

\$3000 Request from Mayor's Operating Budget - Early Childhood Support

For the past eleven years, the Stamford School Readiness Council has hosted the Stamford Early Childhood Fair. Prior to last year, the Early Childhood Fair had been funded by the United Way of Western CT. Due to funding cuts, the United Way has stopped providing this support. As a result, the School Readiness Council, is requesting funding to sustain the EC Fair.

The Stamford Early Childhood Fair is vital to our community for many reasons which are detailed below:

- Studies show that students who enter school with a preschool experience demonstrate a positive educational outcome.
- The Fair is an opportunity for Stamford families to learn the long term importance of a positive preschool experience.
- Stamford is allotted 775 funded preschool spaces that are provided to the community by Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County (CLC). CLC is typically full to capacity. There are approximately 1300 children entering kindergarten each year.
- Other than CLC, Stamford has 32 other preschool providers that offer preschool and daycare. Many of these preschools provide tuition assistance through the Care4Kids family subsidy, scholarship and/or direct tuition assistance.
- The Fair provides an opportunity for preschool providers to introduce their program to the Stamford community and give parents a choice in one location.
- Preschool providers are able to provide registration and program information to families in a timely manner and learn about how each school differs from one another.
- Staff from Stamford Public Schools (SPS) is on hand for families to meet and ask questions. SPS staff is able to provide registration, ELL and early childhood programming materials.
- The Fair is a free event that offers children (Ages birth to eight) and their families a chance to enjoy age-appropriate entertainment, games, and hands-on learning activities.
- Another important component, the Fair offers parents an opportunity to learn about community-based organizations and the many health, education, and social service resources available to them throughout the city.

The 2018-19 Stamford Early Childhood Fair was the first held with City of Stamford support. We would not have been able to hold this vital event **without** the generosity of a few community partners who donated the use of their facilities and provided supplies.

Because of this support, we were able to successfully hold the EC Fair during this past winter with nominal support.

The proposed budget is below.

Fair Support Staff <i>(Funding supports staff assistance to translate, create flyers, organize and be on hand to handle overflow)</i>	\$1000
Entertainment & Learning <i>(face painting, story teller, live music and promotional materials)</i>	\$600
Food & Drinks <i>(given away free)</i>	\$200
Decorations and Supplies <i>(tablecloths, balloons, signage)</i>	\$200
Balloon Animals	\$500
Bus Transportation	\$500
TOTAL	\$3,000.00

The other supplies are provided in kind by our generous community partners. The event will again include many, child-centered activities, face painting, and live entertainment.

Thank you for your consideration. This contribution will impact the lives of young children in Stamford.

Please contact me at 203-536-1280 or darcuri@stamfordct.gov if you have any questions.

Best Regards,

Donna Arcuri
Stamford School Readiness Liaison