

Preschool Expansion Grant: Cape Cod Collaborative, Two-District Proposal

Project Narrative

The Cape Cod Collaborative has extensively worked with both public schools and private centers across Cape Cod and the Islands. For the last two years, the Collaborative, under the direction of Dr. Joe Gilbert, has initiated a Cape Cod Early Childhood Network through the implementation of the 808 Challenger Grant that was received April 2014. During the ensuing twenty-one months, the Collaborative, with the public school districts, private child care providers, and the Early Learning Network, has built a vibrant cooperative of individuals focused on the needs of preschool children. The goal of all educators and administrators involved is to establish an effective continuum of care and education for Cape Cod children, birth through early elementary ages. Additionally, cross-sector service providers have been included in the various conferences and training events to be able to include “wrap-around” services that families and children may need. All of the events have been well-attended and representative with increasing commitment to comprehensive early childhood care and education.

Building on the commitment and cooperation of the now-established Early Childhood Network, the Cape Cod Collaborative is submitting this proposal for a two-district plan for preschool expansion. The two districts are Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District and the Monomoy Regional School District. Also, included in this proposal are more than two private preschool providers from each of the regions, representing the four towns and building alignment across various sectors.

The Planning Team

Representatives from both Dennis-Yarmouth and Monomoy Regional School Districts, Cape Cod Collaborative, private preschools, and Cape Cod Children’s Place and Cape Cod Child Development (Head Start) have met in two formal and several informal sessions to design this proposal. The proposal planning team is comprised of these representatives, with additional support from their respective schools and agencies. Team members’ resumes are included in this proposal and the individuals are listed below:

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- Jan Rotella, Project Manager and Coach, Cape Cod Collaborative;
- Julie Hall, Coach, Cape Cod Collaborative;
- Shirley Smith, Lead Representative for Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District;
- Giordana Cote, Instructional Coach, Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District;
- Carole Eichner, Principal, Dennis-Yarmouth Regional School District;
- Sherry Santini, Director of Humanities & the Arts Instruction, Dennis-Yarmouth RSD;
- Mary Oldach, Lead Representative for the Monomoy Regional School District;
- Samuel Hein, Principal, Monomoy Regional School District;
- Frances Joseph, CFCE Coordinator, Monomoy Regional School District;
- Barbara Kozma, Lead Representative, Cape Cod Child Development (Head Start);
- Anne Colwell, CEO, Cape Cod Child Development (Head Start);
- Cynthia Horgan, Executive Director, Cape Cod Children's Place (Head Start).

The Strategic Planning Committee will be the listed members of this proposal planning team as well as representatives from the private preschools in the four towns, three of whom have already expressed interest and willingness to be part of this initiative. Also, representatives from the social service providers from the four towns will be invited to join – all being equal members.

The Strategic Planning Committee members are early childhood advocates who have extensive experience in early childhood education and care, including “wrap-around” services. The committee will be composed of all members of the proposal planning team and representatives from the private child care agencies in the four towns that compose the Dennis-Yarmouth and Monomoy Regional School Districts. Each person has first-hand knowledge of early child development, developmentally appropriate instruction, and family outreach. They have worked directly with children, possessing extensive understanding of children, their needs, and the requirements of effective program implementation. A cross-section of experience is also represented on the

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committee, both public schools and private agencies. The details of individuals' background and employment experience are listed on the attached resumes and CV's. Although no resume is included, additional input has been offered to be available from the Director and staff of the Cape Cod Family Resource Center.

Consultation for Strategic Planning

Members of the planning team have consulted with experienced strategic planners within and beyond their own school districts and agencies. Specifically, Chris Martes, Strategies for Children, has met with Jan Rotella and Joe Gilbert, proposed project manager and administrator, respectively. He has offered his assistance throughout the planning process.

Members of the planning team have determined that any consultant hired for strategic planning will have extensive knowledge of early childhood education. In addition, the planning team has included experience and knowledge of strategic planning and needs assessment procedures as critical criteria for any consultant to be considered. The team's expectations include face-to-face and virtual meetings with the Strategic Planning Committee. The consultant will be expected to provide guidance in strategic planning to the Committee, conduct a comprehensive needs assessment of the regions involved, and deliver documents delineating the information. All documents and research are to be delivered to the full Committee through the Project Manager who will coordinate meetings and correspondence.

Needs Assessment, to Date

The towns of both the Dennis-Yarmouth and Monomoy Regional School Districts are representative of many of the needs of this geographical area. Childhood poverty across Cape Cod has increased from 6% in 2000 to 15.4% in 2013. Babies born of addictive mothers now comprised 8.8% of live births compared to 2.1% across the Commonwealth. Across the towns, more than 25% of all children entering kindergarten have not had a preschool experience. Also, a significant percentage of the children who attend family child care centers do not have a formal preschool education experience. Complicating these needs, the number of children who have

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English as a second language continues to increase with 2013 data showing, 12.8% in Dennis-Yarmouth and 6.8% in Monomoy, but real current data is significantly higher. Unfortunately, ‘hard data’ is difficult to access because of the transient nature of the year-round population with many living in temporary housing situations.

Social service and counseling agencies have continued to report increasing numbers of homelessness and transience. The four towns, as well as the Cape as a whole, is a region of “two worlds.” The one world is the summer population comprised of part time residents who winter in southern climates and who are the majority of landowners on the Cape. The second world is composed of full time residents who largely represent the service industries that support the tourism and part time residents during the summer months. These two worlds have created an environment of high need among the school-age population.

Timetable

The proposal planning team will convene the Strategic Planning Committee immediately upon notification of receipt of the grant. The first meeting is anticipated to be held during the week of January 4th, 2016. Regularly scheduled meetings will be scheduled at that first date. Also, representatives from the private centers and social agencies will be contacted for their inclusion. The criteria for the strategic planning consultant will be finalized at this first meeting.

By the end of January, the strategic planning consultant will be hired, meetings will be set as well as due dates for the needs assessment process. The needs assessment documents will be delivered to the Strategic Planning Committee in February when discussions and analysis will be completed.

Throughout the month of March, the Strategic Planning Committee will consult with public and private schools and agencies regarding appropriate planning in response to the needs assessment findings. These consultations will be a combination of collegial visits, correspondence, and full meeting focus groups. Notes will be recorded that can be shared and reviewed during the actual composition of the Strategic Plan.

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The Plan will begin to be drafted in April by key members of the Strategic Planning Committee with review and assistance of the Strategic Planning consultant. The full Strategic Planning Committee will revise the Strategic Plan for preschool expansion to meet all criteria of the PEG outline during the months of April and May. Final revisions and the finalized Strategic Plan for the Two Districts Collaboration will be completed in May. All reports will be delivered to EEC in June as required.

Budget

The budget will comprise salaries for administration, coaching, substitute coverage, consultation, travel, and materials as needed to complete the Strategic Planning process. Specifically, the Project Manager will receive compensation of \$5,000; the coaches will receive compensation of \$22,000 for time in direct consultation and meetings; the strategic planning consultant will receive \$8,000; substitute coverage for committee members at the daily rate of \$75 for a total of \$1,000; virtual meeting platform at \$1,000; travel expenses of \$1,000; and materials (copying, paper, and printing) at \$1,000. The total budget is \$39,000.

Work Plan

The Strategic Planning Committee will work in close efforts with one another. In addition to the regularly scheduled meetings, individuals will have assigned direct responsibilities for various components of the strategic planning process. Each member will also consult with schools, private child care centers, and local social agencies to insure effective planning and an open process for implementation of expanded, varied preschool opportunities throughout districts' towns, Dennis, Yarmouth, Harwich, and Chatham.

In Conclusion

The Cape Cod Collaborative has established both credibility and trust with the early childhood education community across the Cape. The Collaborative is proposing this two-district plan for preschool expansion with the full endorsement of both the school districts and local agencies.