

Student Support Specialists Attendance, Behavior, Coursework + Parent Engagement Improvement

FY2021 Strategic Partnership Grants

Children First/Communities in Schools of Buncombe County

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Application Form

INSTRUCTIONS

As part of the FY2021 Strategic Partnership Grants program, Buncombe County requests proposals for community-based projects working toward outcomes in alignment with Strategic Plan focus areas.

Please refer to the Grant Guidelines published on the Strategic Partnership Grants website at buncombecounty.org/grants for complete information about the grant program, including: Purpose; Funding; Eligibility; Timeline; Grant writing workshop; Review process; Awards; and more.

Applications are due by 5:00 on February 14, 2020.

BASIC INFORMATION

BASIC INFORMATION – Before completing the application, please tell us a little about the request.

Project Name*

Student Support Specialists Attendance, Behavior, Coursework + Parent Engagement Improvement

Strategy*

Recognizing that some projects will use more than one strategy, select the strategy that most closely applies to this project:

- Environmental Stewardship - High quality air, water, farmland and renewable energy for future generations
- Educated & Capable Community - A county where all people thrive and demonstrate resilience throughout their lives
- Vibrant Economy - A robust and sustainable economy that builds on homegrown industries/talent and provides economic mobility for all
- Resident Well-Being - A county where residents are safe, healthy, and engaged in their community

Educated & Capable Community

Funding Request*

How much funding is this project requesting for FY2021?

\$80,000.00

Grant Guidelines*

Have you read and understand the information presented in the FY2021 Grant Guidelines Strategic Partnership Grants?

Click here for the Grant Guidelines.

If no, please contact County staff to request assistance: Rachael Nygaard, (828) 250-6536 or rachael.nygaard@buncombecounty.org.

Yes

Nonprofit Status*

Upload proof of nonprofit status, such as IRS Determination Letter or documentation from the North Carolina Secretary of State. If this documentation is not available, briefly state the reason.

Children First CIS 501 C3.pdf

Board of Directors*

Upload a current list of your organization's Board of Directors. If your organization does not have a board of directors, briefly state the reason.

CFCIS BOD Full List with Affiliations.pdf

APPLICATION

APPLICATION QUESTIONS – Responses to these questions will be scored by the grant committee. Each question is worth 10% of the final score.

Organization*

Tell us about your organization. What is your mission? Highlight two or three key facts and accomplishments that best define your organization.

Children First/Communities In Schools' (CF/CIS) mission is to empower children and their families to reach their full potential through advocacy, education, and services. As a CIS affiliate, we surround students with a community of support, empowering them to stay in school and achieve in life. CF/CIS exists today as a result of the merger of three organizations: Youth Services Action Group (est. in 1976), Children First (est. in 1992), and Communities In Schools of Asheville (merged with Children First in 2003).

For 40 years, we have made a significant, measurable impact on children and families in our community and developed a reputation for accountable and efficient resource management. Following the national CIS model, we place Student Support Specialists (SSS) in schools serving grades K-6 to support students with improvement goals related to Attendance, Behavior, Coursework and Parent Engagement (ABC+P). We

develop goals for the school as a whole and work individually with select students. Our presence in schools ensures favorable outcomes for students and is key to Buncombe County's goal of developing an educated and capable community.

During the 2018-19 school year, SSS at five local schools served over 2,000 students. Of the students on SSS caseloads, 92% improved attendance and behavior and 95% improved coursework. All students receiving our services were promoted to the next grade. In addition to CIS model implementation, we provide afterschool and summer enrichment for students at Eblen Intermediate and within the Deaverview, Pisgah View, and Woodridge communities.

CF/CIS also engages in advocacy around family-friendly policies and provides direct services to families through our Family Resource Centers at Emma and Estes Elementary. These Centers provide food boxes, clothing, school supplies, emergency financial assistance, help with SNAP applications, and referral and linkage to other programs and services.

Need for the Project*

What is the main issue this project is established to address? What data or qualitative factors/stories are available to show that need?

CF/CIS addresses the challenges to academic achievement that children from low-income households experience, including food insecurity, transportation barriers, and lack of access to school supplies and clothing. According to NC Child, 46.4% of children in Buncombe County live in low-income homes. Children from low-income households are more likely to start school behind, score lower on academic achievement tests, and eventually drop out. Research shows that one dependable relationship with an adult can mitigate many of these risk factors. With our help, children receive the support they need, narrowing the opportunity and achievement gaps and paving the way for them to become educated, capable, and contributing members of the community.

Our SSS work in four Buncombe County schools and one Asheville City school; these schools have been designated as low-performing schools based on state data and/or have a demonstrated community need. Johnston Elementary was on the 2018-19 "recurring low-performing schools list." Erwin Middle School made the low-performing list in 2017-18, so we work with partners in that school as well as with two other schools that feed into it: Emma Elementary and Eblen Intermediate.

Prior to working in these schools, we performed a community-wide needs assessment. Many students at our chosen schools live in communities owned by the Housing Authority of Asheville: Woodridge, Deaverview, and Pisgah View. These communities experience higher crime rates than most areas within Buncombe County. The schools SSS serve all receive Title I funding, and nearly half the students in these schools receive free or reduced-price lunch (an indicator of food insecurity). According to the Eblen Intermediate school administration, 78% of their students are considered economically disadvantaged. By working with teachers, counselors, administrators, and parents, we develop school-wide goals and identify students that will receive individualized attention.

Project*

Explain the project and how it will work. Include the overall purpose and any models or evidence-based practices that will be included. What specific activities and milestones are included in the project plan?

CF/CIS places SSS in schools to help students with goals related to four predictors of long-term success: Attendance, Behavior, Coursework and Parent Engagement (ABC+P). We meet with school administrators, social workers, counselors, and teachers to analyze data and create school-wide goals that we can address with "Tier 1" supports. For example, if the school has a low attendance rate, the SSS will likely choose to focus

their school-wide (or Tier 1) efforts on attendance intervention. At Johnston Elementary in the 2019-20 school year, the SSS aims to improve students' behavior and decrease suspensions. Tier 1 supports that could be used to reach that goal are bullying prevention programming and behavior incentives. During the 2019-20 school year, 75% of enrolled students will be served by Tier 1 supports.

This process of needs assessment, data analysis and support planning occurs at the individual level for the 5-10% of students on our SSS caseload. These students will receive one-on-one and/or group intervention, known as Tier 2 and Tier 3 supports. Data such as grades, attendance records, and behavior referrals are reviewed during goal creation. In addition to this initial data work, SSS work diligently to monitor and adjust goals and supports throughout the year. For example, if a student with an attendance goal shows significant progress, the SSS may shift focus to another need of that student within the framework of ABC+P.

In the 2018-19 school year, 204 students were served through case management (Tier 2 and 3 support) and over 2,000 students through school-wide services (Tier 1 support). Of the students that were on SSS caseloads, 92% improved attendance, 92% improved behavior, and 95% improved coursework. 100% of our students receiving services were promoted to the next grade.

People Served*

How many people will be served by this project? Describe the people served, including demographics such as geography, income, race & ethnicity, age, etc.

CF/CIS will serve over 2,000 elementary and middle school-aged students with Tier 1 supports at Emma Elementary, Johnston Elementary, W.W. Estes Elementary, Claxton Elementary, and Eblen Intermediate. We will serve at least 150 of these students through more targeted Tier 2 and 3 supports. As explained above, these students are chosen based on a referral system and thorough data review in collaboration with school administrators, social workers, counselors, teachers, and parents.

Our organization is committed to addressing the longstanding racial inequities in our community. These schools are made up of some of the most diverse populations in Buncombe County. Additionally, our after-school and summer enrichment programs take place at Eblen Intermediate School and in the Deaverview, Pisgah View, and Woodridge communities. The demographic breakdown of students in our after-school and summer programming is 60% African American, 15% Latinx, 12.5% Caucasian, 10% Pacific-Islander, and 2.5% multi-racial.

Results*

What results do you hope to achieve with this project? Be specific about how much impact the project will have in line with Commissioner focus areas.

CF/CIS Student Support Specialists (SSS) will serve over 2,000 students at four Buncombe County schools (Emma Elementary, Estes Elementary, Johnston Elementary, and Eblen Intermediate) and one Asheville City school (Claxton Elementary), representing 75% of each school's population. Each SSS will serve 5-10% of the student population (over 150 students in total) with dedicated case management. In addition, at least 35 students will participate in after-school and summer enrichment programming. Our summer programming helps address the "summer slide" in academics by incorporating reading and writing time.

At least 90% of our students receiving individual case management will be promoted to the next grade. More than 85% of these students will meet their Attendance, Behavior, and/or Coursework goals. Furthermore, each SSS will provide at least one parent engagement opportunity every quarter.

Research demonstrates that the areas of focus for SSS (Attendance, Behavior, Coursework and Parent Engagement) are the strongest predictors of students dropping out later in their education and before high

school graduation. It also indicates the connection between dropout rates and other negative outcomes as students become young adults. When it comes specifically to literacy, research shows that failure to read by age nine can lead to a lifetime of illiteracy for at least 70% of those individuals. However, most children who enter elementary school at risk for illiteracy can still learn to read if they receive early intervention. By utilizing a proven evidence based targeted program to address these areas of achievement, our SSS' set students up for future success that reinforces their ability to thrive.

Evaluation*

How will you know you have succeeded? Explain the project evaluation process, including specific measures that will be tracked.

The national CIS model relies heavily on data monitoring and evaluation. Accordingly, our Student Support Specialists (SSS) regularly record and evaluate data on their case-managed students and the school population. We utilize a data management system, CISDM, to track student progress. Throughout the year, key stakeholders such as school staff, community partners, and families will review data with the SSS and adjust as needed. Students are not compared to each other; student growth goals are individualized. Therefore, the specific measures that will be tracked vary from student to student. We will know that success has been achieved when a large majority of students have made progress toward or met their goals related to Attendance, Behavior and Coursework.

Our specific, measurable goals for this project are as follows:

- Serve over 2,000 students at four Buncombe County schools (Emma Elementary, Estes Elementary, Johnston Elementary, and Eblen Intermediate) and one Asheville City school (Claxton Elementary), representing 75% of each school's population.

- Serve 5-10% of the student population at these five schools (over 150 students in total) with dedicated case management.

- Enroll at least 35 students in after-school and summer enrichment programming.

- Ensure at least 90% of our students receiving individual case management are promoted to the next grade.

- See that more than 85% of our case-managed students meet their Attendance, Behavior, and/or Coursework goals.

- Provide at least one parent engagement opportunity each quarter.

Collaboration*

List any formal and/or supportive partners. Describe their roles in the project. How will they make it stronger?

We have system-wide agreements with Buncombe County Schools and Asheville City Schools, as well as agreements with each specific school site. Those agreements cover each school's support for CF/CIS, the availability of our programming, space, technology, and data sharing. Our partnership with the Housing Authority of Asheville is vital to this work. The Housing Authority provides space to host children in our afterschool and summer programs and helps promote our program to the broader community. Student Support Specialists could not do their work without partners that provide additional enrichment experiences for students. These partners include LEAF Community Arts, FEAST Nutritional Learning, Roots and Wings, Horse Sense of the Carolinas, Creative Peacemakers, Navitat Canopy Adventures, French Broad Adventures,

and the North Carolina Arboretum. We also partner with MANNA Foodbank to provide basic needs services to students at each of our schools.

These key collaborative partners are environmental educators and recreation partners that come to our afterschool program each week during the school year and provide fantastic learning and recreational opportunities in our summer camp. For example, Horse Sense of the Carolinas provides social-emotional support to our students through equine therapy. Students engage in 10 two-hour sessions that promote self-regulation and emotional help. CF/CIS buses students to Marshall for the sessions after school and over the summer.

Budget*

Download a copy of the budget form [HERE](#). Complete the form, and upload it using the button below.

Explain how grant funds will be used, specifically what type of expenses will be covered by County funds. Describe other sources of revenue, including type of funding, source, restrictions and status.

FY21_SPGrant_Budget_Form CFCIS.xlsx

Children First/Communities in Schools requests \$80,000 to support the salaries and benefits of Student Support Specialists at Emma Elementary, W.W. Estes Elementary, Johnston Elementary and Eblen Intermediate. The full cost of the Student Support Specialist program will be covered through foundation funding, United Way, individual donations, corporate sponsorships and an Extended Learning and Integrated Student Supports (ELISS) NC Department of Public Instruction (DPI) grant. The United Way funding is guaranteed for FY 2021 as part of a three year grant commitment. The ELISS NC DPI grant is pending state budget approval and all other foundation decisions will be given closer to FY21. Sisters of Mercy is one of the largest foundation contributors and has been a supporter of this work for many years. The amount listed for individual and corporate sponsorships reflects the amounts that were given in the past few years.

Other County Funding*

List all other Buncombe County funding that is provided to your organization. For each item, list the project being funded, amount of funding, source (grant, departmental contract, etc.) and whether funding is to be renewed for FY2021.

We do not receive any county funding outside of the Strategic Partnership Fund.

Sustainability*

How will the project continue to succeed after the funding of the grant? Explain your plan for making this an ongoing effort.

Children First/Communities in Schools recently underwent a strategic planning process in order to identify priorities and strategies for long-term sustainability. The Student Support Specialist (SSS) program was identified as a key effort for the organization, so we are committed to continuing and expanding this program. We plan to continue diversifying funding streams and creating new partnerships that can ensure the continuation of this work.

We are also focusing on implementing a new Resource Development strategy that will strengthen our overall fundraising efforts. We have reinstated "Mind the Gap" tours of our offices, our SSS classroom at Emma Elementary, and an afterschool enrichment center to engage donors in our work. Mind the Gap tour participants have opportunity to learn about the organization and to see our mission in action. As our

organization has grown, we better understand the need for a variety of funding sources. We are taking several steps this fiscal year to ensure that we can maintain our existing operations and expand in the future.

OPTIONAL INFORMATION

OPTIONAL INFORMATION – This information will not impact grant scoring but will be helpful to the committee.

Partial Funding

If the project were to be offered a grant for partial funding, what factors would need to be considered?

We have relied on funding from Buncombe County to ensure the success of our work with children and families throughout the community. This funding has been critical to supporting the work of our Student Support Specialists at five area schools. With partial funding, we would have to make difficult decisions about which school(s) we would either decrease services at or pull back from altogether.

Resource Support

Beyond this grant request, how can Buncombe County support your organization with this project and in strengthening your work?

In order to ensure the continued success and expansion of our Student Support Specialist program, we hope to build our sustainability through diverse, reliable long-term funding. Any introductions or connections Buncombe County could facilitate with potential partners, major donors, and foundations would be appreciated. We would also appreciate Buncombe County's vocal support of CF/CIS to increase our name and service recognition throughout the community. We would also benefit from technical assistance (e.g. communications and marketing support) and continued connection with the Community Engagement Team.

Other

Is there anything else that you want the committee to know?

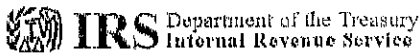
STUDENT SUPPORT SPECIALIST.pdf

The work of CF/CIS to address the myriad barriers to achievement in low-income communities is critical to the lives of children in Buncombe County. When we are present in schools, children are empowered to succeed. This work will have a future impact on Buncombe County by helping to guide students toward successful academic and eventually professional careers. It is important to invest in our children early on to give them every opportunity to succeed.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- Children First CIS 501 C3.pdf
- CFCIS BOD Full List with Affiliations.pdf
- FY21_SPGrant_Budget_Form CFCIS.xlsx
- STUDENT SUPPORT SPECIALIST.pdf



Department of the Treasury
Internal Revenue Service

P.O. Box 2508, Room 4010
Cincinnati OH 45201

In reply refer to: 4077550279
May 20, 2013 LTR 4168C 0
59-1721943 000000 00

00034101
BODC: TE

CHILDREN FIRST COMMUNITIES IN
SCHOOLS OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY INC
50 SOUTH FRENCH BROAD AVE STE 246
ASHEVILLE NC 28801

Employer Identification Number: 59-1721943
Person to Contact: Sophia Brown
Toll Free Telephone Number: 1-877-829-5500

Dear Taxpayer:

This is in response to your Mar. 01, 2013, request for information regarding your tax-exempt status.

Our records indicate that you were recognized as exempt under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code in a determination letter issued in May 1977.

Our records also indicate that you are not a private foundation within the meaning of section 509(a) of the Code because you are described in section(s) 509(a)(1) and 170(b)(1)(A)(vi).

Donors may deduct contributions to you as provided in section 170 of the Code. Bequests, legacies, devises, transfers, or gifts to you or for your use are deductible for Federal estate and gift tax purposes if they meet the applicable provisions of sections 2055, 2106, and 2522 of the Code.

Please refer to our website www.irs.gov/eo for information regarding filing requirements. Specifically, section 6033(j) of the Code provides that failure to file an annual information return for three consecutive years results in revocation of tax-exempt status as of the filing due date of the third return for organizations required to file. We will publish a list of organizations whose tax-exempt status was revoked under section 6033(j) of the Code on our website beginning in early 2011.

4077550279
May 20, 2013 LTR 4168C 0
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00034102

CHILDREN FIRST COMMUNITIES IN
SCHOOLS OF BUNCOMBE COUNTY INC
50 SOUTH FRENCH BROAD AVE STE 246
ASHEVILLE NC 28801

If you have any questions, please call us at the telephone number
shown in the heading of this letter.

Sincerely yours,

Cindy Thomas

Cindy Thomas
Manager, EO Determinations



Children First/CIS of Buncombe County
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2019 - 2020

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Strategic Partnership Grants

Proposed FY2021 Project Budget (July 1, 2020 - June 30, 2021)

Organization Name:	Children First/Communities in Schools of Buncombe County
Project Name:	Student Support Specialists ABC+P Improvement
Grant Amount Requested:	\$80,000

FY2021 Proposed Project Revenue	Amount	Committed or Pending?
Proposed Buncombe County Strategic Partnerships Grant	\$ 80,000	Pending
List other sources: United Way	\$ 30,000	Committed
List other sources: Sisters of Mercy	\$ 50,000	Pending
List other sources: Asheville City Strategic Partnership Grant	\$ 15,000	Pending
List other sources: ELISS DPI Grant	\$ 90,000	Pending
List other sources: Corporate Sponsors	\$ 5,000	Pending
List other sources: Individual Donations	\$ 30,000	Pending
List other sources:		
Total	\$ 300,000	

FY2021 Proposed Project Expenses	Proposed Grant	Other Funds	Total	Notes
Personnel	\$ 80,000	\$ 205,000	\$ 285,000	Intermediate, Emma Elementary, Johnston Elementary and W.W. Estes Elementary
Training		\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	
Travel		\$ 5,000	\$ 5,000	
Supplies / Materials		\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	
Meetings (Food, Interpreting, Child Care, etc.)		\$ 500	\$ 500	
Equipment / Furniture		\$ 500	\$ 500	
Printing / Marketing		\$ 500	\$ 500	
Licensing / Memberships / Dues / Subscriptions		\$ -	\$ -	
Client Support		\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	
Contracts		\$ -	\$ -	
Professional Services (Legal, Accounting, etc.)		\$ -	\$ -	
Insurance and Bonds		\$ -	\$ -	
Building Maintenance (Rent, Utilities, Repairs, etc.)		\$ 500	\$ 500	
List other costs: Bus, Van Maintenance for Student Transport		\$ 1,000	\$ 1,000	
List other costs:			\$ -	
List other costs:			\$ -	
List other costs:			\$ -	
Total			\$ 300,000	

Overall Organization Budget	Amount	Notes
FY2019 Actual Year-End Revenue	\$ 1,241,316	For audited financials, all grant nominations given during FY19 must be included in the total revenue amounts. This includes one large 2 year grant that could not be spent.
FY2019 Actual Year-End Expenses	\$ 1,064,248	
FY2020 Adopted Budget Amount	\$ 1,164,348	
FY2021 Proposed Budget Amount	\$ 1,164,348	

STUDENT SUPPORT SPECIALISTS

work directly in schools
and communities, building
relationships that
empower students to
succeed inside and
outside the classroom.



**Children First - Family Resource
Center @ Emma**

37 Brickyard Rd. 28806

Eblen Intermediate After-School

59 Lees Creek Rd. 28806



Claxton Elementary

241 Merrimon Ave. 28801

Pisgah View-Learning Center

16 Steward St. Apt. C & D 28806



Johnston Elementary

230 Johnston Blvd. 28806

Deaverview After-School

275 Deverview Rd. 28806



**W.W. Estes Elementary
& Resource Center**

275 Overlook Rd. 28803



Emma Elementary

37 Brickyard Rd. 28806

Woodridge-Learning Center

61 Bingham Rd. Apt. 26F 28806



RESOURCE CENTERS

- Food Pantry, Clothing Closet, Financial Assistance

SCHOOLS

- Case Management, Interventions

LEARNING CENTERS & AFTER-SCHOOL

- Homework Assistance, Academic Enrichment,
Summer Camp

STUDENT SUPPORT SPECIALISTS



**2018-
2019
Impact**

Over 2,000

Students served @ 5 schools

Claxton Elementary | Emma Elementary | Eblen Intermediate
Johnston Elementary | W.W. Estes Elementary

OF STUDENTS WHO RECEIVED CASE MANAGEMENT

92%

**IMPROVED
ATTENDANCE**

92%

**IMPROVED
BEHAVIOR**

95%

**IMPROVED
COURSEWORK**