

November 27, 2024 Questions	November 27, 2024 Answers
Who will be reviewing and approving Early Start CT applications?	The OEC team will be reviewing and approving Early Start CT. As a reminder, School Readiness councils/liaisons will not be reviewing or approving applications.
What's the difference between the Annual Funding Amount (Program Operations tab) and Funding Amount for Spaces (Spaces and Funding tab) in the application	The Program Operations Tab is the program specific information on file with the OEC. The annual funding amount is the amount the program may be funded annually that includes both state-funded spaces (baseline funding amount for previous School Readiness and Child Day Care slots) and private provider payments. The Space and Funding Tab has the program's baseline funding amount; the amount for state-funded spaces only. This section is where a program requests state-funded spaces within that allocation.
Can a Board of Education run program (not licensed) who operates a before/after school program request the school age funding space?	Programs can choose the space type/s that meet the needs of their children and families and is within their allocation. The type of spaces requested in this application may be different than the programs current School Readiness and/or Child Day Care space types.
What is the difference between the Part Day space rates?	There are three space type categories in Early Start CT: full time, half time, and quarter time. Then, there are 10- and 12-month options for each of these space type categories. Programs may choose the space type whose hours of care matches the needs of the families and community.
Will the OEC be offering office hours for programs to ask specific questions and or scenarios for the RFA (A)?	Office hours will not be offered, but you are encouraged to discuss specific impacts and or situations with your liaison or contractor.
If I choose a reduction in spaces will this affect my allocation moving forward?	A programs' allocation is based on the number and type of spaces requested and approved.
I am a contractor and oversee several public-school programs, why were these spaces not included in our RFA (A) application?	All programs received an individual application and will need to apply for spaces through the Early Start CT RFA (A) application. If both the program and contractor would like to maintain the current relationship structure, the program should indicate on their RFA application that it is supported by a fiduciary/contractor, and that they would like to continue this relationship with the current contractor. More information will be communicated regarding this process.
The RFA (A) application will not allow me to create a password	Programs need to register with the email on file that the RFA (A) application was sent to.

	<p>If you are experiencing technical difficulties with the RFA (A) application email, please send an email to <a href="mailto:oeq.app.eceqi@ct.gov">oeq.app.eceqi@ct.gov</a></p>
Will OEC consider extending the December 5 <sup>th</sup> deadline for the application to be submitted?	The deadline for submission is Thursday, December 5, 2024.
Will I receive a confirmation once my RFA is submitted?	No, but a confirmation email will be sent once the application has been reviewed by OEC. If there is missing information, programs will have an opportunity to submit the missing information.
Does the allocation include all of my state funded spaces (Child Day Care and School Readiness)?	The funding in the RFA (A) is the total of state funds programs currently receive (Child Day Care and/or School Readiness) which is merging into one funding stream with Early Start CT July 1, 2025. Please note: Child Day Care also includes Infant Toddler Expansion Phases 1 and 3. School Readiness also includes Infant Toddler Expansion Phase 2.
How do I decide how many spaces to select since Child Day Care and School Readiness are now combined into one allocation?	Programs should consider the needs of their families/community and licensed capacity when selecting space types.
Why is the OEC aligning the spaces with Care4Kids, and how does this impact programs that are not Care4Kids providers?	<p>Early Start CT legislation (<a href="https://www.cga.ct.gov/2024/ACT/PA/PDF/2024PA-00078-R00SB-00014-PA.PDF">https://www.cga.ct.gov/2024/ACT/PA/PDF/2024PA-00078-R00SB-00014-PA.PDF</a>) dictates that the OEC aligns state funded programs to the Care 4 Kids system.</p> <p>There is no impact on programs that do not receive Care 4 Kids funding. The space types align to hours of care provided.</p>
If our allocation is reduced what happens to funding for currently enrolled children over the summer?	Programs will have the opportunity to apply for additional spaces in the Competitive RFA (B) as outlined in the RFA (B) application. Spaces are not guaranteed and will be awarded based on the competitive criteria.
How do I apply for more spaces in the RFA?	Programs can apply for additional spaces in RFA (B) to be released in the coming weeks.
The Local Governance Partner process is not part of the Early Start CT RFA. Do we know anything about what this process will look like?	Information will be scheduled in the upcoming months to discuss Local Governance Partner responsibilities.
Do we include the additional spaces we will find out about in January in this application?	No, final approvals have not yet been determined for new space requests. The new spaces are not included in the Early Start CT RFA (A) baseline funding application. More information on new space requests will be provided soon.

If I have students who are funded through Smart Start or just traditional public school preschool students, may I use Early Start spaces to offer before and after care services?	<p>Yes. Early Start CT should be used to increase access to programming, not supplant other funding streams.</p> <p>There are three space type categories in Early Start CT: full time, half time, and quarter time. Then, there are 10- and 12-month options for each of these space type categories. Programs may choose the space type whose hours of care matches the needs of the families and community.</p>
Will you be looking at QSM data in the registry for all applicants?	<p>For RFA (A), no, the OEC is reviewing the application submitted and not OEC DQSM Professional Registry data. Currently funded state programs should be in compliance with General Policy A-01  <a href="https://www.ctoec.org/forms-documents/legislative-requirements-for-staff-qualifications-in-state-funded-programs.pdf">https://www.ctoec.org/forms-documents/legislative-requirements-for-staff-qualifications-in-state-funded-programs.pdf</a></p> <p>*Interim guidance for QSM's was emailed to providers on November 25, 2024 <a href="#">Interim Guidance QSM November 2024.pdf</a></p>
If students in School Readiness slots are attending beyond 35 hours per week do they qualify for the wraparound spots in the application?	No, 35+ hours is considered full time and is reimbursed at \$10,500. Wraparound spaces are intended to provide the equivalent of full day services for children not currently enrolled in a full day state-funded space.
Is this application for CDC PHASE II and III, including those who are a contractor for phase III? If so, do I need to do two applications?	RFA (A) allocations include expansion funding as applicable. Programs will only complete one application. Child Day Care also includes Infant Toddler Expansion Phases 1 and 3. School Readiness also includes Infant Toddler Expansion Phase 2.
Does the amount paid by the State include the extra enrollment funds for FY 22-23 and 23-24?	No, enrollment funds were not a part of the allocation and were a separate grant/contract using ARPA funds which ended 9/30/24.
Does the program funding include the administrative fee, and can a program change their space type/care level for this application?	Programs will not receive administrative funds. Those funds (up to 10% but not to exceed \$150,000) will go to the Local Governance Partner.
My table would not let me put in the number of spaces I have. What happens then? I have 15 children on my preschool grant but if I cannot get paid for that what do I do? Tell families they have to come off the grant?	Spaces can only be entered within your allocation. In RFA (A), spaces can only be requested in your baseline amount. Programs will have the opportunity to apply for additional spaces in the Competitive RFA (B) as outlined in the RFA (B) application. Spaces are not guaranteed and will be awarded based on the competitive criteria.
If I currently have a contractor/fiduciary that holds my OEC contract/grant, but do not plan to continue it, rather I plan to	Early Start CT RFA A will result in direct contracts between the OEC and the program(s) approved for state-funded spaces. Programs only need to indicate if

contract with OEC as my fiduciary do I check the box?	they would like for their current contractor/fiduciary relationship to continue.
If a program has a transitional kindergarten classroom for children not enrolled in kindergarten, can they be considered as a preschooler for Early Start?	<p>If a child is not enrolled in Kindergarten, they are considered a preschool-age child and may occupy a preschool space. The School Age space type is for children who are enrolled in Kindergarten through 12 years of age.</p> <p>Regardless of the age of a child, all families enrolling in Early Start CT must meet program eligibility requirements. These requirements will be detailed in the forthcoming Early Start CT contract and General Policies.</p>
I currently have preschool state funding spaces but would like to request infant/toddler spaces. My current allocation will only cover the preschool spots. How can I request infant/toddler spaces?	Programs will have the opportunity to apply for additional spaces in the Competitive RFA (B) as outlined in the RFA (B) application. Spaces are not guaranteed and will be awarded based on the competitive criteria.
Does my program need to be fully enrolled by July 1, 2025, for the beginning of Early Start CT?	Yes, it is expected that programs will be fully enrolled on July 1, 2025.
What is the process if current enrollment exceeds the calculated baseline funding allocation?	The number of space/types must fit within the baseline allocation listed in the RFA. Programs will have the opportunity to apply for additional spaces in the Competitive RFA (B) as outlined in the RFA (B) application. Spaces are not guaranteed and will be awarded based on the competitive criteria.
For a public-school program where students attend 7 hours a day what space type do I select?	If care is provided for at least 35 hours per week, the program would select preschool full time (10 months).
If my program is a current CDC subcontractor, would I now be a direct contractor with OEC?	Early Start CT RFA (A) will result in direct contracts between OEC and the program(s) approved for state-funded spaces. Programs only need to indicate if they would like for their current contractor/fiduciary relationship to continue.
Can we use our Head Start funding for an existing program, or does it have to be a new or expansion of the program?	<p>No. This application is not for brand new programs.</p> <p>If a State Head Start space supports a Federal Head Start/Early Head Start space, it would be an "expanded" space. If the State Head Start space does not support a Federal Head State/Early Head Start space, it is a "new" space.</p>
What space type options are available for State Head Start? Does summer programming qualify as year-round?	The State Head Start space types are set and detailed the Early Start CT legislation. To provide a summer option to Head Start/Early Head Start children, a

	program would need to expand services from school year to full year, to include summer months.
Will there be a COLA added to the amount of funding?	The annual funding amount in the RFA includes both the baseline funding amount for spaces and the anticipated COLA/Private Provider Payments. The baseline funding amount is for state-funded spaces only. Final COLA/Private Provider Payments will be calculated based on the final award of spaces for those programs that are eligible to receive these funds.
Where do I find my funding allocation in the RFA (A)? What if I am having technical difficulties?	<p>The baseline funding allocation (for spaces) is listed at the top of tab 3, above the spaces and funding grid, in the RFA (A) application.</p> <p>Please submit an email if you are experiencing technical difficulties to <a href="mailto:oeq.app.eceqi@ct.gov">oeq.app.eceqi@ct.gov</a></p>
How do we fill out the application if there is not a space type option that would equal our current funding amount?	Programs should select the space type option that equals the number of hours of care that meets the needs of families.
Is Care 4 Kids being rolled into Early Start?	Care 4 Kids is not included in the Early Start CT allocation and is a separate OEC funding stream.
Would children who are currently funded completely by State Head Start (no federal funds go towards supporting this classroom), would those children be expanded spaces or new spaces?	If a State Head Start space supports a Federal Head Start/Early Head Start space, it would be an "expanded" space. If the State Head Start space does not support a Federal Head State/Early Head Start space, it is a "new" space.
What if our baseline funding amount is not enough to sustain our program? Are we able to decline RFA (A) funding and wait for the RFA (B) application?	Yes, programs may decline funding. However, please note that the RFA (B) application will be highly competitive, with a smaller amount of money to be allocated, and open to all providers state-wide. Spaces are not guaranteed and will be awarded based on the competitive criteria.