

Request for Application
 FY24 Preschool Quality Partnership (PQP) Grant

<p align="center">DEADLINE:</p> <p align="center">March 22, 2024 4 PM ET</p>	<p align="center">ISSUED BY:</p> <p align="center">Office of Special Education and Early Learning</p>
<p>ADDRESS QUESTIONS TO: Jennifer Bryant, Kentucky Department of Education</p> <p align="center">KDERFP@education.ky.gov</p> <p align="center">Question Deadline: February 6, 2024, 4 PM ET</p>	<p>SUBMIT APPLICATIONS TO: Jennifer Bryant, Kentucky Department of Education</p> <p align="center">KDERFP@education.ky.gov</p> <p align="center"><u>*ONLY ELECTRONIC APPLICATIONS</u> <u>ACCEPTED</u> <u>NO HARD COPIES</u></p>

Specific Instructions:

Failure to follow these specific instructions will deem an applicant non-responsive and the application will not be scored.

- Local School districts must apply on behalf of licensed childcare provider(s).
- Eligible co-applicant(s) must be identified on the cover sheet (page 13). If the co-applicant(s) is not identified on the cover sheet, the application will be deemed non-responsive and will not move forward in the evaluation process.
- Applicant must demonstrate the ability to implement or enhance a full-day, year-round, high-quality early childhood program to serve three- and four-year-old preschool children.
- Applicants must agree to submit grantee-reported metrics in the following areas: childcare partnership, activities completed for the grant, successes, collaboration, challenges, and next steps
- Must be registered in the System for Awards Management, maintain an active registration and have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and a CAGE Code number.
- It is the responsibility of the applicant to continue to check the Kentucky Department of Education Competitive Grants website for any changes or updates in the RFA document.
- KDE reserves the right to waive minor technical deficiencies.
- Plagiarism is prohibited. The use of AI to generate application content will also be considered plagiarism.

Solicitation Schedule

Date	Event	Location	Participation
January 23, 2024	RFA released	Online	N/A
February 1, 2024	Pre-recorded Technical assistance webinar	Online	Recommended.
February 6, 2024	Questions deadline	Email	N/A
On or Around February 9, 2024	FAQ post	KDE competitive grants page	N/A
*March 22, 2024 *Please do not submit before March 20, 2024	Application deadline	Send to KDE	Required
April 2024	Application review	Frankfort	N/A
On or around April 24, 2024	Awardees are posted to the KDE website	Online	N/A
April/May 2024	MOA process	N/A	
On or around July 1, 2024	Funding available	N/A	

Announcement

In partnership with the Governor’s Office of Early Childhood (GOEC), the Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) is pleased to announce a funding opportunity designed to incentivize cooperative public/private partnerships between public school districts and childcare providers to develop full-day, year-round, high-quality programs for at-risk children. The incentive grant program represents an opportunity for school districts and childcare providers to improve the quality of services in their communities.

Background and Purpose

The Preschool Quality Partnership Grant (PQP) is designed to support full-day, year-round, high-quality early childhood services for 3- and 4-year-old preschool children. The goal is to expand access to or enhance the quality of existing programs to meet the unique and unmet needs of children and families in communities across the state. Funding for this initiative is made possible by the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5), a federal grant designed to improve state early childhood systems.

The KDE is issuing a Request for Application (RFA) for school districts to partner with childcare programs to provide full-day, year-round, high-quality programs to serve 3- and 4-year-old preschool children.

KDE expects school districts will accomplish this goal in partnership with a licensed childcare provider or providers. Head Start may serve as the childcare partner if **the district does not duplicate services defined by existing full utilization agreements and does not supplant federal Head Start funding.**

Partnerships will be **expected to increase the availability of full-day, year-round, high-quality preschool services in their communities.** A summary of activities completed for the grant will be expected from each grantee school district to include, but not be limited to, the following: number of additional hours/days scheduled, number of additional at-risk preschool students served, improvements in quality as defined by Kentucky All STARS and training participation rates, meaningful impacts on child development and student achievement and amount of services targeting early mathematics and early literacy skill development.

Funding

The purpose of these funds is **to increase the number of preschool children served in full-day, year-round, high-quality early childhood environments.** Fifteen (15) grantees may be funded up to \$300,000 for the eighteen-month grant period. The number of grantees and funding amounts may vary depending on the number and quality of applications received. As a result, some applicants may not receive the full amount requested. The award range for the implementation grant is up to \$300,000 for the eighteen-month grant period. The eighteen-month grant period is contingent upon the availability of federal Preschool Development Grant Birth to Five (PDG B-5) funding and the demonstration of adequate progress made toward partnership implementation.

Funding will be provided on a quarterly reimbursement basis only. No funds may be expended, or project activities may begin until a fully executed contract is approved by fully executed contract approved by the Finance and Administration Cabinet. Grant funds must be expended or encumbered by December 30, 2025.

Key Terms and Definitions

Program supplantation: Using grant funds to replace funding already set aside for a program currently in place.

Program supplementing: Funds may enhance a program depending on the connection to grant goals and objectives, alignment with academic standards, and if services and activities provided by the program address the needs of students identified to be served in the application.

Full-Day, Year-Round, High-Quality Program: For the purposes of this grant, a “full-day” program is defined as an early childhood program providing a minimum of six hours of operation, four or five days per week. “Year-round” means operating for the full year that the co-applicant is open. “High-quality” means a STARS level three rating or higher in Kentucky All STARS, the state’s five-star quality rating and improvement system for early care and education

programs. Kentucky All STARS is based on Kentucky's Early Childhood Standards and *Child Care Program*: Programs include:

- Licensed Type I Child Care Facility - provides childcare services for four or more children in a non-residential setting, or 13 or more children in a residential setting.
- Licensed Type II Child Care Facility – refers to the primary residence where childcare is regularly provided for at least seven, but not more than 12 children including related children.
- Certified Family Child Care Home – is a person who cares for a child in their own home; and does not exceed six unrelated children at any one time; or four related children in addition to six unrelated children for a maximum of 10 children at any one time.

More information about licensed childcare is available at: <https://chfs.ky.gov>.

Head Start Program: Head Start promotes the school readiness of young children from low-income families through agencies in their local community. In addition to education services, programs provide children and their families with health, nutrition, social and other services. Three- and four-year-olds made up over 80 percent of children served by Head Start last year. More information about Kentucky Head Start programs is available at:

<https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/programs/kentucky-head-start-collaboration-office>.

Kentucky State-Funded Preschool Program: The Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA) of 1990 established a preschool education program to give children at risk of failing in school an early opportunity to become successful in school and life. The state-funded preschool program is available to all four-year-old children whose family income is no more than 160% of poverty, and three- and four-year-old children with disabilities. Income eligible children must reach the age of four on or before August 1 of the current school year. Program components focus on developmentally appropriate preschool experiences for young children in all areas of child development: cognition, communication, creative expression, physical, social, and emotional development. Since parents are their child's first and most important teacher, the state-funded program includes parent involvement activities to strengthen home/school relationships. More information about state-funded preschool is available at:

<https://education.ky.gov/curriculum/conpro/prim-pre/Pages/default.aspx>.

Developmentally appropriate practice: This means *teaching and learning opportunities* are focused on the physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development of young children. Decisions about developmentally appropriate practice should be based upon three core considerations: (1) knowledge of child development and learning; (2) knowledge of what is individually appropriate for young children; and, (3) knowledge of what is culturally important (National Association for the Education of Young Children, available [here](#)).

Early Literacy: This means *early literacy* activities that are evidence-based and integrated with all domains of learning. Research indicates the following skills and abilities of young children are predictive of future reading outcomes: oral language (listening comprehension, oral language vocabulary), alphabetic code (alphabet knowledge, phonological/phonemic awareness) and print knowledge/concepts (environmental print, concepts about print) (National Institute of Early Education Research, available [here](#)).

Early Mathematics: This means *early mathematics* activities that are evidence-based and integrated with all domains of learning. Young children need opportunities to explore mathematical concepts in everyday settings, as well as demonstrate understanding of counting and cardinality, ability to identify and use shapes and concepts about position, ability to use the attributes of objects for comparison and patterning, and ability to describe and compare measurable attributes of objects. (Development and Research in Early Mathematics Education, available [here](#)).

Evidence-based: [Evidence-based](#) means an activity, strategy, or intervention that –

- Demonstrates a statistically significant effect on improving student outcomes or other relevant outcomes based on –
 - Strong evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented experimental study;
 - Moderate evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented quasi-experimental study;
 - Promising evidence from at least one well-designed and well-implemented correlational study with statistical controls for selection bias; or
 - Demonstrates a rationale based on high-quality research findings or positive evaluation that such activity, strategy or intervention is likely to improve student outcomes or other relevant outcomes; and
 - Includes ongoing efforts to examine the effects of such activity, strategy, or intervention.

Professional development: [Professional development](#) means professional learning that aligns with standards and goals, focuses on content and pedagogy, occurs collaboratively, is facilitated by early educators, focuses on continuous improvement and is on-going.

Student progress measures: This means *student progress* should be assessed with measures that are valid, reliable, evidence-based, and developmentally appropriate. Appropriate assessments include formal (diagnostic, classroom/instructional) and informal (natural observations, student portfolios, parent, and teacher input/feedback) measures and methods.

Requirements

1. An applicant is defined as one or more Kentucky school districts providing state-funded preschool services. The applicant will serve as the grant’s fiscal agent for the purpose of receiving and directing partnership funds in support of implementing or enhancing full-day, high-quality early childhood services to 3- and 4-year-old preschool children.
2. A co-applicant is defined as one or more childcare partners responsible for working collaboratively with the applicant to implement or enhance full-day, high-quality early childhood services. Co-applicants must include licensed Type I provider(s) or Type II childcare provider(s) or certified home childcare providers. ***Applicants not identifying co-applicants on the cover sheet will be deemed non-responsive and will not move forward in the application process.***

3. Preschool children are defined as three- or four-year-old children residing in the school district. Three- and four-year-old children with disabilities and income eligible four-year-old children also may be enrolled in the state-funded preschool program.
4. Full-day services are defined as a minimum of six hours of operation, four or five days per week. Applicants are encouraged to base comprehensive services and hours of operation on community needs.
5. High-quality programs are defined by a level three (3) rating or higher in the Kentucky All STARS system.
6. Head Start may serve as a co-applicant but **partnerships must avoid duplication of full utilization agreements and must not supplant federal Head Start funding.**
7. Applicants must use funds to implement a full-day, year-round, high-quality early childhood program to serve 3- and 4-year-old preschool children.
8. Applicants must report student information using Infinite Campus while adhering to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).
9. Applicants must use developmentally appropriate instructional programs with an emphasis on research-based early mathematics and early literacy skill development.
10. Applicants must describe family engagement activities, including support for parent-child literacy and mathematics activities.
11. Applicants must demonstrate collaboration and coordination with co-applicants, as well as collaboration and coordination with existing early childhood programs and services including Head Start.
12. Co-applicants must achieve at least a rating of three (3) STARS under the Kentucky All STARS system.
13. Funds from this grant cannot be used to replace regular preschool or childcare services.
14. Applicants must submit a final report each year identifying student level outcomes, collaboration activities and professional development activities. Payments may be contingent upon receipt of these reports.
15. Applicants must use a portion of funds on high-quality professional development to support district and childcare staff.
16. Applicants must use a portion of funds to evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership grant.

Application Narrative

Part 1: Need

- Details compelling need to collaborate with childcare partners to deliver a full-day, year-round, high-quality early childhood program to serve 3- and 4-year-old preschool children.
- Provide analysis of community early childhood needs using multiple sources of data, including, but not limited to, the 2023 Early Childhood profile, district kindergarten entry screener results (Brigance), KIDS COUNT data, free and reduced lunch eligibility data, and school report card information.
- Provide a clear link between identified needs and expected outcomes.

Part 2: Program Quality

- Demonstrate ability to implement or enhance full-day, year-round, high-quality early childhood program services for 3- and 4-year-old preschool children, including definition of partnership roles and responsibilities.

- Identify 3 strategies for jointly recruiting and screening 3- and 4-year-old preschool children to be served by childcare and state-funded preschool programs.
- Identifies developmentally appropriate curriculum, early mathematics and early literacy activities, and practices for children in preschool classrooms and childcare settings.
- Identifies 3 outcomes for student progress and ways to measure progress towards meeting outcome goals, including early mathematics and early literacy goals, which may include the Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) program.
- Describes steps for collecting, managing, and reporting preschool quality partnership student information in Infinite Campus.
- Describes family engagement activities, including support for parent-child literacy and mathematics activities.
- Describes how staff training needs will be identified and how training will be provided to district and childcare staff.
- Includes plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the partnership grant for three-year period, including evidence and data to demonstrate partnership success

Part 3: Collaboration

- Describes joint planning with key partners in the development of the application proposal.
- Describes collaboration with childcare, Head Start, Regional Collaboratives and other early childhood stakeholders in carrying out the application proposal.
- Includes plan for district and childcare partners to meet regularly to review success of partnership and child outcomes.
- Provides strategies for continuing to implement collaborative services successfully and sustaining partnership services beyond the three-year grant period.

Part 4: Budget

- Demonstrates clear connection between activities to develop program services and expenses.
- Reflects reasonable costs associated with implementing program services.
- Identifies sufficient resources necessary to implement grant activities and sustain services beyond the grant period, including identification of non-grant funds (i.e., matching funds).
- Includes a minimum set aside of \$5,000 for professional development in early mathematics and/or early literacy for preschool and childcare staff.
- Includes a \$1,500 set aside to participate in a state evaluation of the preschool quality partnership grant program.
- Includes a detailed budget form that itemizes specific uses of funds

Allowable Activities and Expenses

Programs must use funds to support full-day, year-round, high-quality early learning services for the benefit of 3- and 4-year-old preschool children. Funds may be used to:

- Supplement childcare teacher salaries;
- Provide or supplement salaries to extend program hours or open new classrooms;
- Travel and participate in regional, state, or national early childhood training or meetings for the purpose of improving early childhood quality;

- Purchase supplies related to trainings and/or meetings (e.g., paper, writing utensils);
- Conduct marketing and recruitment activities.

Unallowable Activities and Expenses

Funds may not be used for the following:

- Capital construction projects;
- Rent or lease of building space;
- Playground equipment;
- Technology (e.g., computers, tablets, audio/visual equipment);
- Food or refreshments;
- Fees for grant writers;
- Funds to promote school or child care providers;
- Gifts, rewards or prizes;
- Entertainment or social activities.

Application Components

- 1) Application Cover Page
- 2) Additional Childcare Participation Page (if serving more than 1 childcare center)
- 3) Table of Contents (no more than one page, created by applicant)
- 4) Narrative
- 5) Itemized Budget Form(s) with a Budget Narrative (not included in the 15-page narrative limit, but the two budget documents must not exceed 5 pages)
- 6) Certifications regarding lobbying, debarment, suspension, and other responsibility matters; and drug-free workplace requirements.

Formatting Requirements

- 1) Text **MUST** be in Arial font (do not use a condensed or narrow version) 12 point and double-spaced.
- 2) Texts within charts and graphs may be 10-point and single-spaced.
- 3) Bullets may be single-spaced and should be 12 point.
- 4) All margins for the narrative section should be 1 inch (top, bottom, and sides).
- 5) Pages **MUST** be numbered consecutively with the Narrative beginning on page one. (Do not number the application cover page or the table of contents.)
- 6) Application Narrative may not exceed 15 double-spaced pages (Itemized budget with budget narrative is not included in the 15 pages.)

Submission of Proposal

Application must be received in the KDERFP email inbox no later than **4:00 p.m. ET, March 22, 2024**. Applications received after this time and date stamp will not be reviewed or considered for award.

1. Scan the completed application in its entirety, including all signatures, to PDF format. Save the original application as **24PQP District Name** (For example, Franklin County would save the original application as 24PQP Franklin.)

2. Scan a redacted copy to submit with your application. **The redacted copy MUST not contain any identifying information** including RTC name, district name, school name, county name, and city name. Save the redacted application as **24PQP District Name B** (For example, 24PQP Franklin B)
3. To submit applications:
 - On the subject line of the email, type **24PQP District Name Application**
 - Email to KDERFP@education.ky.gov.
 - **The date/time on the received email must be on or before 4:00 p.m. ET on March 22, 2024.**
 - Keep in mind that email coming into KDE is routed for security purposes through multiple networks and servers. Allow ample time for this and the possibility that email is not always sent or received on the first try.
 - Applications not received by the deadline will not be reviewed or considered for award.
 - Applications will be scored as received, so please ensure they are complete before emailing.
 - Confirmation of Receipt requests should be made in the submission email. Please note that KDE does not open attachments to confirm correctness.
 - Please do not CC others on application submissions.
 - Do not submit Google Docs or documents from Google Drive.
 - Each PDF attachment **MUST** be less than 10,000 KB (or 10 MB) in size. Please work with your technology staff to ensure the correct file size. Files that are above the size limit will not be reviewed or eligible for an award.

Redacting Instructions

Redacting/Blinding is the removal of identifying information from an application. Identifying information is **RTC name, district name, school name, county name, and city name**. Names of Individuals and Signatures should NOT be blinded/redacted.

Redacted copies should be completely redacted electronically using Black highlighting or X'd out - using the find and replace or replace feature - ex: XXX.

Please review the redacted copy before submitting it to ensure all identifying information is redacted and all required pages and attachments are attached and redacted properly.

Evaluation of Proposals

A committee consisting of persons knowledgeable in kindergarten readiness, gap closure, and student development will review applications according to the scoring criteria outlined in this request for application. The evaluation process shall be completed under the direction of the KDE procurement branch.

Scoring Rubric

PART 1: NEED	15 Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes compelling need to collaborate with childcare partners to deliver a full-day, year-round, high-quality early childhood program to serve 3- and 4-year-old preschool children. • Provides analysis of community early childhood needs using multiple sources of data, including, but not limited to, the 2023 Early Childhood profile, district kindergarten entry screener results (Brigance), KIDS COUNT data, free and reduced lunch eligibility data, and school report card information. • Provides a clear link between identified needs and expected outcomes. 	
PART 2: PROGRAM QUALITY	40 Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates ability to implement or enhance full-day, year-round, high-quality early childhood program services for 3- and 4-year-old preschool children, including definition of partnership roles and responsibilities. • Identifies 3 strategies for jointly recruiting and screening 3- and 4-year-old preschool children to be served by childcare and state-funded preschool programs. • Identifies developmentally appropriate curriculum, early mathematics, and early literacy activities, and practices for children in preschool classrooms and childcare settings. • Identifies 3 outcomes for student progress and ways to measure progress towards meeting outcome goals, including early mathematics and early literacy goals, which may include the Language Essentials for Teachers of Reading and Spelling (LETRS) program. • Describes steps for collecting, managing, and reporting preschool quality partnership student information in Infinite Campus. • Describes family engagement activities, including support for parent-child literacy and mathematics activities. • Describes how staff training needs will be identified and how training will be provided to district and childcare staff. • Includes plan for evaluating the effectiveness of the partnership grant for three-year period, including evidence and data to demonstrate partnership success. 	

PART 3: COLLABORATION	20 Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describes joint planning with key partners in the development of the application proposal. • Describes collaboration with childcare, Head Start, Regional Collaboratives and other early childhood stakeholders in carrying out the application proposal. • Includes plan for district and childcare partners to meet regularly to review success of partnership and child outcomes. • Provides strategies for continuing to implement collaborative services successfully and sustaining partnership services beyond the three-year grant period. 	
PART 4: BUDGET	30 Points
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates clear connection between activities to develop program services and expenses. • Reflects reasonable costs associated with implementing program services. • Identifies sufficient resources necessary to implement grant activities and sustain services beyond the grant period, including identification of non-grant funds (i.e., matching funds). • Includes a minimum set aside of \$5,000 for professional development in early mathematics and/or early literacy for preschool and childcare staff. • Includes a \$1,500 set aside to participate in a state evaluation of the preschool quality partnership grant program. • Includes a detailed budget form that itemizes specific uses of funds. 	
TOTAL POINTS	105 Points

Appendix of Forms

- Application Cover Page
- Additional Childcare Participation Page (if serving more than 1 childcare center)
- Budget Form(attachment)
- Certifications regarding lobbying, debarment, suspension, and other responsibility matters; and drug-free workplace requirements.

FY24 PQP Application Cover Page

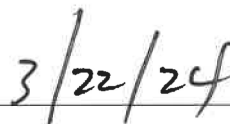
Applicant/District/ Fiscal Agent:	Franklin Elementary Simpson County School District J’Nora Anderson-Principal	
District Address:	211 S Main St., Franklin, KY 42134	
Superintendent Name	Tim Schlosser	Email: tim.schlosser@simpson.kyschools.us Phone: 270-586-8877
Co-Applicant/ Childcare Provider #1	Simpson County HeadStart	
Childcare Director #1	Samantha Vysa	Email:svysa@casoky.org Phone: 270-586-7716
Grant Contact	J’Nora Anderson	Email: j’nora.anderson@simpson.kyschools.us Phone: 270-586-3241
Fiscal Agent Finance Office	Amanda Spears	Email: amanda.spears@simpson.kyschools.us Phone: 270-586-8877

Fiscal Agent UI #: UCLG5HS69GNT1 **Fiscal Agent SAM CAGE Code#:**

I swear under oath, subject to penalty for perjury, that I am authorized to execute this document and assure that the attached application has been reviewed and approved for implementation by all stakeholders and the district will comply with all requirements, both technical and programmatic, pertaining to the Preschool Quality Partnership grant. I acknowledge that failure to comply may significantly impact future funding, in addition to any applicable penalties under law.



Superintendent



Date

Janet J. Vignone
Child Care Director #1

03-22-2024
Date

Jane Ross 59301
Notary Public

10-15-26
My commission expires on

Part 1: NEED

District and Partner Descriptions and Need Statement

Simpson County School District is seeking funding to support a partnership agreement with **“Simpson County Head Start”** to increase availability of full-day, high-quality early childhood program services for students classified as low income, foster, and/or homeless eligible preschool children. **“Simpson County Head Start”** will house 2 federally-funded preschool classrooms in the 2024-2025 school year in the Franklin Elementary School building. Children will be served within this particular preschool classroom from 8:15am-4:30pm for four days a week (Monday-Thursday). This program is rated as a Level 4 on the Kentucky ALL STARS scale. **“Simpson County Head Start”**, our district’s partner, is a Head Start Child Care program located in Franklin, KY. The program is licensed for 34 children and operates 4 full days a week on a year-round school schedule. Staff members do work on Fridays planning instruction for the following 4-day week. **“Simpson County Head Start”** serves preschool children who qualify based on federal guidelines set out by the US Office of Head Start. Head Start is a local community service who supports families and preschool age students that will be entering school within the next 1-2 years. This partnership provides an opportunity to reach a high-need, at-risk population of children. Head Start teams with community partners to provide human services with dignity and respect, empowering people in Southern Kentucky to achieve stability and economic security. They are a non-profit organization funded by federal, state, and local government funding, private contributions, and user fees.

Data Analysis

Significant needs continue to illuminate from our yearly Preschool and Kindergarten Data. Nearly 70% of students qualify for free/reduced lunch assistance and nearly 20% are identified as students with disabilities. Brigance III Screener, Kentucky’s Kindergarten Readiness target, reports that 49% of children arrived at kindergarten in August 2023 without the necessary skills needed to be successful and in 2022 the number was 55%. The subdomain scores (**Figure 1**) show a trend over the last 4 years, which do not include the undetermined overall impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on kindergarten readiness.

(Note: Simpson County has two private daycares/preschools that each have one three-year-old room and one four-year-old room with no more than 20 kids in each room. Those students who attend the private preschool setting are represented in the numbers below.)

Brigance Screen III Trend Percentage Scoring Below Average (Figure 1)

Domain	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023	2023-2024
Academic Cognitive	56.5%	62.2%	79.1%	76.1%	69%	
Language Development	12.1%	18.9%	28.9%	22.2%	21%	
Self-Help	55.6%	39.0%	54.9%	42.3%	52%	
Social Emotional	14.7%	21.2%	24.9%	18.0%	23%	
Physical Development	50.9%	50.9%	77.4%	65.7%	67%	

The Kentucky School Report Card data (21-22/22-23) indicates a continued need to increase proficiency for students in grades 3-5 as noted in **Figure 2**. We know that reading foundational skills and number sense development begin in the early childhood years. The lack of improvement with students obtaining proficiency in the 3rd-5th grade years could in essence be linked to the below average data highlighted in **Figure 1**.

2021-2022 KSA Proficiency Percentages- Simpson County Schools (Figure 2)

Grade	Reading	Math
3	55%	47%
4	56%	49%
5	49%	39%

2022-2023 KSA Proficiency Percentages- Simpson County Schools

Grade	Reading	Math
3	54%	55%
4	59%	49%
5	45%	45%

Another barrier is the poverty rate for Simpson County Schools. We have 69.7% of students who are eligible for free and reduced lunch. These challenges, combined with the large numbers we need to serve as indicated by the Simpson County Profile in

Figures 4-6, cause us to seek financial support to increase the amount of time our students spend in a high-quality learning environment each week.

2021-22 Early Childhood Profile Data for Simpson County (Figure 4)

Demographic	Total Number
Number of 3 and 4 year olds	506
Number of 3 and 4 year olds served by Preschool	110
Number of 3 and 4 year olds served by Head Start	34
Number of children receiving Child Care Assistance (CCAP)	77
Number of 3 and 4 year olds not in state/federally funded program	124

2021-22 State or Federally Funded Early Care and Education Programs (Figure 5)

Demographic	Preschool	Head Start	Total Number
Total Number	110	34	144
At-risk 4 year olds and or below 160% poverty level	39	17	56
3 and 4 year olds with disabilities	59	5	64
3 and 4 year olds over income or other	12	10	22

2021-22 Early Childhood Kindergarten Readiness Brigance, Figure 6

Program	Number of Students	Number Tested	% Not Ready	% Kindergarten Ready
Total Number	238	230	63%	37%
State Funded	59	59	78%	22%
Head Start	14	14	35.7%	64.3%
Child Care	43	43	34.9%	65.1%
Home	103	103	75.7%	24.3%
Other	19	19	47.4%	52.6%
Unknown	10			
State				

*Counts are suppressed to protect student identification required by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

From looking at the data in Figures 4-6, one can see that there is a significant number of three and four-year-olds who are not necessarily being served within an accredited preschool classroom. As noted before, we do have two private preschools in the county who serve approximately 30-40 preschool aged students, but they do not accept CCAP eligible students. We still have many who are either at daycare facilities or at home with their guardians. Out of 230 students who were assessed, we had 37% who qualified as "Kindergarten Ready" according to the Brigance III Screener. In particular, for the preschool aged students who are identified as being at "home", there were only 24% of those students who qualified as being kindergarten ready. These data call out the need for a partnership between the school district and community childcare partners such as Simpson County Head Start. Creating a partnership between the Simpson County School District and "***Simpson County Head Start***" will provide a coherent, community-wide early childhood system to address the needs of children who are considered our most vulnerable population. Being that Head Start is an accredited childcare system, having this partnership will provide access for students to receive high quality instruction through the use of evidence-based practices and resources. This partnership will support the early literacy, early numeracy, and social emotional development of ALL students and the recruitment of more children to participate in an early childhood program through parent education and community outreach.

Research and Linkage between Needs and Outcomes

The following research clearly links these needs to action and positive outcomes for our community. An increasing number of studies show that a quality preschool is associated with multiple benefits to students, schools, and society at large. One obvious benefit of Early Childhood Education (ECE) is enhanced academic achievement, evidenced in higher test scores, graduation rates, retention rates, and college attendance. Studies have also shown that when children go on to kindergarten and progress through secondary school, those with ECE are less likely to repeat grades and do not need special education assistance. Children who have had experience in early childhood education also commit fewer crimes over their lifetime than children in the same socioeconomic circumstances who have not had ECE. Over the long term, further gains from ECE are realized on local, state, and national levels, as the children enter the workforce themselves. They earn higher salaries and contribute larger income and sales tax payments (Economic Benefits of Quality Universal Preschool, 2014, UC Economic Center).

Additionally, the partnership agreement will provide professional learning experiences focused on literacy, numeracy, and social emotional well-being for district and childcare staff and families of children. This human capacity building effort is based on research from a large body of instructional strategies demanding literacy and inquiry across the content areas that span from preschool to third grade domains (NICHHD, 200; NELP, 2010). In response to the need described in this section, the Simpson County School District and "***Simpson County Head Start***" proposes the Early Care and Education Partnership Goals and Activities described in the next section- a scalable and replicable program to address the significant needs of at-risk children.

PART 2: PROGRAM QUALITY

Partnership Roles and Responsibilities, Goals and Management Plan

Simpson County Schools will enter into an agreement with **“Simpson County Head Start”** to provide a coherent community wide early childhood system to address the needs of our children who are considered our most vulnerable population.

“Simpson County Head Start” will accept eligible children into their program and work with them on developing skills for kindergarten readiness. Simpson County School District will provide resource, human, and financial support to increase the quality of services received through the Head Start program classrooms by:

- Collaborating to recruit and provide full-day services for all eligible children,
- Partnering with community partners to provide services to reduce barriers to learning,
- Providing intervention to students identified by district screeners in both settings,
- Supporting social and emotional development for all children enrolled in the program,
- Supporting early literacy and early numeracy development for all children enrolled in the program by using high-quality, evidence-based instructional resources and practices
- Providing professional learning for staff emphasizing literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional learning, and
- Engaging parents through community outreach and learning strategy experiences anchored in evidence based research in literacy, numeracy, and social emotional learning through the collaboration with Literacy Regional Collaborative Team.

The Brigance Early Screen III will be utilized to track eligible students progress. Children who are at least four-years-old on or before August 1, and attend Head Start will be screened using the Brigance as a baseline measure. This will make it easier for tracking purposes, as the Simpson County Preschool is already using this beginning of the year screening measure. Students will be screened again at the end of the academic year to determine progress made. Expected outcomes include demonstrating gains across all developmental areas.

Goals and Management Plan

Goal 1: Early Literacy/Early Numeracy/ Social-Emotional Support: *The Simpson County School District and “Simpson County Head Start” will collaborate to provide full-time support in the areas of early literacy, early numeracy, and social-emotional development to ALL students, with a timeline goal for completion by December 30, 2025, unless noted, by the following milestones and deliverables:*

- I. Employ 2.0 Early Childhood Instructional Assistants to provide services to children and families by...
 - A. Working with an interdisciplinary team (medical professionals, occupational/physical therapists, psychologists, etc.) to perform comprehensive evaluations to determine how students will benefit from early intervention services.

- B. Providing consultation services such as home visits to parents/guardians or discussions with other professionals, such as psychologists or doctors regarding the care and treatment of children.
- C. Collaborating and providing support to Head Start teachers and program members regarding issues such as infant and toddler development or family needs
- D. Assisting with behavioral, mental, emotional, or physical problems
- E. Assisting with early literacy and early numeracy implementation
- F. Assisting with arrangement for needed child and/or family services, and
- G. Helping integrate disabled students into the general school population (Timeline, employed upon grant notification)

Goal 2: Increase Quality: *The Preschool Partnership will collaborate to increase high quality early childhood educational environments for all children, with a timeline goal for completion by December 30, 2025, unless noted otherwise, as measured by the following milestones and deliverables:*

- I. Provide evidence-based curricular resources and strategies to be utilized in the Head Start classroom
 - A. Increase childcare STAR rating as determined by Kentucky All STARS, a five-star quality rating and improvement systems (currently level 4)
 - B. Increase kindergarten readiness scores as measured by both the KY standardized screener/assessment and Teaching Strategies Gold, continuous monitoring tool to establish baseline and progress monitor growth toward kindergarten readiness.
 - C. Conduct a data review to identify measurable goals for improvement for the preschool classrooms

Goal 3: Recruitment, Screening and Enrollment of Eligible Children: *Simpson County Schools, “Simpson County Head Start”, the RTC, the CECC, and other stakeholders will collaborate to utilize strategies to increase early childhood education, with a timeline goal for completion by December 30, 2025, unless noted, as measured by the following milestones and deliverables:*

- I. Collaborate monthly with “**Simpson County Head Start**” and Simpson County Preschool Coordinator to locate eligible students. (Timeline, upon grant notification)
- II. Collaborate a minimum of once monthly with community partners regarding the availability of full-day available slots for Head Start and Preschool. (Timeline, upon grant notification)
- III. Collaborate with partners to screen potential eligible students to receive intervention
- IV. Assist with paperwork, doctor’s visits, eye exams, etc. to eliminate barriers to enrolling children in childcare or preschool.
- V. Provide Early Childhood Education information while at scheduled school readiness community events, and take books and learning strategies to the community.

- VI. Collaborate with the Literacy Regional Collaborative to implement Early Childhood Education activities throughout the community to increase kindergarten readiness and parental involvement.

Goal 4: High-Quality Professional Learning: *The Preschool Partnership will provide personalized training, coaching, and resources to increase high quality early childhood experiences for all children with a timeline for completion by December 30, 2025, unless noted, as measured by the following milestones and deliverables:*

- I. Conduct a needs assessment of all staff in **“Simpson County Head Start”** and Simpson County Preschool to plan and provide professional development experiences and networking for teachers and administrators resulting in sustained learning for childcare staff through professional learning activities. These activities will emphasize literacy and numeracy concepts, social-emotional learning, and lesson development.
- II. Provide a variety of research-based early literacy and early numeracy to **“Simpson County Head Start”** (Timeline, upon grant notification)
- III. Implement common developmentally appropriate curriculum, Amplify Literacy Curriculum, Go Math Numeracy Curriculum, Creative Curriculum & 2nd Step Social Emotional Curriculum, with children in both **“Simpson County Head Start”** and Simpson County Preschool, providing an evidence-based framework for lesson/unit planning for the teachers.

Goal 5: Family Engagement: *The partnership will increase families active engagement in their children’s education, with a timeline goal for completion by December 30, 2025, unless noted, as measured by the following milestones and deliverables:*

- I. Provide family education events focused on literacy, numeracy, and social-emotional development (a minimum of three times per year) to increase family-child interactions through modeling early childhood educational experiences for young children with families to create a sustainable connection between home and school.
- II. Develop and communicate common messaging to all families regarding child development and brain research, early childhood learning standards and benchmarks, kindergarten readiness, and the importance of early childhood intervention.
- III. Share resources and early childhood learning strategies with families by setting up a booth in places where families are already naturally present such as, but not limited to, FRYSC events, the library, community events, organizational events, and school activities. (Timeline, upon grant notification)

Preschool Partnership Information in Infinite Campus

All partners will implement a plan to collect, manage and report preschool partnership information in Infinite Campus. A form will be included in each child’s registration packet to gather information required to enter necessary data. Information will be collected, managed, and reported as a joint effort of the partnership program as the ECE Coordinator’s role. This data will be shared with the RTC, Board of Education, **“Simpson County Head Start”** administrators, and community partners during each regular reporting cycle.