



Early School Success Supplemental Questions

Does the size of the district matter?

A: We will be selecting two districts of differing sizes. With the intention of addressing instructional alignment and improvement in the early grades across Oregon, we hope that having a diverse representation of district participants will have greater impact across the state than selecting districts of similar sizes. Thus, we may be looking at large, medium, and small districts. Further, beyond the characteristic of size, we hope to select two sites with differing geographical characteristics, student and family populations, and types of preschool programs or partnerships.

Do we get to see the rubric prior to submitting the application?

A: Children's Institute will not share our scoring rubric to potential applicants before scoring applications. We do not wish to receive questions that are tailored to the rubric. We hope, rather, that applicants answer questions earnestly and authentically. If you are not selected as a district finalist or participant, we will share the scoring of the rubric with you.

We should note that in this first year of our program's implementation, we will be selecting two district sites. In year three of our program's implementation, we will bring in two more district participants. We are not clear yet if we will ask districts to resubmit applications or if we will use the same applications in the first year for the second round of review.

Are we limited to partnering with one preschool program or can we partner with multiple?

A: We recognize that districts vary widely in terms of how they are implementing preschool or partnering with preschool providers. We will not limit applicants to a type of partnership, or how many preschool programs you are partnering with. We will be looking, rather, for the depth of partnerships or implementation, current levels of commitment across multiple stakeholders, how stakeholders have come together to collaboratively solve problems of implementation, and support from leadership and governing bodies.

Does the partner need to be a community-based program, or can it be a program that is a part of the K-12 district already?

A: There is no limitation to whether preschool alignment is happening with a preschool program partner or through the P-12 district.

Do we need to turn in a notice for application prior to the RFP submission?

A: We are not requiring applicants to submit a notice for application, but if you would like to notify Soobin or Marina about your impending application, we will greatly appreciate the notice!

Our district has K-4 grades in most elementary schools, would that be an issue?



A: We recognize that districts have a variety of configurations for elementary school: K-4 , K-5, K-6, K-8, Prek-3, Prek-5, and so on. Consideration for your application will not be negatively impacted if your elementary grade configuration is not specifically Prek-5. We do, however, expect that applicants show broad support across the elementary grades for whatever configuration you do have.

What does small scale vertical alignment look like?

A: This will be dependent on the district's context. In a smaller district, small scale vertical alignment may simply be occurring across two teachers of different grade levels. In another district, small scale vertical alignment may be across multiple grade levels in two or three schools. Whatever the district's context, however, small scale plans for improvement include using data to inform decision-making, using subsequent data to improve the plan, and scaling up implementation as the plan improves. Our process is informed by Improvement Science.

For example, if a district is focused on creating coherence and alignment on literacy instruction across the elementary grades, small-scale implementation might focus on one school at first among three to five committed teachers. As the implementation improves, other teachers and other schools may begin to implement. Throughout the process Children's Institute and the District's Core Team will evaluate, analyze, and improve upon the implementation.

If selected, will this project focus on just one school within a district, or can there be several schools in the pilot?

A: Depending on the size and context of the district, the core team may select to focus on specific schools with existing strong leadership to focus their implementation. Some districts may be prepared for broad participation across 5-7 schools right away. The goal is to establish organizational supports and capacity to foster a culture of continuous improvement and data-informed decision making.

Would the 2019-20 school year be a planning year in which preschool is not offered?

A: The 2019-2020 school year is indeed a planning year. We will be looking, however, to work with districts who already have preschool partnerships or in operation at the district. The goal of the initiative is to deepen and strengthen instructional practice and create alignment up through the elementary years. If you are currently offering preschool or are partnering with preschool programs, it is not necessary to halt operations for this project.

When you ask for preschool data in the application, for districts with multiple district run preschools, do you want data for all the district's preschools or just the pilot schools?

A: We hope that you can share as much rich data as possible to communicate your preschool and alignment efforts as is reasonably possible. If you determine that sharing data on intended pilot schools presents enough of a story for the reviewers to make informed decisions about your potential participation, then we will review whatever data you provide.

Will you prioritize districts that largely serve populations of kids who are from traditionally underserved communities (low income, kids of color, ELL, geographic isolation)?



A: Absolutely. We are intending on prioritizing districts that are serving historically underserved and marginalized populations. Additionally, between the two districts that we select we intend on selecting districts that may contrast in some characteristics such as populations served and geographic location.

How many districts will you be selecting to receive grant funding?

A: In this current RFP, we will be selecting two districts. We have been funded to work for 3-5 years with districts based on learnings from our research and design year. After working for three years with our first two districts, we will be selecting two more districts. We are not sure yet if we will conduct another RFP or select the second round of districts from our first batch of applications.

Is it possible to read anything about the current programs? Web or print materials?

A: Absolutely. Please visit <https://childinst.org> to learn about our programs and policy priorities.

Would you consider an application from two very small school districts who are close in size, geographically and in composition?

A: We have been in discussion regarding this specific question and have not made a final determination as to whether we will accept applications from “networks” of smaller districts. If you are considering applying as part of a network of smaller districts, please contact Marina or Soobin.