**Early School Success: Preschool to Fifth Grade Alignment Program**

Request for Proposals

Proposals must be received by **5:00 p.m. PDT on** **Friday,** **February 8, 2019**.

Completed proposals may be emailed, mailed, or dropped off to:

Children’s Institute

1411 SW Morrison St. #205

Portland, OR 97205

[marina@childinst.org](mailto:marina@childinst.org)

Questions may be submitted to Marina Merrill ([marina@childinst.org](mailto:marina@childinst.org)) or you may call the main Children’s Institute number at 503-219-9034 to reach Marina. Applicants will be notified about whether or not they are finalists for participation in Early School Success by March 1, 2019.

RFP Table of Contents

(Select “CTRL” then click on any section you want to navigate to directly)

[Section I: Information About Early School Success (ESS) 2](#_Toc530036951)

[Early School Success: The Need and the Opportunity 2](#_Toc530036952)

[Early School Success Program Overview 3](#_Toc530036953)

[Early School Success Timeline 7](#_Toc530036954)

[Detailed Application Process and Expectations 7](#_Toc530036955)

[Section II: District Proposal Materials (to complete) 10](#_Toc530036956)

[Checklist of Materials 10](#_Toc530036957)

[District Profile 11](#_Toc530036958)

[Proposal Narrative 13](#_Toc530036959)

[Responses to Required Questions 13](#_Toc530036960)

[Budget Estimate 15](#_Toc530036961)

[Letters of Support (LOSs) 17](#_Toc530036962)

[APPENDIX: 17](#_Toc530036963)

[Letter of Support Template 17](#_Toc530036964)

# Section I: Information About Early School Success (ESS)

## Early School Success: The Need and the Opportunity

More than a century of cognitive research has proven that very young children are capable of rigorous learning, abstraction, and reasoning.[[1]](#footnote-1) Providing young children with intentional educational opportunities to develop these skills is vital, particularly between birth and age 5 when 90 percent of brain development occurs.[[2]](#footnote-2) Many families, educators, and policymakers recognize that education during these early years is essential for helping children cultivate cognitive abilities such as executive functioning, emotional regulation, and the ability to navigate social environments that set them up for success in their education and career. As a result, we have seen significant movement in Oregon to provide access to high-quality preschool for young learners.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Despite efforts to expand early learning opportunities for more children and families, many children still struggle to fully develop cognitive skills that support kindergarten readiness and third grade reading achievement.[[4]](#footnote-4) These challenges especially affect low-income children with the fewest opportunities, including children of color, English language learners, and children with learning differences. Skill gaps that develop in the first five years of life typically follow students throughout their K–12 education and ultimately contribute to Oregon’s low high school graduation rates.[[5]](#footnote-5)

Changing student outcomes and closing achievement gaps before they begin require a transformational shift in how we think about and approach education in the early years. Most education reform efforts and professional learning opportunities for educators focus on grades 3–12. The data show, however, that Oregon is leaving kids behind by not focusing on education before third grade.[[6]](#footnote-6) Since 2010, Children’s Institute (CI) has worked with educators to better understand what they need to be effective: professional learning and tools to build rigorous and developmentally supportive learning environments for the youngest learners. By creating rich, engaging classroom experiences for children that have continuity from preschool through the elementary grades, educators can focus on laying the foundation for lifelong learning achievement. Oregon already recognizes the value in aligning preschool through elementary instruction;[[7]](#footnote-7) the work ahead is to support educators and communities to make alignment possible.

The time to align and support evidence-based and innovative instructional practices in the early years is *now*. Starting in 2019, CI wants to engage two pioneering districts in a collaborative learning initiative to improve alignment in the early years, informed by both established and emerging research on how young children learn best.[[8]](#footnote-8) Full district-community (e.g., teachers, parents, community members, district leaders, preschool leaders) engagement will drive this work. This Request for Proposals (RFP) is seeking applications from districts to partner with CI in a shared learning agenda focused on building a bold vision for early school success for young learners.

## Early School Success Program Overview

Children’s Institute

Founded in 2003, Children’s Institute (CI) brings Oregonians together to support the early learning and healthy development of young children, prenatal to 8 years old. Through advocacy, research, policy, and practice, CI works to ensure that young children get the programs and services they need to nurture their love of learning and prepare them for success in school and beyond.

Since 2010, CI has partnered with schools to support the healthy development and school readiness of young children through the [Early Works](http://childinst.org/our-work/early-works/) initiative. This work has connected CI to districts, teachers, students, and families that share our desire to further align early learning around classroom practices that reflect research, evidence, and innovative thinking about how young children learn best.

CI also laid the groundwork for Early School Success (ESS) through a research and design year (2017–2018) generously supported by the [James F. and Marion L. Miller Foundation](https://www.millerfound.org/). CI heard from educators that they need more supportive policies, professional development, and dedicated collaboration time to better understand how to incorporate research on [child development](https://www.naeyc.org/resources/topics/dap), [culturally-responsive teaching](https://www.brown.edu/academics/education-alliance/teaching-diverse-learners/strategies-0/culturally-responsive-teaching-0), [social and emotional learning](https://casel.org/what-is-sel/), and other evidence-based strategies into the instruction of young learners. Educators also need facilitated, collaborative time to work together across preschool to fifth grade, to plan and embed these strategies in their classrooms and communications with families. Through ESS, CI will support districts in this alignment work by providing district communities with access to on-site and virtual technical assistance (TA) on facilitation, the latest early learning research and emerging best practices, family and community engagement, and ongoing data and evaluation to help foster the development of rich, cohesive learning environments for young children.

Vision and Goals for Early School Success

**The Early School Success (ESS) initiative aims to engage districts to transform how we approach research-based instruction informed by child development from preschool through fifth grade to increase student achievement and engagement.** Strengthening connections from preschool to fifth grade is vital for tackling low achievement in third grade reading mentioned previously.[[9]](#footnote-9) We know that third grade reading is a predictor of high school graduation, another area where Oregon needs to move the needle for all students.[[10]](#footnote-10) While research cites preschool through third grade as a key developmental stage for young learners, elementary schools rarely end at third grade. Therefore, CI seeks to foster district- and school-wide alignment from preschool to fifth grade and will refer to ESS as a preschool to fifth grade alignment effort. The initiative will have an intentional focus on the needs of underserved children, including children in low-income families, children of color, dual language learners (DLLs), and children with special needs. To better serve these children and their families, ESS will draw upon authentic family and community partnerships to understand and address local strengths and problems of practice around preschool through fifth grade instructional alignment. Strengths and problems of practice will vary depending on the district, and ESS implementation will meet districts where they are to create and execute action plans that address local needs.

Desired Outcomes for District Communities and the State

By participating in ESS, districts will be positioned to experience shifts toward greater cohesion and research-based instructional strategies in preschool through fifth grade. An inclusive table of groups and individuals with a stake in early years education will drive this shift. For example, ESS work could consist of the consistent incorporation of research and emerging best practices on dual language development into thematic literacy instruction across preschool and kindergarten. Educators could tailor this aligned literacy instruction to the linguistic demographics and needs of their students, identified via outreach to parents and local community-based organizations who are connected to families. Another example of this work could be doubling-down on a district’s behavioral/social emotional instructional efforts to increase student engagement (and lower chronic absenteeism) from preschool through elementary school. These efforts might include TA from external organizations with expertise in chronic absenteeism and empathetic partnership with families.

These shifts are intended to equitably improve outcomes for *all* students, ultimately laying the foundation for gains and success in middle school, high school, college, and career. This district-level work involving partners from the community, families, and TA organizations will help influence statewide priorities and investments to bolster a cohesive, research-based approach to early learning for all young Oregonians. To attain these results for districts, their partners, and the state, ESS aims to achieve these more specific outcomes after five years:

**Districts participating in ESS will have**

* **a district-wide common language and set of collaboration techniques focused** on quality and innovative/research-based instructional strategies in early learning to shape curriculum, classroom instruction, and decisions about resource allocation
* **mastery of innovative early childhood teaching strategies** among preschool to fifth grade teachers, specialists, and leaders who are authentically engaged in ESS decisionmaking
* **an invigorated and vibrant community with families and local partners that “co-own” this work**, includingthe new practices, communication pathways, and gains made through creating closer alignment from preschool to fifth grade
* **data and practices to showcase as preschool to fifth grade alignment “learning labs”** that explore and document the value of aligning instructional practice through an inclusive, community-driven process (which could include district activities like hosting site visits and providing testimony to decisionmakers, and contributing to reports and other communications to share lessons learned)
* **established, regular touch-points with other participating ESS districts** that will allow districtsto share lessons-learned, challenges, best practices, and innovations in early learning, creating a sustained community of practice that can serve as an incubator or “think tank” for preschool through fifth alignment strategies

**Decisionmakers and other districts in Oregon will**

* **have a model framework** (based on the work of ESS districts) for community-driven preschool through fifth instructional alignment to localize in their contexts and help shape state policy and teacher professional learning
* **begin to allocate resources (funds, staff, time)** to aligning early learning around evidence-based strategies and emerging innovations in early learning practice
* **regularly discuss and take steps to foster preschool to fifth grade alignment efforts,** emphasizingcohesive, research-based and innovative instructional practice and a community-driven approach

Program Description

**Oregon school districts—in collaboration with their early childhood education (“preschool”) partners—are eligible to participate in ESS.** A district’s preschool partner could consist of any program providing services and education to young children, whether co-located with and run by the district or a community preschool connected to the district in some way. ESS is a three- to five-year long initiative. In Year 1, ESS will engage two pilot districts to develop their local needs assessments and implementation plans. CI anticipates that districts will begin ESS work in one to two elementary schools in connection with an on-site preschool or community preschool partner. In later years, the district will scale the innovations and successes to other schools in the district. In Year 3, two additional (new) districts will implement ESS (for a total of four ESS districts). From CI, participating districts will receive a combination of funds for ESS activities (see description of funds in the [Budget Estimate](#BUDGET_ESTIMATE) section of this RFP) as well as direct on-site and virtual technical assistance (TA) from CI on conducting the needs assessment, facilitation, coaching, strategies for family/community engagement, access to early learning research, and professional development to support schools and districts as they align teaching practices for children from preschool to fifth grade.

With support from CI, each district will convene a core leadership team of individuals (or “stakeholders”) who will prioritize preschool through fifth grade alignment. This team will be intentionally diverse, including building and district-level partners as well as community representatives. Core team members should include (at the minimum) an identified project manager (or lead), early learning leader (or equivalent), curriculum and instruction lead(s), English Language Learner (ELL) program lead(s), data manager(s), community partners (e.g., families and advocacy organizations), school-building-level leaders (e.g., principals), and teacher representatives.

This team will serve as the ESS “backbone” and will consult with other key stakeholders regularly (e.g., families, the district superintendent, school board) throughout the work. The work will begin with contact with a wide range of key stakeholders to conduct an initial needs assessment. We recognize that smaller districts have fewer staff/dedicated positions than larger districts and will need to fulfill these roles in unique ways. We expect that the composition of core teams will look different for each district.

During their first year of implementation, district core leadership teams will collaborate with CI and other partners to conduct the needs assessment and analyze district data, curricula, instructional practices, professional development structures, community resources, and stakeholder perspectives to identify current district strengths as well as “problems of practice” impeding alignment from preschool through fifth grade. CI will provide TA for districts on content, research, and evidence-based best practices that will help educators and the community capitalize on strengths and address problems of practice. CI can also assist as districts test and possibly scale any innovative or emerging practices that might address strengths and problems of practice. The district core team will use this information to develop an implementation plan to enhance preschool through fifth alignment and measure progress toward district goals. CI also recognizes that districts’ strengths, needs, and problems of practice will vary depending on context. The subsequent implementation plan will include coaching and content tailored to the needs of the district.

ESS will have six components:

* **Connecting and Strengthening Preschool and Elementary Instruction** by fostering district collaboration and facilitated planning to align instruction between preschool and K–5 based on evidence-based instructional practice and/or emerging classroom innovations.
* **Revamped Professional Learning** so that instructional leaders and teachers from preschool through fifth grade have vertical planning time and a shared understanding of instructional practices that address their district and school priorities.
* **A Cross-District Professional Learning Community (PLC),** facilitated by CI, in which other districts in addition to the four ESS implementation districts can participate and observe to expand the impact of ESS (to launch in Year 2).
* **Family and Community Engagement** to strengthen cohesive partnerships between communities, preschools, and districts because family and community members are key supporters of a child’s learning.
* **Rapid-Cycle Evaluation and Continuous Improvement** to surface real-time, actionable lessons learned through [Plan-Do-Study-Act cycles](https://deming.org/explore/p-d-s-a). External program evaluators will help provide data and analysis for these cycles and on the larger-scale process/impact of ESS.
* **Policy and Communications** in which district/preschool ESS participants can share their stories and proof points with state stakeholders to bolster momentum for preschool through fifth grade alignment in Oregon (e.g., by hosting site visits).

As mentioned previously, the implementation of these components of ESS will look different in each district and will draw upon perspectives, needs, and priorities of educators, community partners and families.

## Early School Success Timeline

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Project Phase | Activities |
| Year 1: Pilot District Planning | * Form core leadership teams in both pilot districts * Conduct needs assessments of district curriculum, professional learning practices, and community resources to identify strengths, gaps, and needs * Develop tailored implementation plans based on local needs assessment to test on a small scale in the district (e.g., in one preschool and one kindergarten classroom) |
| Year 2:  Pilot District Implementation | * Continue implementing pilot districts’ core team plans, using rapid-cycle evaluation to analyze and scale emerging outcomes (stakeholder engagement is ongoing) * Engage principals and teachers in coaching to better understand and implement instructional strategies * Launch Cross-District Professional Learning Community * Conduct RFP process for two additional ESS districts |
| Year 3: Taking Stock/Additional Districts | * Launch ESS in the two additional districts (including needs assessments, implementation plans) * Pilot districts take stock of three-year outcomes, make any adjustments, continue stakeholder engagement, and possibly transition to district-owned long-term plans |
| Year 4: Ongoing Implementation | * Conduct demonstration site visits in districts * New ESS districts fully engage in ESS implementation activities * As needed, continue transitioning pilot districts to district-owned long-term plans |
| Year 5: Transition | * Take stock of ESS outcomes, possibly make adjustments while evaluating overall ESS strengths and progress * Ensure that all participating districts are able to transition to district-owned long-term plans |

## Detailed Application Process and Expectations

Full Application Process

This process for applying for participation in ESS will occur in two stages:

* **Stage I—Written RFP Responses**: School districts and their preschool partners who wish to foster and enhance preschool through fifth grade instructional alignment should respond to this RFP. Districts should complete their responses and deliver them to CI by no later than **5:00 p.m. PT February 8, 2019.** To be considered for ESS participation, districts must complete the [Section II](#_Section_II:_District) components of this RFP including the program narrative, short answer responses, budget estimate, and letters of support (see full checklist below). Applicants will be notified of their finalist status by close-of-business March 1, 2019. On December 13, 2018 at 11:00 a.m. PDT, CI will conduct an informative webinar for districts interested in applying to ESS. The webinar will provide further details about the initiative and include a question and answer session.
* **Stage II**—**Site Visits with Finalists and Selection**: CI will conduct site visits for finalist districts during March–April 2019. In advance of the site visit, CI will send a packet of materials for district and preschool stakeholders to review and will work with districts to arrange scheduling and logistics. Site visits will include meetings with the prospective core team members, parents, community stakeholders, and other district and preschool leaders as well as classroom observation. Districts will be informed if they have been selected for participation in ESS by **close-of-business April 26, 2019**.

Selection Criteria and Procedure

CI will select districts for implementation based on an assessment of the districts’ abilities to fulfill program goals for the duration of the ESS initiative, their demonstration of motivation and willingness to succeed in the initiative, and evidence of a positive, action-oriented culture. Districts selected for implementation will have:

* **A robust partnership with a local preschool(s)** or a district-operated preschool
* **Evidence of existing investments/efforts to align preschool and elementary education,** for example:
  + Involvement in the Kindergarten Readiness Partnership & Innovation (KPI) Grant Program (and/or)
  + An on-site [Preschool Promise](https://oregonearlylearning.com/preschool-promise) program
  + Other alignment processes in place like shared professional learning schedules between preschool and elementary educators or shared student data
* **A collaboration** with its local [Early Learning Hub](https://oregonearlylearning.com/administration/what-are-hubs/) (or similar)
* **A track record of managing and sustaining work seeded by grants**
* **A track record of community partnerships** with groups like parents, nonprofits, technical assistance (TA) providers, and advocacy organizations
* **The ability to dedicate district staff** to ESS work, preferably a full FTE (some ESS funds can be used for this purpose)
* **Evidence of open-mindedness and buy-in** to focus on vertical instructional alignment across the preschool through fifth continuum (which could include changes to professional learning and other systems)

Throughout the application process, CI will also look for evidence of expected commitments from key district and preschool stakeholders listed below. CI will make a substantial investment of time and resources into ESS and aims to identify district partners similarly committed to this work and sustaining it into the future. Once the sites have been selected, CI and the districts will co-establish and sign a formal Memorandum of Agreement (MOA). This MOA will define the scope of the partnership and outline the agreements to provide the supports, dedicated resources, and more detailed commitments to the initiative over time.

List of Commitments from Key Stakeholders

Below is a list of commitments for ESS stakeholder groups. While other stakeholder groups’ participation will be essential to the success of ESS (e.g., parents), early commitments from the district- and school-level groups below will support early ESS planning. CI will look for evidence of these commitments from these stakeholders during the full application process (both Stage I and Stage II). These commitments arose from our ESS research and design (R&D) year (as mentioned previously, the R&D year included research, site visits, and focus groups on successful and promising preschool through fifth alignment efforts). Each commitment represents a mindset or activity that contributed to the success and progress of similar preschool through fifth alignment efforts.

**Children’s Institute (CI) will:**

* Provide districts selected for participation in ESS with district-level grant awards for planning activities and materials. This funding is variable over the planned span of the project with amounts scaled to district size and needs
* Deliver TA, coaching, and content to stakeholders on messaging, research, evidence-based best practices, and emerging innovations for preschool through fifth instructional alignment, primarily funded from a separate budget that does not draw from the district’s award
* Use a data-rich approach that draws upon perspectives from all key district stakeholders (including leadership, teachers, and parents) to understand district strengths, challenges, and needs to foster preschool through fifth instructional alignment
* Partner with districts selected for implementation to customize and provide structure (as needed) for ESS preschool through fifth alignment activities to specific district and school-community needs while also connecting districts to each other to analyze broader lessons-learned (e.g., through the PLC and other venues)
* If needed, connect districts to external TA providers that address local needs

**Teachers (Preschool and K–5) will:**

* Be willing to try out and test instructional practices to create alignment between preschool through fifth grade, which will include incorporating evidence-based and/or emerging, innovative strategies into the classroom
* Participate in vertical planning and collaboration activities across preschool through fifth grade as well as horizontal planning and collaboration to emphasize and integrate preschool through fifth instructional alignment
* Be open to collaborating with new professional development providers and other partners to inform instructional alignment work

**District Leadership will:**

* Create and support a dedicated ESS district core team that will cultivate preschool through fifth instructional alignment; core team membership will include (at the minimum) an identified project manager, early learning leader (or equivalent), curriculum and instruction lead(s), English Language Learner program lead(s), data manager, community partners, school-building-level leaders (e.g., principals) and teacher representatives
* Allocate funds, including appropriate FTE to ensure initiative success
* Support preschool through fifth alignment efforts with resource allocation and public messaging
* Be open to enacting structural changes as necessary that foster preschool through fifth instructional alignment (e.g., adjust schedules, establish professional learning communities)
* Be willing to foster the revision of instructional practice to align with preschool and reflect established research or emerging innovative strategies for young learners
* Be willing to create opportunities for collaboration between educators, district staff and partners outside of the district (e.g., families, community-based organizations, TA providers)

**Principals will:**

* Actively participate in the Core Team activities to advance instructional alignment
* Work to incorporate preschool as part of their leadership (e.g., principals will start to think of themselves as the leaders of preschool–5 school rather than K–5 school)
* Be open to enacting structural changes that foster preschool through fifth grade alignment at the building level (e.g., adjust schedules, establish professional learning communities)
* Be willing to foster the revision of instructional practice to align with preschool and reflect established research or emerging innovative strategies for young learners
* Provide messaging, support, and flexibility to teachers/other building-level educators demonstrating that preschool through fifth grade instructional alignment is a building and district priority (e.g., by setting and supporting school-level instructional alignment goals from preschool to kindergarten)
* Be willing to create opportunities for collaboration between educators, district staff and partners outside of the district (e.g., families, community-based organizations, TA providers)

**Leaders at the Preschool will:**

* Actively participate in and co-lead ESS district core team activities and decisionmaking processes
* Allocate resources (including staff) to preschool through fifth instructional alignment activities
* Be open to enacting structural changes that foster preschool through fifth grade instructional alignment (e.g., scheduling adjustments)
* Be willing to revise/adopt standards and adapt instructional practices to align with the district
* Be willing to consider revising licensure and human resources practices to align with the district

**The School Board will:**

* Prioritize preschool through fifth grade instructional alignment/ESS work with public messaging and resource allocation, calling out (or continuing to call out) preschool through fifth alignment as a key district goal (e.g., in the district strategic plan)
* Allocate sustaining resources (including funds) to preschool to fifth alignment work at some point in the life cycle of the ESS initiative and beyond

**The Union will:**

* Be open to changing structures and schedules that enable preschool to fifth grade instructional alignment (e.g., to foster shared vertical planning and collaboration time between preschool and K–5 educators)

# Section II: District Proposal Materials (to complete)

## Checklist of Materials

* District Profile
* Proposal Narrative
* Responses to Required Questions
* Budget Estimate
* Letters of Support

## District Profile

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. District Name |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Superintendent(s) |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Contact Information |  | | | | |
| 1. Telephone number(s) |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Fax number(s) |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Mailing address |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Email address(es) |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Website(s) |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Number of students |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Disaggregated student data | *% Free and Reduced Lunch* | *% English Language Learners, if available, disaggregated by income and race* | *% Students with Disabilities* | *% African American* | *% American Indian or Native Alaskan* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | *% Asian* | *% Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander* | *% Hispanic or Latino* | *% White* | *% Other* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | *Oregon Kindergarten Assessment data disaggregated by income and race* | *% Meeting 3rd grade English language arts (ELA) and mathematics benchmarks disaggregated by income and race* | *% Chronically absent disaggregated by income and race* | *Number and % of schools Title I eligible* | *Student mobility rate* |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Number of teachers |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Number of administrators |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Number/types of other relevant personnel |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Annual operating budget |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Number of elementary schools |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Number of middle schools |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Number of high schools |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Number/types of other schools |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Preschool partner |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Preschool partner contact information |  | | | | |
| 1. Telephone number(s) |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Fax number(s) |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Mailing address |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Email address(es) |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Website(s) |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Number of preschool students |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Location of preschool and whether or not it is co-located with a district school. |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Number of preschool teachers |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Number/types of other relevant preschool personnel |  | | | | |
|  |  | | | | |
| 1. Preschool operating budget |  | | | | |

## Proposal Narrative

**Please respond to the following prompt in no more than 900 words:**

*Please describe the approach your district would take to create stronger alignment between preschool and the K–5 system as part of Early School Success over the course of this three- to five-year program. Be sure to include which aspects of your district’s existing vision, strategic plan, professional learning for educators, and resource allocation already emphasize and prioritize preschool through fifth alignment. Please also describe the challenges you foresee and possible steps to mitigate those challenges.*

## Responses to Required Questions

Please limit your responses to no more than 500 words per question.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **For the elementary school(s) that would participate in ESS, please briefly describe:** | |
| 1. The number and name(s) of the elementary schools that would participate in ESS in Years 1 and 2.   *(Note: if your district proposes to engage in initial ESS work at more than one elementary school, please answer all questions below for both schools).* |  |
| 1. School leadership’s (e.g., principals’) involvement and support for current and/or previous preschool through fifth alignment work (include any background or qualifications school leadership might have in early childhood learning). |  |
| 1. Current community engagement strategies used at the school. |  |
| 1. The current partnership between this school and the preschool program to participate in ESS. |  |
| 1. How implementing ESS at this school would target support for traditionally underserved student groups. |  |
| 1. The school’s approach to dual language learner (DLL) support (e.g., pull-out vs. push-in approach). |  |
| **For the preschool program that would participate in ESS, please briefly describe:** | |
| 1. The outcomes and/or approaches to instruction that make this program high-quality. |  |
| 1. Current community engagement strategies used at the preschool. |  |
| 1. The current partnership between this preschool and the district and/or elementary school(s) to participate in ESS. |  |
| 1. How implementing ESS at this preschool would target support for traditionally underserved student groups. |  |
| 1. The preschool’s approach to dual language learner (DLL) support (e.g., pull-out vs. push-in approach). |  |
| **For your district overall, please briefly describe:** | |
| 1. Any preschool through fifth (or similar) alignment efforts already underway. |  |
| 1. An example of a reform, change effort, or instructional improvement successfully implemented (or underway) by the district and a description of what made it successful. |  |
| 1. The district’s approach to educator professional learning and leadership (including calendar and purchased professional learning programs). Feel free to attach a district professional learning calendar or other materials as appendices. |  |
| 1. District-wide approaches to family and community engagement. |  |
| 1. One to two successful district partnerships with external organizations. |  |
| 1. The district’s approach to student data management and sharing (including if it is shared with the preschool). |  |
| 1. The district’s overall strategy to support dual language learners (DLL) (e.g., goals for DLL students and policies in place to achieve those goals). |  |
| 1. Any decisionmaking bodies or structures for funding or strategy that would be involved with ESS (e.g., district leadership cabinet). |  |

## Budget Estimate

CI will provide each ESS district with grant awards based on district size and needs, to be disbursed over one to five years for district-level ESS activities and expenses. In addition to district grant awards CI will also provide TA and professional learning. In Year 1, districts can anticipate a disbursal of between $30,000 and $60,000 to support planning activities (i.e., forming the core team, stakeholder engagement, and the needs assessment). Further funds in Years 2–5 will depend on outcomes and needs that emerge from Year 1 planning activities. Funding in Year 1 does not act as a guarantee for continued funding; please see the “Estimated Fund Disbursal” below for what possible multi-year ESS funding could look like.

Based on the size and needs of your district and the “Estimated Fund Disbursal” information below, please complete the Budget Estimate Table to convey at a high level how your district might designate further revenue and use funds to support ESS work. Personnel expenses might include hiring a part- or full-FTE to project manage the work, for example, and non-personnel expenses could include new classroom materials to support refreshed instructional approaches. Note that if your district is selected for Stage II of the application process, CI will ask to see a more detailed budget narrative, which CI will work with you to develop.

*Estimated Fund Disbursal*: For Years 1–5 of ESS, ranges dependent on district size, needs, and yearly outcomes

1. Year 1 planning and materials: $30,000 to $60,000 total
2. First year of implementation (End of Year 1 and all of Year 2 of ESS): $40,000 to $80,000 total
3. Supporting funds (for materials and implementation) for Years 3–5: $30,000 to $60,000 per year

*Budget Estimate Table*:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **ESS Budget, Years 1-5** | **Year 1** | **Year 2** | **Years 3-5** | **TOTAL** |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **ANTICIPATED REVENUE** |  |  |  |  |
| CI Grant award |  |  |  |  |
| [*list any anticipated in-kind*] |  |  |  |  |
| [*list any additional direct district funds*] |  |  |  |  |
| ***Total Anticipated Revenue:*** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **PERSONNEL EXPENSES** |  |  |  |  |
| [*list* *expense on personnel for ESS*] |  |  |  |  |
| [*list* *expense on personnel for ESS*] |  |  |  |  |
| ***Total Personnel Expenses:*** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **NON-PERSONNEL EXPENSES** |  |  |  |  |
| [*list non-personnel expense for ESS*] |  |  |  |  |
| [*list non-personnel expense for ESS*] |  |  |  |  |
| ***Total Non-Personnel Expenses:*** |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| **TOTAL EXPENSES:** |  |  |  |  |

## Letters of Support (LOSs)

Please include Letters of Support (LOSs) no longer than one page in length from the bulleted list of stakeholders below (note that some letters are required while others are strongly preferred). An optional template for the LOS is included in the Appendix of this RFP. Please refer to the [List of Commitments from Key Stakeholders](#COMMITMENTS) when completing LOSs.

* School board (***required***)
* Superintendent (***required***)
* Preschool/early childhood agency partner (***required***)
* Preschool educator(s) (***required***)
* K–5 educator(s) (***required***)
* Elementary principal (***required***)
* Local [Early Learning Hub](https://oregonearlylearning.com/administration/early-learning-hubs/) leader or Community Based Organizations (CBOs) (or similar) (***strongly preferred***)
* Curriculum administrator or equivalent (***strongly preferred***)
* Special education administrator or equivalent (***strongly preferred***)
* Dual language or English language administrator or equivalent (***strongly preferred***)
* Union (***strongly preferred***)

# APPENDIX:

## Letter of Support Template

* Note: Placeholder space for you to complete is in brackets with [*blue italics*].

[*Letter Date*]

Dear Children’s Institute Early School Success Team,

As the [*role*] of [*district, school, org. name*], I am pleased to submit this letter of support to you for [*district* *name*]’s with [*preschool partner’s name*] inclusion in the Early School Success initiative. I strongly support this proposal and the focus on fostering better instructional alignment between preschool and K–5 to provide young learners with learning environments that reflect research-based and innovative, emerging best practices.

In the past, as part of [*department/team from the district, school or org.*], we have engaged in [*or*] supported the following activities that enhanced preschool to fifth grade instructional alignment and early learning. [*Description of previous initiatives, activities, efforts, trainings, etc. indicating experience with and support for high-quality early learning and preschool through fifth grade alignment*.]

As part of Early School Success, we acknowledge that our role in the work, if selected for implementation, will be to:

* [*task/role of department/org*]
* [*task/role of department/org*]
* [*task/role of department/org*]
* [*etc.*]

In particular, the personal responsibilities and commitments that I would assume as part of Early School Success would include:

* [*task/role*]
* [*task/role*]
* [*task/role*]
* [*etc.*]

[*Include any other pertinent information here*].

We look forward to continuing the conversation about participation in Early School Success.

Sincerely,

[*Name*

*Title*

*Department/Organization*]

1. National Research Council. 2000. *Eager to Learn: Educating Our Preschoolers*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/9745>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. First Five Years Fund. N.d. “Why It Matters: Brain Development.” Retrieved October 23, 2018. <https://www.ffyf.org/why-it-matters/brain-development/>. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. E.g., Oregon has enacted full-day kindergarten, [Preschool Promise](https://oregonearlylearning.com/preschool-promise) publicly funded preschool programs, and the Kindergarten Readiness Partnership & Innovation Program (KPI) to build connections between preschool and K–3. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Oregon Department of Education Early Learning Division. 2018. “2017–18 preliminary kindergarten assessment results show correlation with 3rd grade skills.” Accessed October 5, 2018. <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/about-us/Documents/News%20Release%2017-18%20Kindergarten%20Assessment.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Oregon Department of Education. 2017. “Oregon’s Graduation: Critical Elements Leading to Positive Graduation Outcomes.” Accessed October 22, 2018. <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/GraduationImprovement/Pages/default.aspx>. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Oregon Department of Education Early Learning Division. 2018. “2017–18 preliminary kindergarten assessment results show correlation with 3rd grade skills.” Accessed October 5, 2018. <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/about-us/Documents/News%20Release%2017-18%20Kindergarten%20Assessment.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. Oregon Department of Education. 2017. “PreK–3rd Grade Alignment.” Accessed November 12, 2019. <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/GraduationImprovement/Documents/PreK-3rd%20Grade%20Alignment.pdf>. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. For example, The National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine published a comprehensive consensus study in 2018 on how people learn (including very young children). National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. 2018. *How People Learn II Learners, Contexts, and Cultures*. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press. <https://doi.org/10.17226/24783>. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. Oregon Department of Education. 2017. “Oregon’s Graduation: Critical Elements Leading to Positive Graduation Outcomes.” Accessed October 22, 2018. <https://www.oregon.gov/ode/students-and-family/GraduationImprovement/Pages/default.aspx>. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Annie E. Casey Foundation. 2013. *Early warning confirmed: A research update on third-grade reading*. <http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/AECF-EarlyWarningConfirmed-2013.pdf> [↑](#footnote-ref-10)