

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of Commissioners

FROM: Michael Mark, Grants Administrator

DATE: March 27, 2023

RE: **MOTION: Authorization to hold USDA Congressionally Directed Spending Public Information meeting**

STATEMENT OF ISSUE:

To satisfy USDA Rural Development application requirements, Jefferson County must hold at least one public information meeting.

ANALYSIS:

Jefferson County is working with the USDA to secure \$1.45M of Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) to support development of the Early Learning and Family Support Center Project. Similar to a federal grant, CDS funds come with a variety of application requirements.

Staff is preparing the USDA's Rural Development application package, which includes a requirement to hold a public information meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT:

USDA has advised staff to treat Congressionally-Directed Spending like a grant, implying that fund administration costs the county incurs are reimbursable. The fiscal impact of the USDA funds is therefore expected to be neutral.

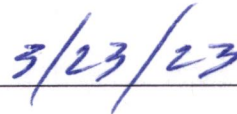
RECOMMENDATION:

Approve a motion to authorize holding a USDA Congressionally Directed Spending public information meeting planned for Wednesday, April 19, 2023.

REVIEWED BY:


Mark McCauley, County Administrator

Date


3/23/23



PUBLIC MEETING

April 19, 2023 at 6:30 p.m.

This is an informational meeting to discuss Jefferson County's intent to work with the USDA to secure a \$1.45 Million Congressionally Directed Spending (CDS) grant to support development of the Early Learning and Family Support Center Project

This is a Hybrid meeting: Virtual and In-Person Attendance at
Jefferson County Courthouse – Commissioners' Chambers
1820 Jefferson Street, Port Townsend, WA

To view Agenda items, meeting materials and comments received, click here: www.co.jefferson.wa.us – Services – Laserfiche Web Portal – Board of County Commissioners – Boards & Committees – USDA Meetings

You can join this meeting by using the following methods:

• Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/93777841705 This option will allow you to join the meeting live. You will need to enter an email address. If you wish to provide public comment, click on the hand icon at the bottom of the screen to "raise your hand." Participation will be up to the Chair and Clerk
• Audio-only: Dial: 1-253-215-8782 and use Webinar ID: 937-7784-1705# This option will allow you to listen to the meeting live. If you wish to provide public comment, press *9 to "raise your hand." Participation will be up to the Chair and Clerk Access for the hearing impaired can be accommodated using Washington Relay Service at 1-800-833-6384. If you need special accommodations, please contact our office 24 hours in advance.
• Website: www.co.jefferson.wa.us Follow the links under "Quick links," "Videos of Meetings," and click on "Today." This option will allow you to watch the meeting live-streaming, with no participation.
• In-Person: You are welcome to join the meeting in-person.

In the event of technical difficulties, at least one of the methods above will be accessible to the public. Please try all methods first before calling 360-774-2713 to report any issues.

Individuals may provide Public Comment using the following methods:

- Video: Refer to meeting instructions above
- Audio-only: Refer to meeting instructions above
- Email: You may submit comments/correspondence to us at: jeffbocc@co.jefferson.wa.us up through 11:59 p.m. the day before the meeting.

6:30 p.m. CALL TO ORDER

Welcome, Introduction, Purpose of Meeting – Commissioner Kate Dean (5 min)

- . Introduction of Partners in Attendance – Commissioner Kate Dean (5 min)
- . Project Background – Wendy Bart, Olympic Peninsula YMCA (5 min)
- . Facility Design Concepts – Simon Little, studioSTL(15 min)
- . Public feedback and discussion – Kate, Wendy, Simon (25 min)
- . Closing Remarks – Commissioner Kate Dean (5 min)

7:30 p.m. ADJOURNMENT

JEFFERSON COUNTY

EARLY LEARNING & FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER

BACKGROUND

Even before the pandemic, the lack of available child care was at a crisis level in Jefferson County. As of March, 2021 the Washington State Department of Children Youth & Families (DCYF) estimated that of the 645 children eligible* in Jefferson County, only 130 were enrolled in licensed early learning child care¹. This represents 20% of the total need; for families who are at or above 200% of the federal poverty level, only 16% of the need is met.

THE CASE FOR EARLY LEARNING & FAMILY SUPPORT

- ▶ **For Children:** 90% of brain development happens in the first five years; early childhood education increases kindergarten preparedness so children start school ready to learn; and participation in a quality early learning program lowers risk factors and improves health outcomes in adulthood. According to the National Education Association, children in early childhood education programs are less likely to repeat a grade, less likely to be identified as having special needs, more likely to graduate from college, and are higher earners in the workforce.
- ▶ **For The Workforce:** Parents rely on childcare to help them enter, re-enter, or remain in the workforce. Current licensed availability meets the need of less than 20% of children under six whose parents are in the workforce and need care. Based on estimates provided by Washington State Department of Commerce employers in our region incur almost \$94 million per year in compensation and turnover costs for workers arriving late or leaving early as a result of child care issues and for workers who leave employment because of a lack of child care; 2,900 employees with children under six years of age quit a job due to challenges related to child care; and 1,400 employees with children under the age of six were fired from work due to challenges related to child care.
- ▶ **For Families:** 25% of Jefferson County households are considered ALICE families (Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed). These families earn more than the Federal Poverty Level, but less than the basic cost of living for the county. Among Jefferson County's combined ALICE/poverty households, 40% have school-aged children. ALICE families have experienced heightened social and economic burdens as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and are increasingly in need of help meeting their basic needs (e.g., shelter, health care, food, child care).
- ▶ **Food Security:** Almost half of all children in Jefferson County live under 185% of the federal poverty level and qualify for free or reduced lunch. One in five 8th and 12th graders report missing meals or eating less due to no money. Half (53%) of infants born to families in Jefferson County qualify for WIC, and half of births are to families who qualify for Medicaid, compared to 41% statewide.



PROJECT OUTCOMES AND BENEFITS

- ▶ **Serve more families:** An estimated 30 families and up to 42 children ages 0 to 5 will be enrolled in child care. An additional 50 families will access support services through the Family Resource Navigator.
- ▶ **Improve workforce recruitment and retention:** Employees will be able to work knowing that they have access to safe, quality, affordable child care.
- ▶ **Address food and nutrition insecurity:** An additional 75 families will receive food boxes during out-of-school times and an additional 15,000 meals will be prepared and distributed throughout Jefferson County.

EARLY LEARNING & FAMILY SUPPORT CENTER – BUDGET: \$2,790,000

CAPITAL FUNDING

U.S. Congressionally Directed Appropriation	\$1,450,000.00
Government Pledges.....	\$290,000.00
Jefferson Healthcare.....	\$50,000.00
Washington State Department of Commerce	\$1,000,000.00

TOTAL To-Date.....	\$2,790,000.00
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* All caregivers in the workforce

¹ <https://www.dcyf.wa.gov/practice/oiaa/reports/early-learning-dashboards/child-care-need-supply-data>

THE VISION

To enable children and families in our community to thrive by establishing a hub for early learning, family support, and access to fresh, locally-sourced, healthy food.

THE PROJECT

The early learning and family support center will be built on property owned by the Port Townsend School District. The property is centrally located and within 5 minutes of the largest employers in Jefferson County. The site will accommodate a 4,000+ square foot facility, providing child care for up to 42 children, support meal preparation and delivery for more than 75 families, and facilitate family resource navigation for more than 50 families. The facility will be owned and operated by the Olympic Peninsula YMCA.

EARLY LEARNING

- ▶ High quality, licensed child care for 42 children ages 6 weeks to 5 years.
- ▶ 30% of spots reserved for families eligible for ECEAP and/or WCCC (state subsidy)
- ▶ Nine full-time-equivalent staff, and one to two office staff
- ▶ Partnership with Peninsula College Early Childhood Education Program
- ▶ Anticipated hours: 6:45 am to 7:15 pm

MEALS/FOOD & NUTRITION SECURITY

- ▶ Providing food & nutrition support for kids and families throughout Jefferson County
- ▶ Early Learning Center/YMCA After-School Programs – meals and snacks
- ▶ YMCA Summer Day Camp & East Jefferson County Summer School – meals and snacks
- ▶ Out-of-School Time (Summers & School Breaks) – family food boxes

FAMILY SUPPORT

- ▶ Providing one-to-one support for Asset Limited, Income Constrained, Employed (ALICE) families – 25% of Jefferson County households
- ▶ Storage for diaper and clothing bank
- ▶ Meeting room for parenting classes and preschool playgroups

COMMUNITY PARTNERS

The vision for this project is the result of a partnership between **Jefferson Healthcare, Port Townsend School District, Jefferson County, City of Port Townsend, Peninsula College, and the Olympic Peninsula YMCA.**



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Additional information about the Jefferson County Early Learning & Family Support Center can be found at <https://www.olympicpeninsulaymca.org/early-learning-port-townsend>.

Questions, comments, or ideas regarding this project may be sent to info@olympicpeninsulaymca.org.