



Collaborating with Community Based Organizations:

Best Practices and the Request for Proposal (RFP) Process

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Key Terms

Community Based Organization (CBO) – agencies in the community that provide prekindergarten instructional services (day care centers, nursery schools, Head Start programs, etc.)

Request for Proposal (RFP) – announcement and process to solicit bids for collaboration between a district and Community Based Organization (CBO) for prekindergarten instructional services

Collaboration – relationship between school districts and Community Based Organizations (CBOs) to provide prekindergarten instructional services

State-Administered Prekindergarten – any prekindergarten program paid for with State or Federal allocations and grants

This Presentation Will Cover...

The 10% Collaboration Requirement

Request for Proposal (RFP) Process

Selection & Establishing Partnerships

Best Practices for Collaboration



The 10% Collaboration Requirement

Education Law – 10% Minimum

Education Law 3602-e(5)(e) states that, “Not less than ten percent of the total grant award to the school district shall be set aside for collaborative efforts with eligible agencies”.

- This is 10% of the district’s total UPK funding (allocations **and** grants), regardless of whether or not the district plans to access all funds.
- If the district will not meet the 10% minimum, a full or partial variance request is submitted with the State-Administered Prekindergarten Application.

What is UPK collaboration?



Collaboration refers to a school district partnering with a Community Based Organization (CBO) to administer prekindergarten instructional services.

- The district contracts with a CBO to deliver prekindergarten instruction. This can take place in a district building or onsite at a CBO.
- The district pays the CBO with State-Administered Prekindergarten funding to deliver these services.

Collaboration Benefits

- Additional space
- Serve more students
- Wraparound care
- Access to additional resources
- Convenience and choice for families



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Request for Proposal (RFP) Process

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Commissioner's Regulations 151-1.6 states that, "...districts shall accept proposals from eligible agencies to collaborate with the district to implement the universal prekindergarten program. The district shall conduct a competitive process to determine with which eligible agencies it will collaborate."

- Districts must issue an RFP to determine which agencies it will partner with for UPK instructional services.
- Simply conducting outreach does not satisfy this requirement.

Request for Proposal (RFP) Process



- How to draft an RFP
- When to issue an RFP
- How to find potential partners
- Where to post/send the RFP

Request for Proposal (RFP) Process

How to Draft an RFP



Outline expectations, requirements and criteria.



Utilize Commissioner's Regulations 151-1.6.



Include a timeline for submission and selection process.



Ask OEL or neighboring school districts for an RFP example.

What Should be Requested by a School District?

A description of the services to be provided.

A description of how the agency proposes to meet the goals and objectives of the district's prekindergarten program.

A description of the agency's staff qualifications, child-staff ratio, and administrative structure.

Request for Proposal (RFP) Process

When to Issue an RFP

- Must be issued if a district is not collaborating at 10%, or if new funding is received.
- Ideally an RFP is issued in January/February.
- This gives potential agencies time to respond thoughtfully.
- Allows the district time to review proposals, visit locations, make selections, and draft contracts prior to prekindergarten registration.



Request for Proposal (RFP) Process

How to Find Partners

Office of
Children and
Family Services
(OCFS) website

Kids' Well-being
Indicators
Clearinghouse
(KWIC) Map

Google search
for private
nursery and
preschools



Office of Children
and Family Services



Request for Proposal (RFP) Process

Where to Post/Send RFP



- Hard copies of the RFP can be mailed directly to agencies
- Email potential agencies to notify them of the RFP
- Newspaper Ads
- Social Media
- District website



Selection and Establishing Partnership

Selection Process



Establish clear selection criteria.



Objectively review and score each proposal.



Include a site visit as part of the selection process.



The decisions should be made public and approved by the Board of Education.

District and CBO Agreement



Determine rate per pupil.



Clearly define financial arrangements.



Outline roles, responsibilities and expectations.



See Commissioners Regulations 151-1 for more ideas on what to include.

Good Cause Reasons to not Collaborate

- No potential prekindergarten providers in district boundaries.
- No providers responded to the RFP and outreach efforts.
- Providers have declined interest in collaborating.
- Providers are unable/unwilling to comply with NYSED requirements.
- New providers with no record of program effectiveness or fiscal solvency.
- Providers' continued failure to meet terms of prior contract.
- Not enough space at provider locations to meet 10% (partial variance).

Full & Partial Collaboration Waivers

Full Waiver

The district will not be collaborating at all.

Partial Waiver

The district is collaborating but will not meet the 10% requirement.

Waivers are now embedded in the State-Administered Prekindergarten Application and must include a copy of the RFP that was issued to solicit potential CBO partners.

Teacher Certification & Waivers

- Teachers at collaborating agencies do not need to be certified.
- If teachers are not certified, the director of the agency should be certified.
- If the director is not certified, they must submit a 5-year plan to achieve appropriate certification to the district.
- If the director is not certified, a District Oversight Plan must also be submitted with the State-Administered Prekindergarten Application.

Teacher Certification (SUFDPK Only)



- Districts with SUFDPK grants should remember the grant pays out at \$10,000 per student with a certified teacher and \$7,000 per student with an uncertified teacher.
- Districts should keep track of this throughout the year to be aware of funding they are eligible to receive.

District Responsibility

- All students enrolled in State-Administered Prekindergarten are district students, regardless of location.
- The district should ensure that students at all locations have access to the same resources and education as students in a district classroom.



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Best Practices for Collaboration

Shared Vision and Goals

- Effective and successful collaborations between school districts and partnering community-based organizations should begin with a common understanding of the shared vision and goals for the prekindergarten program.
- Districts and collaborating partners should be on the same page regarding their vision and goals from the very beginning.



Roles, Responsibilities and Communication



- Roles and responsibilities of district and CBO staff should be clearly defined
- Open and regular communication to discuss curriculum, assessment, student progress, and any challenges that arise
- Weekly/monthly meetings between CBO & district teachers/administration

Whitney Point CSD Example

- The district's UPK coordinator leads weekly meetings with an appointed UPK Chair (district teacher).
- Weekly virtual planning meetings attended by all CBO and district teachers.
- ECERS and CLASS evaluations on each teacher completed by district UPK coordinator.
- Professional development based on these results.
- Peer observations between buildings.



Curriculum Alignment



Curriculum at each site should be aligned to ensure consistent and developmentally appropriate learning experiences.

Curriculum do not need to be the same across each site, but it is recommended.

Google Drive or common location where all teachers can access resources, weekly plans, and theme ideas and materials.

Port Chester-Rye UFSD Example

- The Port Chester-Rye Union Free School District shares 100% of its funding with two private schools inside its district boundaries.
- The same curriculum is utilized and implemented in both locations.
- Within each school, the Prekindergarten teachers have common planning times.
- Teachers are communicating, sharing resources, and planning together regularly.
- There is a cohesiveness that is prioritized and expected by both the district and the private school administrators.

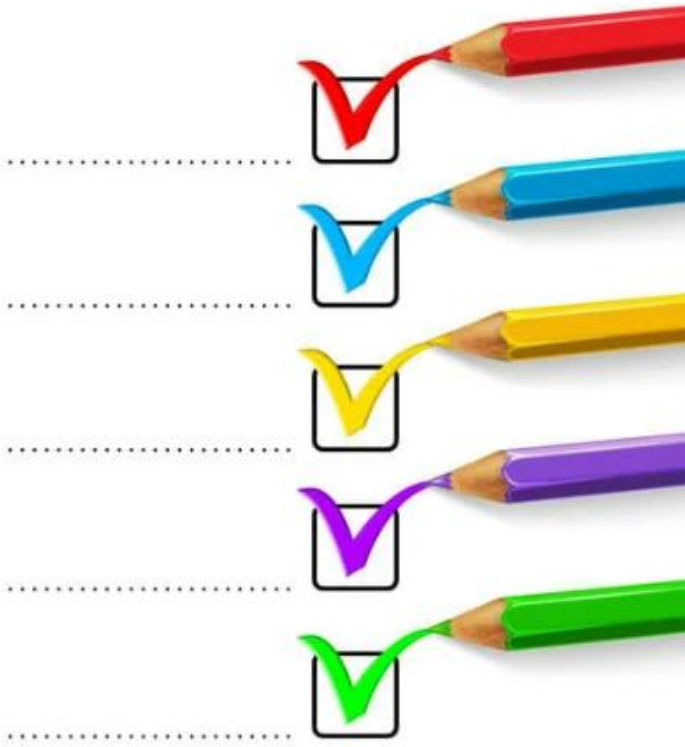


Professional Development

- It is the responsibility of the district to be sure there is quality professional development opportunities for both district and CBO staff.
- Professional learning should be held at various times to allow CBO staff to attend.
- Should be targeted, specific to prekindergarten, and based on the results of student assessment and the instructional needs of students.



District Example



- Instructional coach provides professional development to all staff regardless of setting, at the district's training center.
- PreK checklist that clearly sets the expectations of the PreK program across all classrooms.

Resource Allocation



- Collaboratively and equitably allocate resources to all classrooms, regardless of location.
- Determine who is responsible for supplies, materials, and resources.
- Districts may give CBO programs additional resources or funding outside of the UPK allocation using local funds.

Bay Shore CSD Example

- 100% of UPK funding goes to the CBO.
- The district provides the building space and employs a principal who is on-site 100% of the time and oversees the program.
- The district pays for a librarian, music teacher, STEAM teacher, and cafeteria staff with local funds.



Health & Safety



- Districts are responsible for the health and safety of all prekindergarten students, regardless of location.
- The Office of Early Learning has created the Health and Safety Checklist for districts to use as a tool when conducting site visits of community-based organizations.

Evaluation and Continuous Improvement



- District should continuously evaluate the effectiveness of their partnerships, and make improvements and adjustments as needed.
- RFPs can be reissued annually or every few years as new programs are established in the community.
- Successful collaboration between school districts and CBOs is essential for providing a strong prekindergarten program.

Questions?

*Please save district specific questions
for your OEL liaison.*

Thank you!

Contact Information



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