

**Strong Beginnings Three-Year-Old Preschool Pilot Program RFP
Question and Answer Document**

	Question	Answer
1	So child care providers can't apply directly?	That is correct. Child care providers cannot apply directly. They need to contact the Early Childhood Contact at their county ISD to find out about partnering with them. Intermediate School Districts are the only eligible entities that may apply.
2	Will there be opportunities for training program providers? We provide training for teachers, CDA's in early childhood, and we're interested in being a vendor to provide training, is this possible?	There are no opportunities for training program vendors to apply for this grant. If a successful ISD decides to purchase training from your company, that would just be up to them.
3	Will you allow any over-income slots?	We expect programs to fill up with children below 250% poverty. In exceptional cases, we have allowed programs to enroll one or two over-income children, but this is not standard practice.
4	Can an ECS serve as a Family Liaison?	An ECS can serve as a Family Liaison, given there is capacity in their schedule and the ECS meets the Family Liaison requirements. We have found it unusual to find ECSs who have deep expertise in both classroom practice and family support. Should an ISD wish to have the same individual serve as an ECS and a Family Liaison, approval from CCRESA will be required/
5	In the rubric, it lists offering 5 opportunities for family engagement, could it be through the GSC offered monthly by the Family Liaison?	The family engagement needs to be offered by the center itself. It doesn't have to be for one specific classroom at the center, but it needs to be center-sponsored/held in that

		<p>program. It cannot be something that is offered for the whole or part of a region.</p>
6	<p>How many partners do you elevate in the categories? One? Or one to three?</p>	<p>In each category, an ISD may only have one partner. Each ISD application can only include a maximum of one of each (CBO, HS, LEA) for a total of three. If you are missing one of the three, such as not having a Head Start partner, you cannot add an additional one to any category. In the case of not having a Head Start partner, an ISD would be able to submit two partners maximum.</p>
7	<p>For the rubric, if they are a current GSRP subrecipient and do offer 5 family engagement socializations, would you answer that as 4 pts for that question? Or would you base your answer on what they are currently offering for a tuition-based three-year-old program that they operate?</p>	<p>If a site has different levels of parent engagement for different classrooms, such as those funded by GSRP and tuition, complete the parent engagement component of the rubric for both of those types of classrooms and use the average of the two scores in your computation of the total score. You may round up if the average ends in a .5.</p>
8	<p>Will there be an inclusive option? We know that 26-27 will be one of the special program types you are looking to add. Is 25-26 a possibility to still apply to see how we might be able to look at Strong Beginnings, and how we can make that work for an inclusive option? We have made it work for GSRP, and they don't offer a specific option.</p>	<p>All children in the Strong Beginnings classroom must be able to function well in a classroom of 14 children. All the children's base funding must be from Strong Beginnings, although funds for related service providers who support the children with IEPs must come from Special Education. Careful consideration must be given to the balance of children who are typically developing and those who have IEPs to ensure that everyone benefits from the classroom placement. Staffing for the classroom must also be sufficient to meet every child's needs and must come only from Strong Beginnings funding. No blending or braiding of funds is allowed at this time.</p>

9	<p>What about three-year-olds on a school bus? Do they just need harnesses for them on the bus if we contract with a local school district for transportation?</p>	<p>In Michigan, three-year-old children can be transported on school buses, but with specific safety considerations and regulations. The Michigan Department of Education (MDE) recommends that they be restrained in age-appropriate child safety restraint systems (CSRS). See this document from MDE for additional information.</p>
10	<p>The licensed 3K room that would house the potential Strong Beginnings classroom is located in our licensed child care center, that is operated by our ISD. Does that make us eligible to apply as a CBO site partner, as well?</p>	<p>If the license of a center is held by the ISD, it would be considered in the LEA/PSA/ISD category and not in the CBO category. You could also partner with a CBO (and a Head Start) as well as the ISD licensed partner.</p>
11	<p>How can a CBO afford this with the current funding given? Do you have any examples of a budget for a CBO to get started? When we run the numbers there is no way that a CBO could afford this...unless we are missing something?</p>	<p>We understand that the funding is tight, but it is similar to what is provided for a GSRP classroom of 16 children. We also understand that CBOs generally have additional costs, such as rent, that aren't paid by school districts. Current Strong Beginnings CBOs somehow make it work, although they generally provide less compensation to their teaching staff than school districts.</p>
12	<p>1. Should the rubric be completed with partners based on the current programs they have in their buildings? For example, one site offers a GSRP run by the school and Head Start run by the CBO. Who should the rubric be completed based on? One, both?</p> <p>2. How do we partner with Head Start programs, while solely using Strong Beginnings funds in the classrooms?</p> <p>3. Is it expected that we are to reach out to all licensed partners in our county to offer this?</p>	<p>1. The rubric should be based on the program that will operate the Strong Beginnings classroom in the building. If the ISD plans to sign a contract with and provide funds to the agency that operates Head Start for Strong Beginnings, you should fill out the rubric using their program. If the ISD plans to sign a contract with and provide funds to the school district operating GSRP, you should fill out the rubric using their program.</p> <p>2. Many programs that operate Head Start classrooms also operate GSRP and/or Strong Beginnings classrooms. In the case of Strong Beginnings, the funds are not mixed with Head Start funds, and the Strong Beginnings funds support the</p>

	<p>4. Is a score of 0 an option on the rubric, if they truly don't meet the guidelines?</p>	<p>classroom. It is similar to a CBO that operates some classrooms on tuition and some on GSRP funds. Funding streams must be accounted for separately.</p> <p>3. We expect that every licensed program should have the option of applying to become a Strong Beginnings classroom site. The process used to invite licensed programs should be documented in the application.</p> <p>4. A score of 0 is a definite option. You can indicate for any component of the rubric that the score was zero by not marking any of the existing point columns and adding zero points to the final score.</p>
<p>13</p>	<p>I have a couple questions about inclusion.</p> <p>Will Strong Beginnings use the same process for "inclusive IEPs" as GSRP - selected with lowest income bracket?</p> <p>Is there guidance on how to do selection if there are numerous applications, with IEPs, and comparable other risk factors?</p>	<p>Careful consideration must be given to the balance of children who are typically developing and those who have IEPs to ensure that everyone benefits from the classroom placement. Staffing for the classroom must also be sufficient to meet every child's needs and must come only from Strong Beginnings funding. No blending or braiding of funds is allowed at this time. Strong Beginnings uses the same process of considering children with IEPs in the lowest income quintile (0-50% FPL) and then considering any other eligibility factors that are present. We do not provide specific guidance on selecting children with IEPs who have the same risk factors. We also do not provide guidance on selecting children without IEPs who are in the same income quintile and have the same risk factors when there is insufficient capacity for all to be enrolled in the classroom.</p>

15	The RFP makes a few indirect references to an ECS. Is one required, and what is the role of the ECS in Strong Beginnings?	Yes. You must have an ECS, preferably one who has worked with three-year-old children, as the classrooms have a different dynamic. The role of the ECS is essentially the same as in GSRP, although in Strong Beginnings, the ECS also meets with the teaching staff and Family Liaison to assist them in deciding on the optimal division of roles and responsibilities with families. This and other requirements are included in the Strong Beginnings Implementation Manual, which is linked to the narrative application and here .
16	Given the state of the political landscape there have been weekly and sometimes daily changes to federal contacts. If an ISD is applying with a HS program, what alternative support letter would be acceptable to if the Regional HS Director is unresponsive at this time?	If the regional Head Start Director is unresponsive, there is no alternative option. Please let us know in detail the steps you have taken to get a response and what response, if any, you have received from the regional director.
17	If a company has multiple locations across counties would all of their sites be eligible? If they were selected in multiple rounds would they get to operate both?	Each ISD is allowed to select the CBO it desires to partner with as long as the site scores 75% or above on the rubric. If more than one ISD selects a site from the same parent company, that is not a problem. If more than one ISD who put forth a site from the same parent company is selected during the process, it is possible that the parent company could have multiple sites in multiple counties included in the pilot.
18	Where can I find out which ISDs currently offer Strong Beginnings in case I want to get some information from them about operating the program?	The following ISDs are currently Strong Beginnings partners: Berrien, Calhoun, Charlevoix-Emmet, Eastern Upper Peninsula, Heritage Southwest, Midland, Northwest Educational Services, Oakland School, St. Clair and Wayne.
19	The webinar mentioned a change to the Strong Beginnings model of a program partner having successfully run a GSRP classroom for 2 years. With the removal of this GSRP	We expect ISDs to extend the opportunity to participate as partners to all licensed centers. Only those centers that

	<p>component, are ISDs required to open the Strong Beginnings opportunity up to all licensed centers in our county or can an ISD choose to only offer the opportunity to program partners/sub-recipients (CBOs/LEAs/HS) that the ISD already works with?</p>	<p>receive 75% or more of the points on the rubric, however, will be allowed to be considered as partners.</p>
<p>20</p>	<p>What are the credentials needed for Lead and Associate Teachers? What is the teacher and child ratio?</p>	<p>The qualifications for lead and associate teachers in Strong Beginnings are the same as for GSRP. We allow variances for these positions, but they must be approved by CCRESA Strong Beginnings consultants. The teacher-child ratio is 1:7. Two adults must always be present, regardless of the number of children in attendance. Information and guidance on Strong Beginnings is included in the Strong Beginnings Implementation Manual, which may be found here.</p>