



**Poudre School District
Early Childhood Education Program**

**Request for Transportation Waiver
Grant Years 2020-2025
Grant Year Two: 2021-2022**

Grant Number: 08CH011826
Legal Name of Grantee: Poudre School District
Name of Authorized Official: Rebecca Benedict
Title: Early Childhood Operations Manager

1. Number of Children Served:

Head Start: 275 Children

Early Head Start: 108 Children

2. Number of Children Provided Transportation Services: 90

Head Start: 150-200 Children (typical year)

Early Head Start: Zero Children:

A. Using Grantee Owned or Leased Vehicles Yes

B. Through Grantee Contracted Services No

3. Proposed Number of Children who will be covered by Waiver:

Head Start: 150-200 children- can vary daily by family need

Early Head Start: Zero Children

4. Requesting Waiver of:

X Bus Monitor requirement for buses serving less than 5 children
(45CFR Chapter VIII, 1303.72(a)(4))

5. Waiver applies to: X Grantee _ Delegate

Narrative: Poudre School District (PSD) respectfully submits the FY22 Transportation Waiver request for the Bus Monitor requirement. (Standard 1303.70, section C, specifically 1303.72(a)(4))

Local Background Information: Poudre School District has been the grantee for Early Childhood Education for 55 years. The program serves approximately 1100 children annually. Children are funded by Early/Head Start, Colorado Preschool Program, Tuition Based Preschool, Special



Education funds and local district dollars. Benefits include high quality integrated classrooms for children and in-kind support including building use, facilities maintenance, nutrition, health, and transportation support, and other district staff support. This support allows the District to use most of the Federal Head Start and Early Head Start funds to directly support children and families.

Transportation needs are high for 3-5-year-old children within ECE. These preschool children are currently served in 36 integrated classrooms. Preschool students whose addresses are outside of their neighborhood school's walk areas are transported by PSD school buses. Bus services exist at all 22 elementary schools with preschool classrooms within the 1,856 square miles encompassing the school district catchment.

Currently 90 students are transported on 46 of 82 runs. The breakdown of students is 67 HS, 18 ECSE, and 5 CPP. – During a typical, non-covid year, it is 150 to 181 Head Start students and another 50-60 Integrated Services (Special Education) are transported. The children are placed on existing bus runs which results in operating efficiencies and alignment with the district's promotion of Pre-K through 5th grade integration and provision of inclusive services.

The Early Childhood Program serves children through several braided funding sources. Only some Head Start and Integrated Services funded children are transported. Costs for transportation are applied to the appropriate funding source based on the children served. District Transportation charges ECE for mileage only, and at a lower than standard rate per mile; it also donates some miles, providing Non-Federal Share for the program. The district pays the salaries for drivers, bus aids, routers, and dispatchers.

The costs of personnel are significant and are the primary obstacle to compliance. With 75 runs carrying preschoolers for 133 days per year, at an average of 3.5 hours per day, and with an estimated hourly rate for bus monitors of \$16.80/hour, the estimated annual cost for a monitor on each



run is approximately \$586,530. The ECE budget does not have the funds needed for this purpose.

More than this, Transportation finds that bus drivers capably manage up to 4 ECE children per run without having a significant impact on run time and without the need for a bus attendant's assistance. Runs with over 4 children create difficulties in managing time and runs, so assistance is needed to secure the students in a timely manner. Of the 82 runs used, only 4 runs carry more than 4 preschool students. Paying for bus monitors on 19 runs will cost approximately \$127,360 to \$169,814 per year. PSD has agreed to pay for these bus monitors and the cost for preschool children is used as non-federal share.

The EC Program and the Transportation department jointly propose that the District require bus attendant on only the runs serving 5 or more young children. The request for waiver is to continue running the remaining runs with between 1 and 4 preschool students without a bus attendant, as the driver can support up to 4 students. The EC Program is committed to transporting children safely. We know from experience that providing support on the runs that most need assistance is adequate and financially manageable.

Policy Council: Policy Council supports and appreciates program efforts to increase the level of safety while transporting our children and approves the FY22 Transportation Waiver request. Policy Council approval was granted on March 25, 2021.

**Policy Council Chair
Signature:**

**Director Early
Childhood Signature:**