



# **Early Childhood Education and Literacy Initiative**

A collaborative opportunity funded by a partnership between the Darr Family Foundation, the Community Foundation of the Ozarks, and the Musgrave Foundation.

This Request for Proposals (RFP) was created in response to red flag issues outlined in the 2015 Springfield Greene County Community Focus Report regarding Early Childhood and Education. These red flags include:

- Kindergarten Readiness
- Achievement and Opportunity Gaps

### **This Issue**

A group of local students, referred to as the “super sub-group,” is falling into an academic achievement gap. These students typically come from low-income families, face racial disparities and/or language barriers, or have a disability. These students are less likely to have attended a quality preschool, be academically ready for kindergarten, or have age-appropriate literacy skills by 3rd grade—which research shows is when children stop learning to read and start reading to learn. In fact, 83% of Missouri 4 years olds are not enrolled in a publicly funded preschool program, and 28% of local kindergarteners are not academically ready for kindergarten. These students are three times more likely to drop out of high school and less likely to receive any college education. Long-term, they are more likely to earn less, have poorer health outcomes, or become incarcerated. This unrealized of human potential is the economical equivalent of a permanent recession.

To view the Community Focus Report, visit <http://springfieldcommunityfocus.org>

### **Purpose of RFP**

The purpose of this RFP is to invite collaboratives of three or more agencies to apply for funding to support a multi-year comprehensive intervention that effectively improves kindergarten readiness and literacy skills within a population defined as part of the “super sub group” falling into the achievement gap. This intervention must begin within this target population during early childhood and follow them through 3rd grade. The target population must be able to be tracked throughout the duration of the grant funded program. This intervention should include both evidence-based academic and literacy strategies along with parent engagement strategies. Successful programs will seek to meet the following outcomes as measured using baseline data gathered from Springfield Public Schools:

1. Decrease the number of children not ready for kindergarten
2. Increase the number of children with age appropriate literacy skills upon kindergarten entrance
3. Increase the number of third graders reading at grade level or beyond

## Eligibility

Successful programs will include a robust formative and summative evaluation component to determine program success and areas in need of improvement. Successful programs will also be prepared to sustain intervention activities after grant funding ends.

Collaboratives may apply for multiple years of funding with an award ceiling of \$180,000 - \$200,000 per year. The Darr Family Foundation has committed to providing \$120,000 minimum annually to support this initiative, along with \$40,000 in annual support from Community Foundation of the Ozarks and \$20,000 in support from the Musgrave Foundation.

Lead applicants must have 501(c)3 status or equivalent government or faith-based tax exempt status and serve the Springfield metropolitan area.

June 1, 2017	Request for proposal released
June 15, 2017	Informational meeting with Q & A at 3:30 pm at the Darr Agriculture Center located at 2401 S. Kansas Expressway
September 15, 2017	Full applications due by 5pm—emailed as ONE pdf document to hzoromski@darrfbc.com

Components of proposal:

On a cover page, please include:

- Organization name and address
- Contact name
- Contact phone number and email
- How much funding is requested
- One paragraph executive summary of program

All proposals must provide the following information:

- What is the target population for this project and why were they chosen?
- How many children do you expect to serve?
- Describe the program and how it will meet the outcome objectives of this RFP

**Continued on next page**

- How is the program going to be implemented among the target population?
- How does the program align with outcomes listed on page 1?
- What are the evidence-based strategies being implemented (cite evidence)?
- How do you plan to track the target population throughout the grant funded period?
- Describe each collaborative partner and their role within the program
- Describe how program evaluation and measurement of each child's progress will be performed
- How do you plan to sustain programming after grant funding ends?

Proposals must also include:

- Program budget of secured and requested funding for each year of program
- Budget narrative that outlines the necessity of program related expenses by line item
- Lead applicant's organizational budget
- Lead applicant's 501(c)3 determination letter
- Lead applicant's most recent 990
- Lead applicant's most recent audited financial statements
- Lead applicant's list of board members
- Memorandum of Understanding between lead applicant and all partner agencies defining all roles within the program

Completed applications must be emailed to [hzoromski@darrfbc.com](mailto:hzoromski@darrfbc.com) as ONE PDF document no later than September 15, 2017 by 5pm.

### **Questions?**

Heather Zoromski, Executive Director

Darr Family Foundation

417-888-1495

[hzoromski@darrfbc.com](mailto:hzoromski@darrfbc.com)