



FIRST THINGS FIRST

Ready for School. Set for Life.

Yavapai Regional Partnership Council

AGENDA ITEM 5:
Attachment 2

Discussion and Possible Approval of Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District Government to Government Agreement for SFY2013 Expansion: Increase slots and/or capital expense Strategy

BACKGROUND:

The attached document describes the background, need and intention of funding the Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District's expansion project. The government to government agreement has been reviewed by FTF staff members as well as two Council members.

The Regional Council will discuss the agreement and provide a recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION:

The Regional Director recommends approval of the Cottonwood-Oak Creek government to government agreement.

Yavapai Regional Partnership Council

Background Information for SFY13 Expansion: Increase slots and/or capital expense strategy

Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District

Background: Cottonwood-Oak Creek School District is a K-8 district serving 2,100 students. It is the fourth largest school district in Yavapai County with the largest percentage of children in poverty and children who speak a language other than English. Seventy-six (76%) of incoming kindergarteners qualify for free and reduced lunch; 27% speak a language other than English; 40% are identified with special needs; and 76% do not possess kindergarten readiness skills. The announcement of a preschool created a waiting list of 48; only 30 children could be served during the 2012/2013 school year. Funding was not available to open all classrooms that could be accessed at the school.

The district is proposing the expansion of a comprehensive preschool program to better meet the academic and health needs of young children in the Cottonwood area. The preschool program will consist of opening more preschool slots for community children, aligning research-based curriculum, as well as providing space for agencies to serve the health and social needs of the communities' children and families.

Need for classroom expansion

- Over 70% of the children on the wait list are from low income households;
- Funding would allow for a total of 60 preschool children; 30 new slots and 30 existing slots;
- The expanded slots would create a sustainable business model;
- The new slots will accommodate typically developing children at the preschool, Bright Bears Preschool Academy, located within the Dr. Daniel Bright Elementary School (DDB);
- Implementation of a research-based, developmentally-appropriate curriculum, with applicable professional development, creates a quality learning environment;
- Will allow for increased children's access to the district's nutrition program and health services; will provide health screenings.

Yavapai Region Government to Government funding request

- A 3-month; one-time award of \$65,000.

School and Community Partnerships / Sustainability

- The district has 5,200 square feet of classroom to expand slots
 - The wing at Dr. Daniel Bright consists of 7 classrooms that are each approximately 900 square feet, opening to an interior hallway with easy access to the cafeteria and restrooms designed for young children
 - The wing has a separate playground area
- DES and health licensed preschool / will collect tuition
- On Quality First wait list with expected assessment in early spring 2013 which will provide scholarships and other supports and services

- Resource area will provide access to community agencies and programs including parenting classes; Fit Kids programs; food distribution programs; partnership with Verde Valley Guidance Clinic; Yavapai County Community Health Services; plus more
- *Creative Curriculum for Preschool* aligns with Common Core
- Children who do not speak English will have new opportunities to engage in rich language experiences through developmentally appropriate NAEYC practices
- Weekly professional learning communities will be scheduled for collaboration and professional development; there will be use of technology and interactive media to nurture early learning and development
- The District has a history of implementing related programs; the Oak Creek Elementary preschool located in Cornville has been open for fifteen years with a current enrollment of 9 young children
- District staff members are highly qualified; the Director/Teacher has a Master of Educational Supervision and a Bachelor of Science-Elementary Education as well as endorsements including ESL, LD and Early Childhood. The Assistant Teacher has been employed with the District for nine years as a Tech and Speech Pathology Assistant and has a Certificate in Early Childhood Education