



Request for Proposal (RFP) For New Great Start Readiness Program Preschool Opportunities

Montcalm Area Intermediate School District

621 New Street Stanton, MI 48888

August 2021





TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	Summary and Background	3
II.	Proposal Guidelines	4
III.	Project Scope	5
IV.	Request for Proposal and Project Timeline	7
V.	Budget	8
VI.	Bidder Qualifications	10
VII.	Proposal Evaluation Criteria	11

I. SUMMARY AND BACKGROUND

The Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) is Michigan's state-funded preschool program for four-year-old children with factors that may place them at risk of educational failure. The program is administered by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE).

GSRP has provided quality preschool education to over 500,000 at-risk four-year-olds since it began in 1985. Research shows students attending this successful program did better throughout their academic careers, had lower dropout rates, had higher incomes as adults and were imprisoned less frequently than children who didn't attend preschool.

Program Effectiveness Highlights (1995-2021)

- ✓ *A higher percentage of 4th grade GSRP graduates passed the MEAP compared to non-GSRP students (Xiang & Schweinhart, 2002).*
- ✓ *Significantly fewer GSRP participants were retained in grade than non-GSRP students between 2nd and 12th grades (36.5% versus 49.2% in 12th grade) (HighScope, 2011).*
- ✓ *Significantly fewer GSRP children of color were retained for two or more grades than their non-GSRP counterparts by the 12th grade (14.3% versus 28.1% in 12th grade) (HighScope, 2011).*
- ✓ *More GSRP students graduated on time from high school than non-GSRP participants (58.3% versus 43.0%) (HighScope, 2011).*
- ✓ *More GSRP children of color graduated on time from high school than non-GSRP participants (59.7% vs. 36.5%) (HighScope, 2011).*
- ✓ *Kindergarten teachers consistently rated GSRP graduates as more advanced in imagination and creativity, demonstrating initiative, retaining learning, completing assignments, and as having good attendance. (Florian, et al., 1997).*
- ✓ *Second grade teachers rated GSRP graduates higher on being ready to learn, able to retain learning, maintaining good attendance and having an interest in school. (Xiang & Schweinhart, 2002)*
- ✓ *GSRP boys took more 7th grade and children of color took more 8th grade math courses than non-GSRP boys (Malofeeva et al., 2007).*
- ✓ *Cost of GSRP was recouped by 43.5% from savings because of the reduction in grade retentions.*

Visit www.michigan.gov/gsrp for more information

For the 2021-22 grant year, 30% of the allocated GSRP funds to the MAISD are to be allocated based on a competitive process defined by the local intermediate school districts. A single process will be used for all applicants that are in the Montcalm Area Intermediate School District service area that wish to be sub recipients of GSRP funds to offer GSRP preschool to at-risk four-year-olds.

PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

This Request for Proposal represents the requirements for an open and competitive process. Proposals will be accepted by email or paper copy to the MAISD 621 New Street, Stanton MI 48888 PO BOX ATTENTION Cari O'Connor or coconnor@maisd.com until 5:00 pm EST September 1st, 2021. All proposals must be signed by an official agent or representative of the organization submitting the proposal.

The organization submitting a proposal may not outsource or contract instructional staff from or to another organization to provide GSRP preschool. Recipients of GSRP funds must employ staff (including lead teacher, associate teacher, aides, program director, etc.) directly.

All questions regarding this RFP can be directed to Cari O'Connor, Montcalm County Great Start Director at 616-808-6488.

II. Project Scope

The MAISD is seeking preschool providers able to ensure high quality preschool programs for four-year-old children by meeting the following requirements: Adherence to the [GSRP Implementation Manual](#) and all standards in the *Early Childhood Standards of Quality for Prekindergarten* (ECSQ-PK). Both resources can be located at www.michigan.gov/gsrp. No exceptions will be granted to the Implementation Manual requirements.

- Compliance with state licensing regulations governing childcare. GSRPs must receive a certificate of approval/license from the Michigan Department of Human Services, Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing. All regular child use areas must be approved for use. All licensed childcare classrooms must be rated at a minimum of 3 in the Great Start CONNECT system.
- Ensure Lead Teachers of local educational agencies (LEA) have a bachelor's degree in elementary education with an early childhood endorsement or child development. A lead teacher for any sub recipient that is not a local education agency (LEA) must have:
 - a valid Michigan teaching certificate with an Early Childhood Education (ZA) or Early Childhood-General and Special Education (ZS) endorsement; or
 - a valid Michigan teaching certificate with a valid child development associate credential (CDA); or
 - A bachelor's degree in child development or early childhood education with specialization in preschool teaching. The transcript will document a major, rather than a minor, in child development.
- Adherence to the GSRP Implementation Manual and local process for determining student eligibility and enrollment into the program. Joint recruitment process participation is required.

[GSRP Eligibility](#) – Family income is the most utilized factor in determining eligibility for GSRP. Tiered income eligibility ensures that GSRP finds and provides services to its target population and focuses on those most at risk. Extremely low family income is defined as below 200 percent of the federal poverty level and low family income is defined as between 200 to 250 percent of the federal poverty level. In addition, as part of the prioritization process, **at least 90 percent of the children enrolling into the program must have parent(s) that are identified as being income eligible as defined above.**

GSRP Risk Factors

- 1) Family Income (250 percent of poverty or below and not served by the Federal Head Start program serving families below 100 percent)
- 2) Diagnosed disability or identified developmental delay
- 3) Children with a severe or challenging behavior
- 4) Primary home language other than English
- 5) Parent/guardian with low educational attainment
- 6) Abuse/neglect of child or parent
- 7) Environmental Risk

- Ensure Associate Teachers have an associate’s degree in early childhood/child Development or Child Development Associate credential.
- Ensure staff continues their education through attendance of professional development events, statewide conferences, and/or on-site in-services.
- Maintain staff-child ratio of 1:8 with a maximum class size of 16.
- Receive coaching support from an assigned MAISD Early Childhood Specialist who will serve as a mentor for teaching teams as well as complete the *Program Quality Assessment* (PQA) to guide individual program development three times a year.
- Administer Creative Curriculum, Ages & Stages developmental screening at the start of the program and then monitor & report continuous progress of all GSRP students through the use of *Teaching Strategies Gold* © Online.
- Participate in joint recruitment and enrollment activities, presenting to families **the attached preschool application** for all state and federally funded programs, and sharing of a single waitlist.
- Ensure that the allocated number of four-year-old children residing within the district receive a quality classroom-based Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP) preschool experience. The students shall receive at least 30 weeks/120 days of classroom-based **part-day** programming as required by the Michigan Department of Education. In addition, the program shall provide appropriate parent education and home-based services as required by the [GSRP Implementation Manual](#).
 - **Part-day** (*half-day program with a minimum of three hours of teacher/child contact time per day, for at least four days per week, for a minimum of 30 program weeks/ 120 classroom days*).
 - **School Day** School-Day preschool programs must operate for at least the same length of day as the local school district’s/public school academy (PSA)’s first grade program. A classroom that offers a School-Day program must enroll all children for the length of the school day to be considered a School-Day program. *School-day GSRP one child, results in a full day of preschool programming/ for at least four days per week, for a minimum of 30 program weeks/ 120 classroom days*).
- Provide MAISD with a budget detail for the proposed GSRP expenditures and a final expenditure report detailing the actual expenses incurred in providing the GSRP program.
- Provide MAISD with all required student enrollment data, staff qualifications information and any other information required for program reporting purposes.

III. Request for Proposal and Project Timeline

Request for Proposal Timeline:

All proposals in response to this RFP are due no later than 4 pm EST September 1st, 2021.

Evaluation of proposals will be conducted by September 15th, 2021 and applicants will be notified by no later than September 15th, 2021. If additional information or discussions are needed with any bidders; the bidder(s) will be notified.

The selection decisions for the awarded sub recipients of GSRP funds will be made no later than October 1st, 2021.

Upon notification, contract completion and budget planning will begin immediately. Contracts will need to be signed and returned by October 1st, 2021 to ensure that all funds are committed.

Notifications to bidders who were not selected will be completed by October 1st, 2021.

Project Timeline:

2021-2022 Grants funds are awarded October 1, 2021 and can be used for GSRP operation through September 31, 2022.

Program year must begin within 3 weeks of the K-12 local district start date and end as desired as long as the minimum number of program weeks is met. Scheduled breaks, holidays, and possible inclement weather days should be considered to ensure that 30 weeks/120 days of classroom sessions are met.

- **Part-day** (half-day program with a minimum of three hours of teacher/child contact time per day, for at least four days per week, for a minimum of 30 program weeks/120 days).
- **GSRP/Head Start Blend** (blending a Part-day GSRP slot and a Part-day Head Start slot to create the funding for a GSRP/Head Start Blend slot for one child, resulting in a full day of preschool programming for 30 weeks/120 days).

***Newly opened GSRP classrooms may provide reduced days and weeks according to the GSRP implementation manual. Consultation with the Early Childhood Contact will occur to determine if a site is eligible for this reduction.

IV. Budget

Intermediate School Districts (ISDs) are the grantees for Great Start Readiness Program. They receive funding via eleven State Aid Payments for each fiscal year, beginning in October. Information pertaining to State Aid Payments may be found under Section 32d “Great Start Readiness Program” in the State Aid Financial Status Report sent monthly to each ISD. MAISD shall make payments to awarded sub recipients upon receipt of invoices for actual expenses incurred in operating the GSRP Program on a quarterly basis.

State funds are appropriated annually based on a 10/1 to 9/30 fiscal year. Sub recipients are to ensure that services and materials purchased for a given fiscal year are booked in the accounting system for that year.

MAISD shall retain up to 8.5 percent of the total Section 32D awards from the Michigan Department of Education for managing and administering the GSRP Consortium, to provide Early Childhood Specialists to manage and supervise the program quality and professional development elements of the GSRP, and to cover current year student portfolio expenses associated with the *Teaching Strategies Gold* © online child assessment system.

MAISD shall pay awarded sub recipients the sum of \$3,980 per GSRP part day slot to provide GSRP classroom services.

GSRP funds may be used to pay for the following:

- Instructional materials and supplies
- Nutritional supplies beyond those provided by other available sources (after food program funding has been sought out)
- Lead teacher, associate teacher, early childhood specialist, and aide salaries and fringe benefits
- Parent involvement activities
- Transportation for students
- Health support services
- Student support services
- Staff development and teacher/parent training
- Travel necessary to enable project staff to implement the early childhood program
- Office supplies and materials
- Communication
- Printing and binding
- Rent paid to an entity other than the Intermediate School District (ISD), sub recipient, or subcontractor for facility or space
- Construction or renovation expenses related to licensing, as documented by the pre-licensing report and pre-approved by the Michigan Department of Education (MDE)
- Equipment (such as shelving, tables, CD player)

Great Start Readiness Program funds MAY NOT be used to pay for:

- Stipends
- Existing administrative, educational, or support personnel funded through other sources
- Indirect costs
- Costs that should be covered by Special Education
- Food covered by other food programs

Administrative Cap

The maximum amount of program funds allowable for administrative costs is 4 percent of the total grant. The following function codes are considered “administrative” when being reviewed for the maximum allowable expenditure: 230, 240, 250, 260 and 280. Exempt from the administrative cap are amounts designated for the rent or lease of a facility needed to implement the preschool programs; early childhood specialist; maintenance, janitorial, utilities, and insurances, which are part of a lease/rental agreement; audit; security services; and classroom telephones. ** Administrative rules are subject to change per legislation.

For additional information on approvable function codes and their description refer to the GSRP Implementation Manual, [Section: Budget page 5](#)

V. Bidder Qualifications

Bidders should be a private/public, or a non-profit/for-profit community-based organization licensed by the Michigan Department of Human Services, Bureau of Children and Adult Licensing. Bidders need to provide the following items as part of their proposal for consideration:

- Current status of program license
- Self-Assessment Score of 3 or higher on Tiered Quality Rating & Improvement System/ STARS (or plan to be at a 3 by GSRP implementation start date)
- Population of students at each tier (see below) that meet qualification requirements for GSRP
- Capacity to implement and administer GSRP grant requirements to fidelity

Tier 1

- Extremely low family income (below 250% of Federal Poverty Level)

Tier 2

- Low family income (between 250% and 300% of Federal Poverty Level) **plus** at least 2 of the 6 eligibility factors

Tier 3

- Low family income (between 300% and 350% of Federal Poverty Level) **plus** 1 of the 6 eligibility factors

Tier 4

- Not income eligible (above 350% of Federal Poverty Level) but has at least 1 of the 6 factors (up to 10% of slots awarded)

VI. Proposal Evaluation Criteria

1. Bidders will submit an application to MAISD due 4 pm EST September 1st, 2021.
2. Applications will be reviewed and scored by the Montcalm County Great Start Collaborative Executive Committee.

If there is a reduction in the formula award from MDE, CBO's slots will be awarded first in the allocation process. After this adjustment, all existing programs within the MAISD service area will have their application ranked ordered based on their rubric score reviewed and slots will be awarded to the highest-ranking programs first. If there are no viable proposals funding slots will be allocated to local school districts based on the identified point system.

Points	0	1	2	3	4
Program Quality Assessment form A	PQA not scored/completed by a reliable rater from outside the program	Average classroom score for each classroom is 1.5 or higher	Average classroom score for each classroom is 2.5 or higher	Average classroom score for each classroom is 3.5 or higher	Average classroom score for each classroom is 4.5 or higher
Program Quality Assessment form B	PQA not scored/completed by a reliable rater from outside the program	Average agency score is 1.5 or higher	Average agency score is 2.5 or higher	Average agency score is 3.5 or higher	Average agency score is 4.5 or higher
Integrity of Implementation (Specific to areas not covered in the PQA)	Does not have a plan to follow the Implementation Manual.	Has a plan to follow the implementation manual with 3 or more irregularities from the manual	Has a plan to follow the implementation manual with 2 or more irregularities from the manual	Has a plan to follow the implementation manual with 1 or more irregularities from the manual	Plan to follow the implementation manual with integrity.
Demonstrated Need	No waitlist or gave slots back for redistribution last year	A high concentration of at-risk (level 4 priority or family income above 350% of FPL +2 risk factors) on waiting list (not to exceed 10% of slots)	A high concentration of at-risk (level 3 priority or family income 300% of FPL+1risk factor) children on waiting list	A high concentration of at-risk (level 2 priority or family income below 300% +2 risk factors) children on waiting list	High concentration of at risk (level 1 priority or family income below 200% of FPL) children on waiting list & last year served students beyond an allocation that may have been GSRP eligible
Availability of Transportation	No transportation available for families	One way transportation is available to a limited group of children	Transportation is available to and from the GSRP program for a limited group of children	One way transportation is available to all children	Transportation is available to and from GSRP program site for all children
TQRIS / STARS	Not participating		SAS is at a 2, with plan to have a submitted score of 3 by GSRP implementation	Completed a Self-Assessment Survey (SAS) and has a submitted or approved score of 3 or 4 stars	Submitted or validated by a reliable assessment specialist scoring 5 stars
Status of licensing	License not current			On a regular license throughout the course of program/grant year.	
TOTAL for CLASSROOM					