**Mobilizing Literacy in Kansas**

***Emporia State University***

***and The Tri-County Schools***

**Community Service Action Plan**

**District Name:** Burlingame/Santa Fe Trail

**County:** Osage

**Contact Person(s):** Dr. Steve Pegram

**Amount Requested:** $35,326

**Date Submitted:** April 14, 2016

1. **Identify thetargeted area(s) - must address one or more of the three pillars: school readiness, school attendance, summer learning.**

The Burlingame and Santa Fe Trail School Districts are making their application within the school readiness pillar. It is the intent of the Burlingame and Santa Fe School Districts to expand its current specialized preschool for the 2016-2017 school year. This expanded preschool will provide Burlingame and Santa Fe Trail students, ages 3 and 4 years old the much needed opportunities to become kindergarten ready. The school districts plans to work with the Three Lakes Educational Cooperative (TLEC), Lyndon, KS. The TLCE currently provides preschool services for 3 and 4 year olds who have an IEP or qualify for the Kansas State Department of Education’s (KSDE) 4-year old at-risk program. The district’s proposal will provide additional sections in the preschool setting to address those students who do not qualify for TLEC services in the areas of IEP’s or qualifying for at-risk services.

1. **State your goal(s).**

To provide preschool opportunities for all 3 and 4 year old students in the Burlingame and Santa Fe Trail School Districts:

* Measurable-Evidence will be in the form of whether or not this program is created by the school district.
* Attainable-The approval to implement this program was approved at the February Santa Fe Trail BOE meeting.
* Relevant-Kindergarten readiness is one of the five student outcomes approved by KSDE. It has also been a concern of the district’s kindergarten teachers, due to few opportunities for preschool opportunities in the school districts.
* Time Bound-Implementation of the program to begin August 2016.

To increase the number of 3 and 4 year old students in the Santa Fe Trail who attend preschool:

* Measurable-The number of students who enroll in the district preschool will be compared to the prior year numbers of preschool students who were in the TLEC and a private preschool.
* Attainable-The districts in any given year would have the potential to serve 170-180 students in a preschool setting. Currently, the school districts through the TLEC, serves approximately 70 students and the only private preschool between the two districts serves 15 students, for a total of approximately 85 three and four-year students participating in a preschool setting.
* Relevant-Due to the few opportunities for the two districts students to attain preschool opportunities and with many parents unable to afford early education programs, the districts believe by providing equal access for the two district’s students to attain preschool programing, more students will take advantage of preschool placement provided by the two school districts.
* Time Bound-With the two districts already committed to expanding the preschool opportunities for its students, it will become evident if more students are being served through the summer enrollment and based on the number of students who attend preschool in August..

To increase the percentage of students entering kindergarten in the Burlingame and Santa Fe Trail School Districts who are kindergarten ready:

* Measurable-At the current time, the districts have little data as to how many students are not kindergarten ready. In the Santa Fe Trail there is August 2015 Lexia Reading and Aimsweb data available on kindergarten students that will be used, along with teacher perceptions.
* Attainable-As more students participate in the districts or other preschool program they will become more exposed to social norms and communication skills. These students will have more exposure to letters and opportunities to practice letter identification, this information can be tracked with the data the districts now have, along with using the data that is used by the TLEC. It is hoped that the department of education will soon release the outcomes they are wanting from preschool programs.
* Relevant-The primary reason to implement a preschool is to improve the abilities of kindergarten students to be successful. This strategy is intended to provide all 3 & 4 year old students of the school district with the skills they need to begin learning at the kindergarten level, as well to providing this opportunity for all students regardless to their economic status.
* Time Bound-The first opportunity to review data will be at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year. At this time, the Santa Fe Trail School District will have an additional year of Lexia Reading and Aimsweb data, along with having the time to setup additional learning criteria to be evaluated. The key year for both districts will be the 2018-2019 school year, when the students who enter school will have had two years in which to participate in preschool education.
1. **Provide evidence to support the need for this targeted area(s).**

For many years, the professional staff that make up the both districts kindergarten classrooms have expressed concern with how many district students were entering kindergarten not knowing the basic skills in the areas of colors, alphabet, numbers, and social skills.

In looking at this year’s Santa Fe Trail kindergarten class (2015-2016), according to the Lexia Reading programs placement of students, 38% of the incoming students were a the preschool level of this reading program. This was interpreted to mean these students had little or no prior reading skills entering kindergarten.

In looking at data from Santa Fe Trail Language Arts program and Aimsweb data, it was found that 52% of our students were in the strategic or intensive reading levels according to our Lead 21 Language Arts Program requiring some type of reading intervention. On top of that, no students scored in the advanced level of this program.

For the Santa Fe Trail School District, the Aimsweb data wasn’t much different. Aimsweb data indicated that 51% of the kindergarten students beginning the 2015-2016 were in Tier II and Tier III, which indicated these students needed additional reading support.

As school districts, there are limited opportunities for students to attain preschool education. The districts serve preschool students through the TLEC, but students have to an IEP or qualify through the state guidelines of the 4-year old at-risk program. The IEP program serves students ages 3 & 4, while the at-risk program addresses students that are 4 years old. This school year the program is serving 50 students.

There is one pre-school program in the two school districts. It serves students ages 3 & 4. This preschool is currently serving 15 students. Due to location, transportation needs, and the cost of the program, many of the students in the district could not utilize this private preschool.

To compound the districts issues with kindergarten readiness, both districts have high poverty rate. The current building where the Santa Fe Trail preschool is located has close to a 60% free and reduced lunch rate. These poverty rates make it hard for students to attend any type of private preschool even if there were more preschools available. Also, the exposure to technology and its use to enhance student to educational opportunities is hindered due to the economic status that many of our potential preschool students are in.

1. **List the steps that will be taken to implement this plan (include a timeline).**

Prior to the release of the Jones Trust Early Literacy Grant, the Santa Fe Trail School District was well on its way to implementing an expansion district preschool to include all 3 & 4 year old students. The fact this grant came about when it did, has been seen as an additional resource in providing preschool services for the Santa Fe Trail students. The process of implementing a district wide preschool program developed out of the need for the district to reorganize its student centers and attempt to provide preschool education.

Spring 2015

During the spring of 2015, the board of education reviewed its facility utilization and became aware that the district could be reorganized to better utilize its facilities. The fact was the Scranton Attendance Center (SAC). Grades 3 and 4, could be either moved to the Carbondale Attendance Center (CAC) or split between the Overbrook Attendance Center (OAC) and CAC.

As with any type of closing of facilitates in a consolidated school district where a community school would be closed, there wasn’t enough support on the board to do this. Besides the SAC building is one of the best maintained buildings in the school district. It was proposed that if there was a way in which to keep the SAC building open for district use, the board would reconsider its thoughts.

Knowing there was a strong need to provide preschool services to all eligible students in the school district. This need had been communicated to board of education numerus times from kindergarten instructional staff. As well as being aware that there was only one preschool (private) the board of education was fully aware of the challenges to have beginning students’ kindergarten ready. Add into the mix the state department was discussing the need for school districts to provide interventions to help children become kindergarten ready, the board of education had an opportunity, through reorganization, to explore the issue of expanding its already in place preschool.

Summer 2015

During the summer of 2015 a major event occurred that help provided the board of education the much needing way to fund an expansion of its current preschool.A building administrator resigned and instead of replacing the individual, it was decided to rearrange administrative staff and absorb the savings of this position into the expansion of a district preschool that would serve all students.

At this same time, the superintendent began meeting with the director of the TLEC to begin working how the educational programs could work together to help establish a district wide preschool. After several meeting on this issue a rough plan was developed to begin addressing ways to expand the current district preschool in an attempt to serve all eligible students.

Fall 2015

During the fall of 2015 several meetings were held between the preschool teachers, district kindergarten staff, TLEC administrative staff, along with the director of the TLEC and the superintendent of schools. To discuss this proposed expansion of a district wide preschool and if the needs were still there for this endeavor. After these meetings plans were developed to address the concerns of staff that arose due to discussion of expanding the current preschool program. This was done through developing areas that needed to be addressed and sharing ideas back and forth through email until there was enough agreement to continue.

Winter of 2015-2016

The superintendent began meeting with the site councils in the school district to begin sharing what was developing with the board of education’s intent to reorganize the school district and establish a district wide preschool for all eligible students. There were several questions as to how this would be paid for, but no objections to district reorganization or the establishment of the proposed expansion of the preschool.

The issue of how the district proposed to pay for an expansion of its current, without the need of grants, was discussed and presented. Realizing that if the district were to totally close a building the district would be able to see cost reductions through employment of personnel no longer needed and through utility costs. The board of education was presented a plan that addressed the potential savings to the school district should it out right close the SAC building. The board of education took this amount and directed the superintendent to begin planning on an expansion of the preschool with the proposed savings generated by the close of the building.

The only negatives heard were to rumors that the SAC building was not going to be used. After clearing up the rumors, there has not been any further concerns expressed. As anyone who lives in a school district that is proposing to use buildings in a different manner, this usually fills a room at a board meeting. This has not been the case with this proposal. At this time, there have been no patrons approach the board of education in opposition to the reorganization, nor the establishment of a district wide preschool.

At the February 2016 board meeting, the board of education gave approval to proceed with district reorganization and the establishment of a district wide preschool.

Spring of 2016

TLEC staff who still had questions were asked to attend a site visit to a school district who not only established a district wide preschool, but had implemented a community day care as well. This visit did a lot to comfort TLEC staff that the expansion of the preschool could be accomplished.

Currently, the superintendent of schools is working on staffing for the preschool, enrollment documents needed for preschool students to begin school, and transportation to and from preschool. There are talks being held between the TLEC and the district as to how to handle enrollment of preschool students. The district is also working on the moving of classrooms around in the district and implementing the necessary changes to the SAC building to accommodate preschool students.

A proposed building reorganization schedule follows:

Timeline for Relocation:

* May 16 through August 1st.
* May 16 through May 27 OAC/CAC in building classroom moves.
* May 30 through June 10 Move SAC classroom to OAC/CAC
* July 25-29 move DAC to SAC.
* Out of DAC on August 1st.

With the announcement of the Jones Trust Mobilizing Literacy Grant and the small allocation to the Burlingame School District due to its student enrollment through the grant, the Burlingame School District reached out to the Santa Fe Trail School District to inquire if they could jointly participate with Santa Fe Trail in its expansion of their preschool program?

Due to the relationships of the Osage County superintendents through their work in the TLC and several other joint Jones Trust grants, the inclusion of the Burlingame School District was not seen as a concern, but welcomed by the Santa Fe Trail School District.

Through discussions of the two district superintendents a financial plan has been agreed to. The Burlingame allocation from the Mobilizing Literacy Grant will be combined the Santa Fe Trail allocation. The Burlingame allocation will be used by the Santa Fe Trail to defer the total costs of implementing, supplying, sustaining the preschool expansion.

Through mutual agreement of the two school districts, if the Burlingame preschool enrollment exceed its Mobilizing Literacy allotment, the Burlingame School District will make up this difference. The Burlingame actual student enrollment will be reviewed and compared to the actual personal salaries that make up the classroom instruction (teacher and para support). The Burlingame School District will provide its own transportation to and from the preschool center.

The Santa Fe Trail School District will be responsible for the repair and maintenance of the building, utility expenses, insurance, supplies, technology, etc. The district will also be responsible for the employment of all additional staff and any benefits associated with this employment.

1. **List the resources already in place to support the targeted area(s).**

As mentioned previously, the Santa Fe Trail School District has a facility (SAC) that is in tremendous shape. The facility can house a preschool and other programs that may need additional space both with the school district and TLEC.

Both Burlingame and the Santa Fe Trail have established preschool program that addresses students with IEP’s and 4 year olds who have been identified as at-risk as defined by KSDE. Of the 4-5 instructors who will possibly be needed to expand the Santa Fe Trail current preschool program, 3 of the instructors have experience with the district, with 2 of them having continuous experience for over the past 10 years. The established preschool in Burlingame will remain in Burlingame. Santa Fe Trail will provide preschool opportunities to Burlingame students who do not qualify for TLEC services.

Not mentioned before, both school districts work with an educational service center to provide a Parents as Teachers program. The Santa Fe Trail School District has 21 slots, which the service center provides parental and child developmental education to parents with children birth to 3. This program will have anofficein the SAC building to meet with parents and others should the need arise. This program will help in the identification of potential students to the district preschool. With the space available, the building can address other early child educational needs should the opportunities arise, as well as, adjust to increasing enrollment should this happen.

The school district, along with the bus contractor, have good reputations in providing and overseeing the transportation of the current students in the district. For the last 7 years, the district has been shuttling students throughout the school district. Through this experience the district has developed safe guards as to what to do to get students between buildings. The Santa Fe Trail School District has recently replaced three of its leased buses. Two of these buses have been equipped with student restraint systems in preparation of expanding the preschool program. The Santa Fe Trail School District does not foresee major issues when it comes to transporting preschool students.

Though the implementation of a preschool isn’t totally new to either school district, the concept of a district wide preschool will call for an additional individuals who may not have the experience of being in this type of an educational setting. Due to this fact, these individuals may need professional development in the area of working with preschool students. Through the districts relationship with both the TLEC and an educational service center, the idea of professional development has been discussed and planed for. In most cases, all individuals working in the preschool setting will receive continues professional development through the TLEC and the educational service center as required for those working with the TLEC. In short, all employees working in the preschool will have required professional development to continue working with preschool students.

1. **Identify the resources needed other than monetary funding.**

The Santa Fe Trail School District is keenly aware there will be professional development needs in the employment of individuals who have little or no experience in a preschool setting, as it is aware that those already working in the current preschool or who already have experience in a preschool setting have required professional development that must be attained. The district, in conjunction with the TLEC has planned to address this issue in an ongoing process. The same requirements that are needed for professional and para educators will be required for those working in the district portion of the preschool setting. If additional professional development is identified as being needed, the district will provide this training.

The district welcomes new eyes view what is currently being done in the district preschool. Having ran a specialized preschool, past practice may not be the most appropriate way to run the entire program. The district hopes that through its relationship with Emporia State University that new and more effective ways to administer and operate its preschool program can be addressed to provide the best ways to prepare to be kindergarten ready.

1. **Share the assessment(s) that will be used to measure the effectiveness of the intervention(s).**

The districts, through TLEC uses 3 different evaluation tools to measure effectiveness of the classroom setting. These being the Kansas Early Learning Inventory for 4’s (KELI-R), Assessment, Evaluation, and Programming System (AEPS), and Local Assessments as determined between TLEC teachers and the SFT Kindergarten Instructors. Currently, the districts plans to use the same measures to help evaluate the effectiveness of the entire district preschool and provide consistency between all programs.

As we add this additional segment, that of adding regular education students, to the already established preschools, the school districts will need to establish ways to evaluate data. The use of data from the beginning of school in the years of 2015 and 2016 will need to be used to gage the effectiveness of students entering kindergarten from the district preschools.

Due to the perceptions of the kindergarten teachers that the majority of students are not currently prepared for kindergarten, the districts will need to address these perceptions and evaluate whether the expansion of the preschool is working.The perceptions of the instructional staff, along with the data the TLEC uses, and comparison as to where students are beginning in their kindergarten reading will provide the districts with evidence as to how effective the expansion of the preschool is in the area of reading.

The districts will also need to measure the satisfaction of the parents of students in the preschool program. At the end of each school year as parent satisfaction survey will be administered. The results of the survey will be reported to the Mobilizing Literacy Committee at the end of each year.

As mentioned in an earlier area, it is the districts hope that our involvement with Emporia State University will provide us the resources and tools to enhance our current and future preschool programing. This help could come to us through curriculum, evaluation of our program, new evaluation instruments, and how we gather data, whatever suggestions ESU might have to enhance the districts preschool program would be welcome.

The districts are well aware that KSDE has targeted kindergarten readiness as an area it want to see improved in all school districts of the state. Due to this focus from KSDE, we expect the department to establish the outcomes they want to see in an entering kindergarten student. When outcomes are disseminated, the Santa Fe Trail School District will need to be able to change its current preschool practices and evaluation system to meet the state mandated outcomes.

1. **Provide a detailed budget for the requested funding.**

As mentioned earlier, the district was well on its way to expanding its current preschool program when this grant came out. The parameters established by the school board were that the expansion of the preschool, to address all students ages 3 & 4, could not cost the district any more that the reorganization of moving grades 3 & 4 saved the school district.

In any savings of closing a building, the main cost savings is in the area of staff. In the case of closing, now reorganizing, the potential savings involved in reorganizing SAC building addressed administrative and classified employees. The estimated savings in reorganizing the building by moving the current third and fourth grades was estimated at $213,000 (see attachment).

The process then began into looking at what it would potentially cost the district to expand the current preschool program. In reviewing this expansion it was determined there would be a need to employ two instructors, two para educators and a building secretary/health aide. The day to day administration of the program would fall on the district superintendent with no additional costs. The other required factors were the inclusion of twoshuttle bus routes to assure student attendance, along with anticipating additional costs in furniture, moving fencing, and playground equipment. The estimated cost to expand the preschool program was estimated at $193,000 (see attachment).

With the release of the Jones Trust – Mobilizing Literacy Grant the combined funds will now be used between the Santa Fe Trail and Burlingame School Districts to expand the Santa Fe Trail only preschool into a joint venture by serving both districts preschool populations. The combined allocation, in the neighborhood of $35,000 from the Jones Trust, will help reduce the potential costs to expand the, what was going to be a Santa Fe Trail only program, to a truly joint endeavor between the two school districts. The Santa Fe Trail and Burlingame School Districts look forward to working together on this preschool venture.