we will enroll in the self-study process during the fall of 2016. Based on guidance received from Deborah Flis, we would expect to finish the process and be ready to choose a candidacy date by May of 2018. This would insure that we would receive our accreditation decision well in advance of the third anniversary of Smart Start funding in 2019.

Section II: Operations

Operations Narrative

Plainville Community Preschool currently operates 6 preschool classrooms serving about 24 three and four year olds identified as special education. The remaining 87 four-year-old students currently served in these classrooms are both typical role models as well as those students identified as at risk by the DIAL-4 screening tool. It is our goal to provide preschool programming for an additional 18 students in a new full day, school year program at Linden St. School. The program will run 9:00-3:00 daily, which is slightly different from the K-5 school day of 8:45-3:00. This allows our youngest learners to enter and exit the school during less hectic time periods. Grant funds would be used to add an additional 1.0 FTE certified PreK teacher and 1.0 FTE para professionals to provide appropriate staffing levels per NAEYC standard teacher-child ratios 10.B.12.

Full day preschool seats will be offered to Linden St. School students first, so they can attend their home school. Any remaining seats will be offered to Wheeler Elementary students as they do not have full day PreK programming at their school (other than for those students who have an IEP for full day programming). Toffolon Elementary School currently has a School Readiness classroom that provides full day preschool programming and does not have as significant a need for full day programming as the other two elementary schools in Plainville. Additionally, priority for these new seats will be given to students identified as English Language Learners (ELL) as well as those students who are eligible for free and reduced price lunch. Currently in the Plainville Community Preschool we have 2 ELL students (1% of total preschoolers) and 19 students eligible for free or reduced price lunch (17% of preschoolers) and 24 special education students (21 % of total preschoolers). It is our intention that this full day program will be more representative of our current K-12 percentages. This includes a special education rate of 13%; free/reduced price lunch is at 28%, and our ELL population, who make up 2% of our population. Recruitment for these new seats will include our monthly preschool screening process as well as referrals from our Plainville Family Resource Center, which is housed at Linden St. Elementary School.

Documentation and Evaluation

Program efficacy will be measured using numerous methods. Students' overall progress toward Connecticut Early Learning and Development standards will be measured by a benchmark assessment to be administered in the fall and spring of every school year. Student skills are measured by teacher observation as well as individual student demonstrations for items such as number /letter identification and fine/gross motor skills. This tool was developed by our preschool team in collaboration with our full day Kindergarten teachers. It features standards/objectives that are most critical for students entering Kindergarten. This locally developed assessment is directly aligned to the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (CT ELDS) and is also closely aligned to the DIAL-4 screening tool and the Brigance Early Childhood Screen. The tool, which was piloted during the 2014-15 school year, also includes standards based language similar to what parents will see in our K-5 standards based report cards. Skills measured by this tool include cognitive, motor, social, emotional, self-help, fine motor, and letter/number identification. The data from these assessments will be stored in our district wide data warehouse, Performance Tracker. Student progress will be shared with parents at fall and spring parent teacher conferences. Those students identified with special needs will also be assessed using the Brigance Early Childhood Screening Tool as required by the State Department of Education. These scores are reported to the state annually.

Ongoing data is kept on all children during center activities and as part of our intentional planning and implementation of the curriculum. The preschool team which includes teachers, Occupational and Physical Therapists, and Speech Pathologists meet on a weekly basis to discuss student progress. Any student who is showing difficulty, as measured by classroom benchmark assessments (checklists that list skills from the summative Fall and Spring benchmark assessments), will be put into an intervention group within the program. Progress monitoring will be completed within these interventions every two weeks and will be discussed routinely

at team meetings to insure efficacy. Team meetings will also be the forum for discussing instructional changes necessitated by student progress. Parents will be fully informed via phone calls, notes home, emails, and additional parent conferences.

In addition to the aforementioned assessments, program efficacy will also be measured by our students' readiness for Kindergarten. Prior to our implementation of our expanded PreK model, 40% of incoming K students, as measured by Fall K benchmark assessments, were already deemed "at risk" in their reading readiness skills. We anticipate that number will shrink at least 10% annually as a result of students' participation in a high quality full day preschool program. Our current program model allows all preschool teachers to meet monthly with our full day Kindergarten teachers. These meetings allow the teams to monitor the preschool curriculum to insure it is preparing students for the upcoming Kindergarten standards and experiences.

Family Engagement

Parent communication and outreach will be an integral part of the program. A weekly electronic or hardcopy newsletter will allow parents to stay informed on classroom themes and curricular foci. Several teachers maintain classroom blogs that allow parents to see daily pictures and updates online. Parents will be invited to all school wide activities and be encouraged to join the PTA. Parent involvement in school activities from this very early stage will promote their understanding of the PreK-3 continuum. Similar to our K-5 programs, preschool parents are encouraged to visit the school at any time and volunteer in their child's classroom or chaperone on a field trip. During all school programs, teachers and service providers will use these opportunities for parent education. We will also offer at least two parent education opportunities in the evening based on parent interests and student needs. Topics from previous years include how to work with your child at home to promote literacy skills. In order to insure parent satisfaction with our program, Pre K families will be included in the survey process used district wide as part of our teacher evaluation process. Targeted questions will inquire about preschool program satisfaction.

Our continued collaboration with the Plainville Family Resource Center (PFRC) and School Readiness programs will allow our families to access the activities hosted by these groups. The School Readiness program, housed at Toffolon Elementary, invites Plainville families district wide to attend all their program events. Additionally the PFRC hosts a Conscious Discipline series every year. These 7 week, 90 minute sessions provide parents with supportive ideas to deal with discipline issues in the home. Our families district wide are also welcome to attend daytime and evening playgroups offered by the PFRC. During these sessions, parent educators are available to model positive play strategies for parents. Our Family Resource Center has Parents as Teachers program. Certified bilingual parent educators serve up to 8 families annually with home visits to provide directed support for at risk families who are identified during weekly playgroup sessions. Home visits include modeling on literacy, child development, safety, and school/learning topics. The FRC also sponsors monthly field trips to provide learning in a natural environment. Trips this year have included the Barnes Nature Center and Stop and Shop for healthy eating strategies.

Inclusion/Recruitment of Vulnerable Populations

The Plainville Community Preschool program has been serving an average of 35 special needs three and four year old children as mandated by IDEA for more than twenty years. Currently students identified with special needs comprise 21% of our preschool programs. Each year the district has also provided typical role models for these classrooms. However, recruiting typical role models at the recommended levels of 50% special needs and 50% typical was often challenging, as parents of role models were required to provide their own transportation. During the 2014-15 school year, our preschool program was expanded to offer 60 additional seats with a priority given to students who were determined to be at risk of school failure. As part of this expansion, transportation is now offered to all PreK students.

Preschool aged children come to Plainville Schools via parent or DCF referral, B-3 agencies, our Plainville Family Resource Center, and through our own child find process. Specifically for the past fifteen years, Plainville

has been conducting monthly screenings. Using the DIAL-4 tool, students are screened to determine their developmental status in cognitive, social, fine/gross motor, and language development. We advertise these monthly screenings through press releases, school newsletters, flyers at local pediatrician offices, our website, and by parent contact in our Family Resource playgroup programs. Prior to the 2014-15 school year, students who were determined to be at risk during the screening were not offered a program. The preschool team was only able to offer strategies for parents to try at home. Similarly, if students' screening results led to a special education referral, we were unable to offer preschool programming to students who did not meet eligibility requirements under IDEA. By using grant funds to further expand our preschool programming at Linden St. School to include a full day model. We will be able to accommodate an additional 18 students, who previously have been turned away.

Another referral source for our preschool programs is our Adult Education program. Any parent enrolled in the Program Improvement Project (PIP), English as a Second Language (ESL), Adult Basic Education (ABE), or General Education Development (GED) attends weekly technology sessions at Linden St. School. While parents attend these sessions, their children attend a special Play and Learn group. This group focuses on language immersion through social interaction. These children participate in focused play that supports language and concept acquisition. It is anticipated that this program will be a referral source for ESL and at risk preschool aged children. Based on Fall 2015 data from the Plainville Family Resource Center, there are 6 ESL four-year-old children enrolled in this special playgroup.

Collaboration

As mentioned previously, we have collaborated with the Plainville Early Learning Center (PELC) and Penny's Playground to develop 28 school readiness slots. We also collaborate with area PreK/daycare providers such as the Plainville YMCA, Great Beginnings, and PELC to provide daycare when students are not attending the Plainville Community Preschool. We have also established preschool teacher liaisons at each of our preschool sites that regularly consult with these local providers regarding student or programming concerns. This consultation process has led to referrals for screenings or Planning and Placement team meetings. This has also led to the development of our Dine and Discuss event. Our first session offered in January 2015 featured training in technology in the preschool classroom as well as using visuals and a positive behavior management strategy. Our second Dine and Discuss is scheduled for January 13, 2016. Based on feedback from School Readiness Council member, we will offer sessions on the CT ELDS, early literacy strategies, and behavior analysis. Many of these are PreK providers are also members of the School Readiness Council, who have written a letter in support of this grant application.

Part I Capital Improvements

The following capital improvements will be made in order to accommodate the additional 18 full day preschool seats at Linden St. School. Funds will also be requested to bring the Linden St. playground up to NAEYC standards. These improvements will be made as soon as grant funds are received and are expected to be completed by August 2016. This will allow us to open the new seats described in this grant in time for the 2016-17 school year and continue the process of securing NAEYC accreditations as outlined previously. Linden St. School will need wall shelving installed in the bathroom to meet NAEYC 9.C.03. The cost for shelving and installation will be \$500. Additionally, during a recent NAEYC consultant site visit, it was identified that the fencing around our playground is rusting and a possible safety hazard. Refinishing and repainting the fence to be in compliance with NAEYC standard 9.C.03 will cost \$4000.

In order to establish a full day 4-year-old program for 18 students that meets NAEYC standard 9.A.05, the following start up furniture and curricular supplies will need to be purchased with grant funds:

Writing center, all purpose easel, circle time rug, chair cubes=\$1666
Spring load drying rack=\$243
Adjustable shelves=\$2050, large sand table=\$445, snack tables=\$420
Kitchen set=\$1080, rectangular kitchen table=\$210

Drama set=\$480, Peg tree=\$110, Art Island=\$795, Library rack=\$240
20 Woodcrest Chairs=\$2000
Total furniture cost for newly created full day 4-year-old classroom is \$9739

Classroom instructional supplies such as arts and crafts, tea party sets, boom box, head phones, circle time learning center, math counters, theme collections, classroom library books, and blocks =\$4166

Part II: Operations

In order to meet staffing requirements consistent with NAEYC standard 10.B.12 we need to provide one staff member for every 9 students. The newly created preschool program that will have up to 18 students will require a 1.0 FTE certified preschool teacher (pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes Sec. 10-145b at a total cost of \$54,663 for salary and benefits and a paraprofessional who will also be hired to work 6.0 hours per day at a cost of \$19,383 annually. We do not intend to charge tuition to families for our full day program.

Part III: Program Design

All programs in the Plainville Community Schools are based upon the appropriate state frameworks and our PreK programming is no different. We continue to refine curriculum development process by examining the Connecticut Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS) as well as the research on best practices. Most recently, Assistant Superintendent Maureen Brummett, Ed.D. has attended the UCONN PreK-3 Leadership program. These sessions have featured national experts on best practices in PreK-3 education. Dr. Brummett has been updating the entire PreK team on what she has been learning in this program. For example, this summer the PreK team revised their math curriculum after reviewing the work of Nita Copley who presented at the UCONN Leadership program in June.

Our PreK curriculum is based on creating strong and positive relationships with our children and their families. It is an inclusive program, integrating children with special needs learning side by side with their peers in meaningful learning activities. Respect for each child's cultural background and a commitment to providing opportunities to learn and grow based on inquiry and exploration are at the heart of what we do. The curriculum integrates the CT ELDS with the Connecticut Preschool Curriculum and Assessment frameworks. Teachers apply the cycle of intentional teaching by carefully planning instruction based upon the curriculum and frameworks. Teachers then implement instruction and carefully observe and assess the children. Our teachers are collaborative by nature and design. They work together weekly to plan, process their observations, and then plan again to ensure that the learning needs of each child are being met. Summarizing learning by class and often by school helps teachers understand the needs of their children and enables all program providers to plan for SRBI needs as well as ongoing instruction.

The goal of our preschool program is to provide experiences that will allow the individual child to develop at his or her own pace in a supportive and enriching environment. The learning opportunities are active and provide the children with foundational knowledge and understanding from which future learning can take place. A critical aspect of best practice in early childhood is the inclusion of all children, including English language learners, advanced students, and those with developmental disabilities. We implement a high quality inclusive program that supports the learning of all children. The Plainville Community Preschool strives toward developing readiness skills for all children as they prepare for Kindergarten and beyond. Throughout all units of study, children are placed in homogenous and heterogeneous learning groups in order to provide direct instruction in their weakest academic, social, or behavioral area when comparing their skills with the CT ELDS expectations. Student needs are assessed using our district wide preschool evaluation and professional judgment, then are placed in the appropriate learning group. Bi-weekly or as needed, students are informally assessed using teacher made data collection forms on target CT ELDS skills taught to them in small or large group learning activities.

In a typical three-week unit such as one about Animals and Winter, we address animal hibernation during winter, learning to identify animals and classifying them by features, type, and size. Using non-fiction text and dramatic

play students continue their learning about winter animals and problem solve about how all the animals could stay warm in the winter. Students will retell the sequence of the The Mitten using props that develop communication skills. This type of intentional play addresses Early Language, Communication, and Literacy Strand B. for addressing ideas, feelings, and needs. The Hibernation and Animals in Winter theme introduces students to different ways that animals survive in the cold. Students will make connections to themselves and things they do during the winter months. To address Cognition Standard-Strand B (Problem Solving) and Strand E (Conflict Resolution) the children will use found materials from nature and recycling in their dramatic play to create a house they might want to live in for the winter. Students will be assessed on their approach to creating a structure, capacity to solve a problem with a peer or seek help from an adult, as well as their use of peer observation to gain new ideas to solve problems.

Plainville Community Schools is excited about this opportunity to expand our preschool program to include a full day session. Our unique design for our existing half-day sessions still affords our teacher liaisons time during the week to consult with area preschool/daycare providers regarding student needs. It also allows teachers the opportunity to consult with and attend professional development with their fellow primary teachers in grades K-3 to insure our curriculum is aligned in a coherent fashion.

This grant proposal represents the next logical stop in Plainville's efforts to build a coherent PreK-grade 3 program. More than fifteen years ago we opened the Plainville Family Resource Center and formed the Early Childhood Network in our community. This brought together parents, providers of childcare/preschool, teachers and administrators. Their charge was to plan for effective early childhood programming in Plainville. Over five years ago we formed the Plainville School Readiness Council and successfully acquired grant funding for one full day, school year preschool program. This program represents a partnership between our school district and the Plainville Early Learning Center (PELC). Four years ago, following a highly successful pilot program, Plainville Community Schools implemented full day Kindergarten district wide. In June 2014, a second School Readiness Grant funded ten additional full day preschool seats at Penny's Playground in Plainville. During this same time frame, our school district added six additional half-day preschool programs, so that most four year olds in our community will have access to high quality preschool in their home school. Funding from this Smart Start grant will fill a gap with full day programming that has prohibited many students from taking advantage of our half day model due to child care needs for their families. This grant will also allow us to make needed capital improvements to insure we meet our goal of NAEYC accreditation by January 2019. Most importantly it will enhance our early childhood learning opportunities for our at risk learners, create a continuity of services, and a clear pathway of high quality education from PreK through third grade.

SMART START

FISCAL YEARS 2016 & 2017 BUDGET FORM

GRANTEE NAME:	TOWN CODE:
GRANT TITLE: CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS	YEARS:
PROJECT TITLE:	
FUND: 12052 SPID: 43626 YEAR: 2016 PROG: CF1: 170060	CF2:
GRANT PERIOD: 4/1/16 – 6/30/17 ¹	AUTHORIZED AMOUNT: \$

CODES	DESCRIPTIONS	BUDGET AMOUNT	
		FY 2016	FY 2017
300	PURCHASED PROFESSIONAL/TECHNICAL SERVICES		
400	PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES, INCLUDING CONSTRUCTION		
500	OTHER PURCHASED SERVICES	4000	0
600	SUPPLIES	4166	0
700	PROPERTY	10,239	0
800	DEBT SERVICES AND MISCELLANEOUS		
	TOTAL	18,405	0

ORIGINAL REQUEST DATE	OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM MANAGER AUTHORIZATION	DATE OF APPROVAL
REVISED REQUEST DATE		

¹ Capital improvements are a one-time award and therefore may only be awarded in one funding year.

SMART START

FISCAL YEARS 2017 & 2018 BUDGET FORM

GRANTEE NAME:		TOWN CODE:	
GRANT TITLE: OPERATIONS		YEARS:	
PROJECT TITLE:			
FUND: 12060		SPID: 35586	YEAR: 2017
PROG: 83004		CF1: 170031	CF2:
GRANT PERIOD: 7/1/16 – 6/30/18		AUTHORIZED AMOUNT: \$	
CODES	DESCRIPTIONS	BUDGET AMOUNT	
		FY 2017	FY 2018
111A	NON-INSTRUCTIONAL SALARIES		
111B	INSTRUCTIONAL SALARIES	\$58,721	\$58,721
200	PERSONAL SERVICES-EMPLOYEE BENEFITS	\$15,325	\$15,325
322	INSERVICE		
323	PUPIL SERVICES		
324	FIELD TRIPS		
325	PARENTAL ACTIVITIES		
330	EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES		
340	OTHER PROFESSIONAL SERVICES		
400	PURCHASED PROPERTY SERVICES		
510	STUDENT TRANSPORTATION SERVICES		
530	COMMUNICATIONS		
580	TRAVEL		
600	SUPPLIES		
700	PROPERTY		
	TOTAL	\$74,046	\$74,046

____ ORIGINAL REQUEST DATE
 _____ REVISED REQUEST DATE

 OFFICE OF EARLY CHILDHOOD
 PROGRAM MANAGER AUTHORIZATION

 DATE OF
 APPROVAL

