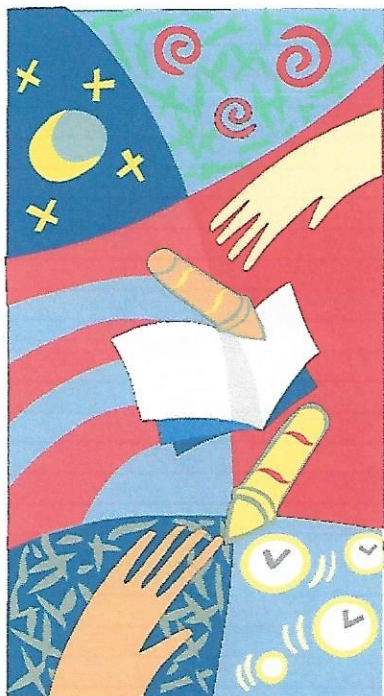


School Readiness



OBJECTIVE

A state-funded initiative administered by the Office of Early Childhood (OEC) that develops a network of school readiness programs to:

- Provide open access for children to quality programs that promote the health and safety of children and prepare them for formal schooling;
- Provide opportunities for parents to choose among affordable and accredited programs;
- Encourage coordination and cooperation among programs and prevent the duplication of services;
- Recognize the specific service needs and unique resources available to particular municipalities and provide flexibility in the implementation of programs;
- Prevent or minimize the potential for developmental delays in children prior to their reaching the age of five;
- Enhance federally funded school readiness programs;
- Strengthen the family through: (A) Encouragement of parental involvement in a child's development and education; and (B) enhancement of a family's capacity to meet the special needs of the children, including children with disabilities;
- Reduce educational costs by decreasing the need for special education services for school age children and to avoid grade repetition;
- Assure that children with disabilities are integrated into programs available to children who are not disabled; and
- Improve the availability and quality of school readiness programs and the coordination with the services of child care providers.



SCHOOL READINESS COUNCIL	p.2
ELIGIBILITY	p.2
PROGRAM TYPES	p.2
REQUIREMENTS	p.3
QUALITY COMPONENTS	p.3
FY 2016 GRANTS	p.4
RESOURCES	p.4
QUALITY ENHANCEMENT GRANTS	p.5
LINKAGES	p.5

OVERVIEW

Established in 1997 under P.A. 97-259, An Act Concerning School Readiness and Child Day Care and encoded in the CT General Statutes C.G.S. 10-16p - 10-16u, the legislation established a grant program to provide spaces in NAEYC accredited or Federal Head Start approved programs for eligible children in priority school districts and competitive grant municipalities.

Priority School Districts

All current and former priority school districts receive a grant allocation for spaces for eligible children.



Competitive Grant Municipalities

Competitive grant municipalities or regional school districts are eligible to receive a grant allocation for spaces for eligible children if the area is served by a priority school or in a town ranked 1 to 50 when all towns are ranked in ascending order according to town wealth. Each eligible municipality or regional school district may apply for a Competitive School Readiness grant.

The School Readiness grant allocation is based on the formula that uses the March 30 space count of the fiscal year prior to the fiscal year in which the grant is to be paid, plus or minus the current space requests, multiplied by the per child cost space rate.

Grant awards are made annually to eligible communities, for a period of five years. The chief elected official and the superintendent of schools jointly submit a plan for the expenditure of the funds and the responses to the local request for proposals process.

To review the RFP for Priority or Competitive School Readiness Grants, please refer to the OEC School Readiness web page.

SCHOOL READINESS COUNCIL



The chief elected official and the superintendent of schools jointly appoint and convene a School Readiness Council with the responsibility of making recommendations on issues relating to School Readiness including the application for School Readiness grants. The School Readiness Council is composed of the chief elected official or designee, the superintendent of schools or management level staff person, parents, a representative of a community health care provider, a librarian, representatives from programs such as Head Start, family resource centers, nonprofit and for profit child-care centers, group day-care homes, pre-kindergarten and nursery schools, family day care home providers and representatives from the community who provide services to children or have an interest in young children and their families.

ELIGIBILITY

Children who are ages 3 and 4 years of age and children age 5 years of age who are not eligible to enroll in kindergarten may enroll in a School Readiness program. Under C.G.S. Sec 10-16t, a School Readiness Council may elect to reserve 5 percent of its spaces for 5-year-olds eligible to enroll in school provided they have been in the program for one year and the parent or legal guardian, the School Readiness provider and local or regional school district agree that the child is not ready for kindergarten and the parent signs the public school option form exempting his/her child from attendance at the public school.

At least 60 percent of the children enrolled must be at or below 75 percent of the State Median Income.

PROGRAM TYPES

Full-day/Full-year Programs

Those programs providing services for 10 hours per day for 50 weeks per year. Reimbursed at \$8,924 per child per year.

School-Day/School-Year Programs

Those programs providing services for 6 hours per day for 180 consecutive days. Reimbursed at \$6,000 per child per year.

Part-Day/Part-Year Programs

Those programs providing services for at least 2.5 hours per day for 180 consecutive days. Reimbursed at \$4,500 per child per year.

Extended-Day Programs

This program is only available in the priority school districts. Those programs providing services that extend the hours, days and/or weeks of programming for children who are in an existing part time program not funded by School Readiness dollars. The purpose is to provide those children with a full time program of 10 hours per day for 50 weeks. Reimbursed at \$2,772 per child per year.

All programs must charge parent fees, based on the School Readiness Sliding Fee Scale, and/or use the child-care subsidy certificates from the Care4Kids program. School Readiness Councils may exempt part-day programs from charging parent fees. Exempt programs are not eligible for Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).