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Superintendent of Schools

Ms. Elizabeth Kupiec
Assistant Superintendent

Mrs. Khrystie Allen
Committee on Special Education Chairperson

Cato-Meridian Central School District

2023-2024 Request for Proposals: Preschool Collaboration

General Information

The Cato-Meridian Central School District is requesting proposals from qualified agencies to provide Pre Kindergarten services for eligible district four year old children for the 2022-2023 school year. These services shall be provided pursuant to the New York State Education Law 3602-ee, Grant Funded Pre kindergarten Programs initially awarded to school districts in school years 2014-2015 and 2021-2022.

The Pre-K curricula must align with the district's and the NYS K-12 educational standards. During the selection process, the Cato-Meridian Central Schools reserves the right to request additional information. Prior to entering into a contract with an eligible pre kindergarten agency, the district will conduct at least one on site visit.

Timeline

The following are key dates for proposals:

Due Date for Proposal	7/14/2023
Selection of Agency/Agencies	8/1/2023
Date services will begin	9/5/2023

Contact

Please submit two (2) copies of the proposal and other documentation in a sealed envelope marked "Proposal for Pre Kindergarten Services" no later than 7/29/2023 at 3:00 PM to the contact below. Any questions regarding the proposals should also be directed to:

Elizabeth Kupiec
Assistant Superintendent
2851 Rt. 370
Cato, NY 13033

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Program Design and Quality of Programmatic Oversight and Fiscal Management

Include a detailed narrative which articulates the applicant agency's/CBO's philosophy and mission, describes how the eligible collaborating pre kindergarten program proposes to provide services that meets the goals and objectives of the district's collaborative prekindergarten program for new full-day four-year-old placements including:

Demonstrated experience, capacity and effectiveness in immediately implementing an innovative, creative, developmentally appropriate, culturally responsive and sustaining full-day pre kindergarten program serving four-year-old students, including those who are ability- and language-diverse;

Effective, efficient, and collaborative administrative structure, record management and documentation procedures.

Fiscal solvency and anticipated fiscal share and other resources that will be contributed full-day prekindergarten program for four-year-old students;

Facility Quality

Provide detailed documentation and description that all applicable health and safety codes and licensure or registration requirements are met. These include the design, sanitation, maintenance, and repair of CBO-operated pre kindergarten buildings, classrooms, premises, equipment, and furnishings with the objective of maximizing child development and early learning while protecting the health and safety of students at all times. The agency/CBO ensures compliance with all application requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

The collaborating pre kindergarten program classrooms and buildings meet all applicable fire safety and building codes and any applicable facility requirements of a state or local licensing or registering agency, including, but not limited to those related to emergency evacuation plans, and health / medical procedures, and as recorded on documents such as day care licenses, certificates of occupancy, and health inspection reports (if meals are prepared on site.)

The agency/CBO must utilize the New York State Education Department's [Prekindergarten Health and Safety Checklist](#) as one component of a comprehensive physical plant review inspection protocol, the school district performs at least one inspection of a potential collaborating pre kindergarten program collaborator's facility before entering into a contract to provide collaborative prekindergarten programming.

Upon entering a contract, the school district performs at least one additional annual facility inspection of collaborating CBO facilities.

At minimum, a second annual facility inspection will be performed by each CBO's respective licensing, permitting, regulatory, oversight, registration, or enrolling agency. All collaborating-operated pre kindergarten programs must provide access to all records, property, and personnel related to the program during all inspections. The New York State Education Department may also perform facility inspections of the collaborating pre kindergarten program sites.

Teaching Staff Patterns, Qualifications, Performance, and Professional Learning

Please provide a detailed narrative including, but not limited to, each applicant's stability of staff, rate of turnover and ability to fill vacancies in a timely manner, staffing patterns, teacher certification, class size and capacity to provide ongoing professional learning opportunities.

Staffing Patterns

Staffing pattern policy to recruit, place, and retain a collaborating pre kindergarten program workforce that considers the diversity and needs of the school district's pre kindergarten students and families.

Teacher Certification Requirements

Mechanism, process, and adequate staffing to collect, record, maintain, verify, update, and report teacher certification compliance and data for:

NYS Certified Pre Kindergarten Teachers

All teachers in the universal full-day pre kindergarten program shall meet the same teacher certification standards applicable to public schools. Pre kindergarten teachers providing instruction shall possess NYS teacher certification pursuant to [CR Part 80](#) valid for service:

in the early childhood grades; or
students with disabilities in the early childhood grades

Uncertified Pre Kindergarten Teachers

Uncertified teachers employed by collaborating pre kindergarten providers are eligible to teach State-administered pre kindergarten students when the uncertified teacher:

Possesses a bachelor's degree in early childhood education or a related field,

Creates and implements a documented three-year plan to obtain NYS teacher certification valid for service in the early childhood grades.

Registers with the [ASPIRE Registry for New York's Early Childhood Workforce](#) (Effective June 2022),

During the hours of operation of pre kindergarten instruction, programming, and operation, the site is supervised by an on-site Education Director who possesses NYS teacher certification valid for the service in the early childhood or child grades pursuant to CR Part 80.

Pre kindergarten Teaching Assistants and Teacher Aides [CR Part 151-1.3(e)(3-4)]

A pre kindergarten *teaching assistant* providing instructional support in a prekindergarten classroom shall meet qualifications pursuant to CR Part 80.

A pre kindergarten *teacher aide* providing support in a pre kindergarten classroom shall meet the requirements prescribed by the local board of education

Maximum Class Sizes and Minimum Staffing Level

Collaborating Pre Kindergarten Provider Type	Maximum Class Size (Four-year-old Students)	Minimum Staffing Levels assigned to each class
Family Day Care	6	1 Teacher
Group Family Day Care	12	1 Teacher
Community Based Organization	18	1 Teacher And 1 Paraprofessional [Teaching Assistant or Teacher Aide]
	19-20	1 Teacher And 2 Paraprofessionals [Teaching Assistant(s) and/or Teacher Aide(s)]

Professional Learning

Please provide a detailed plan for professional development that ensures the planning and provision of quality, research-based, meaningful, sustained professional learning opportunities for all prekindergarten teachers and staff members. Collaboration with the district should be considered in this plan. When planning professional learning opportunities, a variety of factors must be considered based on the comprehensive instructional and non-instructional needs of its prekindergarten four-year-old students, their families, and communities, such as:

Aggregated information on pre kindergarten student progress;

Alignment to [NYSED’s Learning Standards](#) and [NYSED’s Resource Guides for Success in Early Learning](#);

The school district’s Kindergarten through Third Grade curriculum;

Input from the school district and collaborating pre kindergarten provider teachers;
Feedback from families;

Feedback provided from prior completion of NYSED Office of Early Learning’s Quality Assurance Protocol (would not apply in 2021-2022).

Teacher Performance and Evaluation

It is requested that the preschool agency use the same evaluation tools as the District for consistency to measure Teacher-Student interactions and the quality of the learning environments.

The District has chosen to use NYSUT Rubric to measure Teacher-Student Interactions and the ECER-3 to measure the quality of the learning environment.

Child Eligibility, Screening, Progress Monitoring, and Outcomes

Provide a detailed description of the agency's demonstrated success in assessing and meeting the needs of diverse learners, including children with disabilities in integrated settings and Emergent Multilingual Learners in English and home language development.

School District Coordination of Prekindergarten Outreach through Placement]

The school district coordinates and conducts all outreach, recruitment, eligibility, registration, lottery (if necessary), waitlist, enrollment, intake, and placement of students in school district and collaborating pre kindergarten programs.

Student Eligibility

The school district verifies each eligible student's age and school district residency. *Eligible child* means a child who resides within the school district who is four years of age on or before December 1st of the enrolled school year, or who will otherwise be first eligible to enter public school kindergarten commencing the following school year.

New Entrant and Pre Kindergarten Initial Screening

Please provide a plan to communicate to the district all new entrants. The school district screens all new entrants, including those entering school district and collaborating pre kindergarten programs to identify those who may need additional diagnostic assessments that could possibly result in the determination of ability-diverse (preschool students with disabilities and/or gifted) and/or language-diverse ([Emergent Multilingual Learners in Prekindergarten](#)).

Upon prekindergarten enrollment, the school district administers a [valid and reliable](#) screening tool that, at a minimum, that assesses each student's language, cognitive, and social-emotional development.

Screening results are documented, protected, shared with each student's family, and used to inform instruction, address the needs of individual children, improve pre kindergarten program practice, and inform professional learning.

Progress Monitoring Assessments

It is requested that the agency/CBO use the same initial screening process and progress monitoring assessments. These must be completed at least twice during the school year. The progress monitoring assessments must be valid and reliable to measure the progress of each pre kindergarten student's language, cognitive, and social-emotional development.

Progress monitoring assessment results are documented, protected, shared with each student's family, and used to inform instruction, address the needs of individual children, improve pre kindergarten program practice, and inform professional learning.

At the end of each school year, the school district reports aggregate student progress monitoring data to the New York State Education Department via the Final Pre kindergarten Program Report. Prekindergarten programs are considered effective and students demonstrate significant gains in language, cognitive, and social-emotional development.

The school district ensures that any measurement of student outcomes in pre kindergarten will not be used to make high-stakes educational decisions for individual children. For example, such data is not used to preclude or discourage a child's enrollment in kindergarten.

Nutrition, Health, and Well-Being

Provide a detailed plan of the agency's/CBO's capacity, current funding sources (if any), resources, and structures to develop fiscal and logistical arrangements with the school district to provide students with appropriate and sufficient meals and snacks.

Meals and Snacks

Each student's nutritional needs are sufficiently met through the provision of appropriate meals and snacks.

Family Style Dining

Nutritious meals and snacks within the CBO settings are provided at appropriate times and for sufficient durations conducive to meaningful student-student and student-staff interactions.

Physical Activity

Collaborating prekindergarten programs provide students with a variety of daily opportunities to engage in developmentally appropriate activities that are indoor and outdoor, structured and unstructured, and moderately to vigorously physical.

Learning Environment and Curriculum

Provide a detailed description of documented protocols for ensuring adherence to the following requirements related to the learning environment and curriculum:

Schedule and Activities for Student-Centered Learning & Development

Utilizing differentiated instruction with an emphasis on language, emergent literacy, early mathematic skills, social and emotional development, physical abilities, and structured and unstructured play, school district and collaborating prekindergarten program space, scheduling, environment, and learning activities advance student-centered learning and development.

Children are encouraged to be self-assured and independent through an intentionally-planned daily schedule of teacher-initiated learning activities (2/3 of day) and child-initiated learning activities (1/3 of day) that balances active & quiet play, indoor & outdoor gross motor activities, and individual & small group activities.

Early literacy and emergent reading instruction is based on effective, evidence-based practices with essential components including, but not limited to:

Background knowledge,
Phonological awareness,
Receptive and expressive language,
Vocabulary development, and Phonemic awareness.

Learning Centers

Description of classrooms with clearly-defined, well-equipped learning centers that promote a balance of individual and small group activities. Learning centers include, but are not limited to:

Blocks and construction;
Creative Arts;
Dramatic play;
Literacy (Language Arts, Reading/Writing, Library, including Home Language Library);
Mathematics and Manipulatives;
Media/ Technology;
Music / Movement;
Sand and Water play / Sensory;
Science and Nature;

Curriculum and Instruction

The school district and its collaborating pre kindergarten program utilize a developmentally appropriate written curriculum that:

Is evidenced-based (meaning research has been conducted regarding the relationship between the curriculum and children's learning);

Aligns to [NYSED's Prekindergarten Early Learning Standards](#)

Incorporates the key domains of child development as outlined in [NYSED's Resource Guide School Success in Prekindergarten](#);

Emphasizes language, emergent literacy, early mathematics skills, social and emotional development, physical abilities, and structured & unstructured play;

Facilitates and supports individualized, differentiated, and responsive and sustaining instruction for diverse abilities, cultures, and languages;

Ensures continuity with instruction in the early elementary grades, and
Integrates with the school district's Kindergarten-Grade 12 instructional program.

Preschool Students with Disabilities

Adequate and appropriate accommodations, modifications, and supports to enable preschool students with disabilities effective and equitable access, inclusion, and integration in the full range of the program's curriculum, instruction, activities, goals, and objectives.

Emergent Multilingual Learners (EML)

Implement adequate and appropriate accommodations, modifications, and supports to enable language-diverse Emergent Multilingual Learners (EML) with effective and equitable access, inclusion, and integration in the full range of the program's curriculum, instruction, activities, goals, and objectives.

Family Engagement and Support

Provide a detailed narrative of the agency's/CBO's ease of utilization and accessibility of the program to families, parents, and/or guardians and the adherence to following the requirements related to family engagement & support, the partnerships with non-profit, community, and educational institutions in collaborating prekindergarten program settings:

Family Engagement Policy and Practice

Active engagement of families, parents, and/or guardians in the education of their children at either a school district and/or collaborating pre kindergarten programs.

The plan should reflect outreach strategies and how families are engaged free-of-charge in the languages they understand. Examples of active engagement may include, but are not limited to, written communication with families, one-on-one meetings, parent workshops and training on such topics as child development, language development, multilingualism, educational disabilities, and the special education referral process; opportunities for families to volunteer, and opportunities for families, parents, and/or guardians to participate in program- and school-level decisions and program improvement.

Annual Program Evaluation Completed by Families

Families, parents, and/or guardians annually complete a pre kindergarten program evaluation and/or survey. The school district applies results to program improvement, and regularly provides updated program quality information to families and the community.

Community Partnerships / Comprehensive Support Services

Whenever possible, comprehensive services are provided in collaboration with other community organizations in a non-duplicative manner. Comprehensive services are provided to the maximum extent practicable in the language or mode of communication which the parents and/or guardians and the child best understand.

Partnerships with Non-Profit, Community, and Educational Institutions

Provide a detailed narrative of the collaborating pre kindergarten program's relationship with the school district's in transitioning their four-year-old students and families to kindergarten.

Budget

Provide a detailed budget that aligns to those in NYSED's FS-10 Proposed Budget, such as salaries for professional staff and support staff, employee benefits supplies and materials, travel expenses, and employee benefits.