

Cover Sheet – Social Service Activity

AGENCY NAME: Town of Amherst Leisure Services and Supplemental Education, LSSE
AGENCY ADDRESS: Bangs Community Center, 70 Boltwood Walk, Amherst, MA 01002
AGENCY PHONE NO (413) 259-3103 _____ CONTACT PERSON: Linda Chalfant
CONTACT PERSON EMAIL: chalfanatl@amherstma.gov
CDBG FUNDING REQUEST: \$30,000

1. Project Name
Childcare Tuition Assistance

2. Project Description (1-2 sentences)
This project will enable 18 additional elementary school children from low income families to receive childcare tuition assistance and participate in afterschool programs.

3. Project Location (Street address)
Crocker Farm Elementary School
280 West Street
Amherst, MA 01002

4. Budget Request
\$30,000

5. Type of Activity (check one):
 - Family and individual stabilization
 - Youth development
 - Economic self-sufficiency (adult education)
 - Food and nutrition
 - Health services
 - Emergency & preventive services: rental assistance, fuel assistance, and shelter services.
 - Other – please explain

6. National Objective:
 - Total number of beneficiaries (individuals served):
 - Total Low/Mod beneficiaries (individuals served):

Total Low/Mod beneficiaries (individuals served): Total Low/Mod Beneficiaries served through a CDBG grant award, (18 total with a 100% subsidy, a 75 % subsidy or a 55% subsidy). Total Low/Mod beneficiaries served by Town Fee Subsidy Funding currently, (33).

Please submit responses to the following questions:

A. National Objective Description

- Describe in detail how your project will meet a national objective and how it will be documented to ensure that participants meet low/moderate income requirements.
- Limited clientele projects must document compliance by one of the following methods:
 - For projects that do not provide “income payment” forms of assistance, beneficiaries may “self-declare” their eligibility, generally by completing and signing a form declaring household sizes and income ranges.
 - For projects that offer income payments or subsidies, income must be documented.
 - For projects where the user profile will be low- and moderate-income, a description of the profile must be presented so that the conclusion, without a doubt, will be to benefit low- and moderate- income persons.

Our Childcare Tuition Assistance Project will meet a national objective of serving low and moderate income families by providing essential childcare services to 18 children from Amherst’s financially neediest families.

Documentation to ensure that participants meet the low/moderate income requirements will be met in the following ways. Families will be requested to verify financial eligibility through an intake and application process. Families will show documented proof of all household income through the use of income tax forms, payment stubs, and with copies of all income received. Through the application process families will be asked to agree to notify Town officials if income changes occur. Household size will be a part of the application process. We will use the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program, FRLP, income criteria to establish income eligibility. Families will be certified and notified of their eligibility in writing from Town of Amherst staff. This is a process that Town of Amherst Leisure Services, LSSE, staff have ongoing experience in conducting and currently use to verify eligibility for the Town’s Fee Subsidy Program.

B. Demonstrate Consistency with Community Development Strategy

- Describe how the proposed project is consistent with the Community Development Strategy.
- To meet this threshold a proposed project must relate to a community development need or needs identified by the community in the Strategy, and must have been identified in the Strategy as a means to address the need.

The Childcare Tuition Assistance Project is consistent with the Community Development Strategy because it meets the priorities of Youth Development and Family Stabilization, which are stated goals within the Amherst CDBG FY 2016 Priority Projects. CDBG funded childcare tuition assistance will allow children to attend a Prime Time Crocker Farm or Prime Time Wildwood Afterschool Program and enable their parents to attend work or support their families needs in other ways. As a Youth Development activity the Childcare Tuition Assistance project is in step with the CDBG Advisory Committee’s 2nd priority ranked goal in the FY 2016 Priority Projects within the Community Services category. Many of the families currently served as well as those we propose to serve live in housing that is in the FY 16 target areas along the Pomeroy Village Center/East Hadley Road and attend the Crocker Farm Elementary School, our largest afterschool program.

The Childcare Tuition Assistance Project relates to the Community Strategy and the identified community development needs in several ways. The CDBG Advisory Committee has prioritized

basic social services and services that support the chronically homeless and the extremely low income community population. With the growth of the low income population the Town and Schools are witnessing a corresponding increase in an extremely low income and homeless population of school age children. This growth has given rise to greater social service needs including additional financial support for childcare. Nearly forty percent of the children in Amherst Schools are eligible for the Federal Free and Reduced Lunch Program, FRLP. Our afterschool programs are serving children from families that are extremely low income, all of whom fall below the Amherst Income Threshold. The Town uses the FRLP, for income and family size verification. By example a family of 4 that receives assistance from the FRLP, would receive assistance if their income falls below \$31,525 as compared to the Income Threshold for Amherst, Attachment I Income Guidelines which indicates \$65,800, a much higher eligibility threshold.

C. Agency Information

- Provide an overview of your organization, including length of time in existence, experience in successfully conducting activities for which funding is being sought, and skills and current services that reflect capacity for success.

LSSE is a municipal social services department within the Town of Amherst and provides a comprehensive mix of year round programs, services and facilities for recreation, educational and cultural purposes to upwards of 40,000 individual, youth and seniors per year. We are guided by an appointed LSSE Commission of local citizens with oversight by various Town Committees and ad hoc groups to assist in supporting our work. LSSE Commissioners and staff serve on a number of linked community service organizations and committees helping each to connect with the larger community. While our most relevant partnership is with the Amherst Public Schools, varied additional existing partnerships and memberships include: the Friends of Amherst Recreation, the Amherst Leisure Services Community Theater, the Amherst Area Chamber of Commerce, the Amherst Business Improvement District, the Pioneer Valley Park and Recreation Association, the Human Services Network and others.

We have credible long term affiliations and partnerships with the colleges, and University, businesses and community members. LSSE has successfully offered programs to children and families since 1982 and prior to that as the Amherst Recreation Department which began in the 1950's. LSSE has operated child care programs since 1988. The LSSE Department has operated child care focused summer day camps since 1980. In the summer of 2015 LSSE served 582 children in the Adventure Playground and Early Adventures Day Camps. Many children who attend LSSE's afterschool program are connected to summer camps and other out of school time programs.

- Explain your short-term goals and long-term goals.

The project goals include:

Short Term- To support Youth Development by successfully reaching out, certifying and enrolling low income families on our waiting list so they may participate in our afterschool childcare programs. If families no longer qualify or have found other assistance then we would enlarge our outreach by contacting school personnel, other social service providers and families within our low income family database to offer financial assistance through the CDBG award. Our goal for the duration of the project would be to provide ongoing financial support for the afterschool program, to provide a safe, educational and enriching afterschool program experience

that met the child and family needs and to make additional opportunities available to support the child and family via information and referral services within the Town, the School District and the larger community.

Our Long Term Goals- To further family stabilization. To support low income families and their children in overcoming barriers at school, work or within the community and to assist families through information, referral and available opportunities to achieve more financial stability through the assurances that safe, affordable and reliable childcare can bring. To provide the childcare assistance needed so families may pursue new work, attend work, further their education or attend to other family needs while their children are cared for during the afterschool hours.

D. Project Budget Information

- Provide a detailed budget for the proposed program to include program delivery and direct program costs, and include all sources of revenue and all expenses.

Please see attached Proposed Project Revenue and Expenses Budgets.

- Cite Sources of Other Project Funds.

Other sources of projects funds are itemized on the attached budgets and include:

State Voucher Funds:	Funds provided by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to support childcare for qualifying low income families.
Full Pay Participants:	Funds from families that pay the full afterschool fee and do not qualify for financial assistance.
Parent Fee/Town Subsidy:	Funds from parents that are paying a "parent fee" and receiving Town of Amherst Fee Subsidy Funding.
Town of Amherst Fee Subsidy:	Funds appropriated to support low income families.

- If applicable, describe and document the availability and source of matching or other funds needed to complete the project. In-kind services are accepted only as directly related to the project.

The Town's Proposed FY 17 Budget includes the funding for the Town Fee Subsidy Program. LSSE is a Voucher eligible Day Care Provider with Childcare Outlook Day Care. We are currently managing family vouchers with our afterschool programs and will continue to do so.

- Document the experience of the provider, costs of comparable services and the process used to review the accuracy of the budget.
- Explain the qualifications of person who prepared the budget

The LSSE director and staff have prepared CDBG grants and budgets in prior years and administered CDBG supported programs. This project budget was prepared by the following: *Linda Chalfant, LSSE Director*, with the Town since 1987. Master degree in Parks and Recreation Administration, Manages department budget, oversees programs, facilities, staff. *Gail Weston, Operations Manager*, with the Town since 2002. Supports department's budget, handles Fee Subsidy Program, bills, payroll, accounts, records, grant assistance.

Donna Roy, Registration/ Marketing Supervisor, with the Town since 1999. Bachelor's degree in Business Administration. Supports outreach and online and onsite registration for programs. *Stacey LeCuivre, Program Director*, with the Town since 1995, Bachelor's degree in Sociology, Develops and monitors the afterschool program, budget and staff.

The proposed budget was developed based on our FY 16 program budget with data examination of current enrollments and voucher contracts. Afterschool fees are the same at all schools.

Answers for Parts E—I must not exceed three (3) pages

E. Project Description

- Please provide a summary of the proposed project. The summary should include a detailed scope of the total project, including the non-CDBG funded components.
- Demonstrate that the activity has been prioritized by the community at the local level.
- Include information on the number of individuals or families to be served and who they are, i.e. disabled, low-income, homeless, etc.

The Childcare Tuition Assistance Project would provide 100-55% financial assistance for 18 children from extremely low to low income families to attend one of the Town's Prime Time Afterschool Programs. This proposal supports the current program and accessible, quality after school child care for children at Amherst's elementary schools. The Prime Time Afterschool Programs with the Amherst Schools provides academic tutoring, enrichment, exercise, outdoor exploration, transportation home three days per week, a snack and a safe environment.

This proposal serves families in desperate and difficult situations. Elementary school age children from families of varying sizes with extremely low to low incomes that are homeless, impoverished, struggling to hold jobs, seeking employment or furthering their education are assisted. Families supported by LSSE's afterschool are connected to a range of protective and essential services through local social service agencies and the Town's recreational, and community services offices. Funding this proposal will directly advance childcare availability.

This project was chosen after discussions with the Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, Finance Director, LSSE staff, school guidance staff and parents. This project responds to the community's need for youth development and serves families who cannot afford childcare.

F. Project Need

- What is the need for the proposed project/program?
- Define the need or problem to be addressed by the proposed project. Explain why the project is important.

Additional childcare subsidy is urgent. In FY 15 LSSE certified 234 families as eligible for the Town's Fee Subsidy Program. These children qualified for the School's Free and Reduced Lunch Program, a strong representation of Amherst's poverty. A reliance on fuel assistance, the absence of enough affordable housing, Amherst's winter shelter, the advanced number of families visiting the Amherst Survival Center, all point to a community with economic needs.

Children whose families have lost a job or a home can experience isolation and a loss of community. Burdens at home can affect academic achievement and present discipline issues. Support from a caring adult and engaging afterschool activities can motivate learning, strengthen a sense of belonging, provide alternatives to drugs/ alcohol, and assure an alternative to staying home alone. Keeping a job becomes harder in a recession. Holding a job without reliable childcare puts the entire family's financial support at risk if parents cannot remain at work beyond the traditional end of a school day. If a family loses a job, poverty grows.

LSSE's current Town funded child care programs routinely reach maximum enrollment in the first month and a half of school. Our projections show LSSE will use all of its afterschool fee subsidy support with the income eligible children first to enroll. Requests for tuition assistance from school personnel, social service providers and inquiring parents reflect the unmet need.

G. Community Involvement and Support

- Demonstrate the involvement and opportunities available for the community and/or potential beneficiaries in the identification, planning and development of the project.
- Define the process to be used to maintain involvement of the project beneficiaries in the implementation of the project.

Beneficiaries will be engaged in project identification, planning and implementation. Families will be invited to participate in special activities through mailings, our website, school outreach and guidance staff, etc. Families are welcomed and oriented into the program by our onsite directors. Building friendships and a sense of community is a vital goal at afterschool.

Community members and project beneficiaries may choose to serve on program committees and focus groups to provide feedback and participate in planning. The childcare programs host events aided by community volunteers and family beneficiaries. These activities connect project beneficiaries in a relaxed atmosphere during holidays, performances and open house programs.

H. Project Feasibility

- Why is the proposed project/program feasible?

The Town of Amherst LSSE has 27 years of experience offering childcare programs. LSSE's childcare programs are licensed by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts under the Department of Early Education and Care, EEC. We are a State Voucher eligible and manage childcare vouchers through Childcare Outlook. LSSE successfully administers two summer day camps known as Adventure Playground and Early Adventures. These eight week, full day camps daily serve 100 youth ages 5-12 with safe, engaging childcare activities.

- Demonstrate that the project is capable of proceeding at the time of award, can be effectively managed, and can be physically/ financially accomplished in the grant period.

LSSE has a successful track record of grant management including three CDBG grants, Community Foundations grants, and others. We routinely hear families and school staff about the need for additional subsidy and we understand the project is critical. The grant cycle and notice of an award occurs at a strategic time for our family enrollment outreach. We register families in the summer and fall for childcare programs.

- Describe what evidence exists to show that the community at large or project beneficiaries will use the project. Include documentation of **demand** for the activity through summary descriptions of surveys, inquiries, waiting lists or past participation.

The Afterschool Program has grown and the financial need for families has also grown, but our funding for this purpose is inadequate. Personnel from the School's Family Center and staff have stated they would refer more children to our programs if financial support was available.

- Identify and describe the solicitation process used or applicable to the project.

LSSE would solicit families for the childcare program in these ways: By notifying the Amherst Schools through the Superintendent's office, the School Family Center, Guidance staff, social service agencies, LSSE's database, LSSE's brochure, website, social media, press releases.

- Identify the roles and responsibilities of all personnel involved in the project as well as internal controls.

1.) *Linda Chalfant, LSSE Director* supervises the Youth Program Director; manages the grant, outreach, sustainability. 2.) *Stacey LeCuire, LSSE Program Director*, supervises the LSSE Child Care Directors, plans the program, monitors the budget, handles scheduling, manages facility and administrative issues. 3.) *Gail Weston, LSSE Operations Manager*, administers the bills, payroll, Gail supports grants management, verifies income eligibility. 4.) *Grace Marczuk, Primetime*

Afterschool Director at Crocker Farm and Nikki Abelli, Primetime Afterschool Director at Wildwood, oversees and schedules the staff, plans and delivers the program.

- Citing past accomplishments, document that the agency has the necessary past expertise to conduct the activity and has successfully completed past activities with CDBG or other programs in a timely manner.

LSSE has administered other CDBG grants, has received and managed Community Foundation of Western Massachusetts grants, Community Preservation grants, Xeric Foundation grants, etc.

- Describe and identify the project milestones and timeline including unfinished project contracting and other project steps. State the duration of time needed for each milestone, and identify when each milestone will be completed.

-Week One: Prepare press releases and media announcements. Contact school staff, waiting list.

-Week Two and Three: Enroll families from waiting list in the program.

-Week Four and Five: Reach out to larger database of low income families with calls, mailings, e-mails. Reconnect with school staff and social service agencies for referrals. **-Fall 2016:** Start of Afterschool Program. Integrate new families to the afterschool program on a daily basis.

-Mid Fall 2016 and Ongoing: Gauge program satisfaction, make referrals, connect with school personnel on academic support requests. Link families with bus transportation and programs.

-Early Winter and Ongoing: Check in on daily basis for needs with parents, school and others.

-Late Spring –Summer: CDBG final report/ billing. Check on parent experiences/ needs.

Inform parents of summer childcare programs, facilitate financial assistance. Evaluate program.

I. Project Impact

- What will be the impact of the proposed project/program?
- Describe the impact the activity will have on the specifically identified needs. What measurable improvements will result from the activity and will benefit the intended beneficiaries? How much of the need will be addressed?
 - Describe the changes in the target population that indicate the program's success. How will these changes be measured?
 - How will the impact of this service on individual clients be tracked over time?
- Define the direct and indirect outcomes that will result from the project.
- Identify quantitative and qualitative measures to determine that the outcomes are achieved.
- Will this service enable clients to become self-sufficient?
- How is this service linked to other human/social service programs in the community?

Direct Outcomes-Access to safe, affordable child care provides: Support for families to attend work, look for work, and further their education. Creates awareness of Town, human service supports, ability for participants to engage in enriching activities that have been reduced at school, trips, performances, etc. Children engage in additional exercise/health programs including outdoor exercise. Issues in the school day can be processed in an afterschool, decreases in juvenile crime during after school hours, stronger academic performance, homework help.

Indirect Outcomes-Improved quality of family life, sense of community and connections with school, learning to work with others and a chance to excel outside of the classroom.

Interviews occur with families, other social service providers, throughout the year. The child will be supported with safe, enriching programs and the family will be beneficiaries as well. If the afterschool care permits a parent to keep a job or improve their skills, the entire financial outlook for a family will improve. A family may need fewer services due to self sufficiency.

Amherst Leisure Services and Supplemental Education
 Child Care Programs Revenue
 FY 17 Budget
 Community Development Block Grant Funds

LSSE Child Care Programs FY17	Amount	Comments
Revenue		
Voucher Revenue	\$16,745	
Full Paid Participants	\$73,304	
Parent Pay Portion of Fee Subsidy	\$21,439	
Fee Subsidized (Supplanting)	\$40,000	
Block Grant	\$30,398	
Total Revenue	\$181,886	
Block Grant Revenue		
11 Children @ 100% :		
3 days p/wk: \$156/mo X 100% X 7 children	\$10,920	
Full Wk: \$251/mo X 100% X 4 children	\$10,040	
6 Children at 75%:		
3 days p/wk: \$156/mo X 75% X 3 children	\$3,510	
Full Wk: \$251/mo X 75% X 3 children	\$5,648	
1 Child at 55%:		
1 day p/wk: \$52/mo X 55% X 1 child	\$280	\$398 covered by Fee Subsidy
Total Block Grant Revenue	\$30,398	

Amherst Leisure Services and Supplemental Education
 Child Care Programs Expenses
 FY 17 Budget
 Community Development Block Grant Funds

LSSE Child Care Programs FY17	Amount	Comments
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Personnel

Program Leadership (staff)	<u>\$166,556</u>	Program delivery to children
Total Personnel	<u>\$166,556</u>	

Other Expenses

Staff Training - CPR & Aid	\$600	Mandated medical training for on site staff
Telephone	\$600	Emergency contact telephone
Food	\$9,000	Daily snacks for children
Supplies	\$2,600	Program supplies, sports equipment, arts and crafts supplies
Field Trips	\$1,100	Admission fees for local field trips, outings, bus and driver expenses
License	\$830	Mandated state license from Early Education and Childcare
Staff Development	\$600	Mandated professional development for staff
Total Other Expenses	<u>\$15,330</u>	

Total Personnel & Expenses

	<u>\$181,886</u>
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