

February 7, 2025

J.M. Rubin Foundation
Ms. Mary S. Harper
500 S. Flagler Road, Suite 1320
Flagler Town Center
West Palm Beach, FL 33401-5923

Dear Ms. Harper,

It is with great pleasure that xxxxx submits this request of \$63,600 for the Kindergarten Readiness program. The purpose of the grant is to maintain the current level of educational programming by providing one year of tuition-gap scholarship funding to support twelve 2-year-old children. As Xxxx enters our xxth year of serving the community, your generous contribution would help Xxxx achieve its mission: xxxxx.

The Families We Serve: Xxxx serves children, aged 6 weeks-5 years, from low-income working families located in the xxxx neighborhood of city, state. Ninety-five percent of our children are minorities and 8% have limited English language skills. A majority of the children live in single-parent households and crime-riddled neighborhoods with 92% living below or within 150% of the federal poverty level and the rest living near the poverty level. The parents have limited formal education; only 47% are high school graduates. Parents struggle to meet their children's basic needs for food, safe housing, healthcare, and quality childcare. They often cannot provide books and developmentally enriching activities. Prior to entering school, the children exhibit lower levels of cognitive and academic achievement, weaker self-regulatory skills, and higher levels of problematic behavior than widely accepted norms. This disparity contributes to widening the educational "achievement gap" experienced by minorities and lower-socioeconomic children that impact their ability to grow into educated, self-sustaining adults.

Description of Need: Many of our low-income working parents continue to face overwhelming financial struggles post COVID-19 in the face of historical inflation and housing rates. While the needs of our children and families continually increase, Xxxx works tirelessly to maintain an affordable sliding tuition scale based upon household income/ability to pay. The tuition discount creates a gap between tuition and the cost of quality care and education (tuition income covers approximately 45% of the cost per child). We must continue the vital work of helping at-risk children enter kindergarten meeting or exceeding state standards for school readiness. Expansion of our Tuition Discount Scholarship Support to assist families experiencing low and reduced incomes, or those temporarily without incomes, will support our most financially vulnerable families by offering affordable tuition while allowing Xxxx to maintain high quality programming. Based on the socioeconomic background of our families, and the tenuous nature of their housing and employment, many face frequent disruptions to the delicate balance they maintain between family income and expenses. A lack of scholarship funding could have dire consequences such as: 1) reducing the number of children and families we serve; 2) increasing tuition, which would make our vital services unaffordable for our current families; 3) eliminating beneficial elements of our services which go beyond providing child care (i.e., STEAM enrichment, field trips, family development services) or, 4) cutting payroll, leading to significant staff turnover and loss of qualified teachers who have deep bonds with our children.

Further, according to a recent study by McKinsey & Company, COVID-19 has exacerbated pre-pandemic educational gaps which disproportionately impact the families



served at Xxxx. Analysis shows that majority-Black primary and secondary schools are losing even more ground regarding educational attainment gaps after the return to schools from COVID-19 mandated shutdowns than majority-white schools. This makes Xxxx's work even more critical to ensure that its children enter kindergarten meeting or exceeding state standards to close this gap. Xxxx strives to do more for its community regarding this with continued support.

Xxxx engaged in a capital campaign, which raised over \$8 million to build a new facility. The xxx opened in month, year. Moving into our new home has given us nine additional classrooms. Xxxx has worked diligently to request increased support in order to maintain standards and lay the groundwork for increasing enrollment at our new facility. The funds to sustain the new classrooms and associated costs will come from tuition, endowment, rental income, and corporate partnerships. Since 2020, Xxxx has significantly grown enrollment from 96 students to 135 and seeks to incrementally increase enrollment of low-income students further to 208. In the meantime, our waiting list exceeds 250 children. Xxxx is eager to open additional classrooms and reduce the waiting list further with financial support and contributions to our Scholarship Fund in order to support our families as they navigate through resolving their housing and financial issues by assisting them with tuition expenses.

Our Program: Xxxx provides year-round, five days per week preschool education. We deliver a comprehensive early childhood education program preparing at-risk children to enter kindergarten meeting or exceeding state standards for school readiness. Accredited by the National Accreditation Commission and recognized as a Gold Seal School of Excellence by the Florida Department of Children and Families, Xxxx provides critical services and experiences focusing on the whole child. The curriculum is individually tailored to engage each child through visual, auditory, and kinesthetic activities that combine creative, spontaneous play with formal instruction.

The Kindergarten Readiness curriculum consists of two major components:

- 1) **Holistic Early Childhood Education:** Xxxx's program emphasizes creativity, spontaneous play and exploration and is combined with formal instruction based on Florida Early Learning and Developmental Standards. The Literacy for Life program is the foundation of our curriculum, providing the core from which a child will learn throughout his or her lifetime. Xxxx implements STEAM practices, which incorporate enriched science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics throughout the curriculum. Our art, music, movement, field trips, early childhood wellness and social and physical fitness programs enhance our students' social, emotional, physical, and cognitive development. The combination of our literacy curriculum enhanced with STEAM practices and focused social/emotional development encourages curiosity, investigation, and discovery in young learners.
- 2) **Family Development:** As a requirement for children attending Xxxx, all parents must participate in parenting skills training which assists with building self-sufficiency, strengthening the parent-child relationship and empowering parents to provide positive early learning home environments that foster development of school readiness. In addition, all parents are offered a variety of outreach services provided by an on-site social worker including: case management, homelessness prevention, job searches, tax preparation services, credit counseling, homeownership assistance, educational/vocational counseling, benefits navigation, nutrition education, domestic violence, and physical and mental health services. Parenting skills training and outreach services help to

strengthen the family, bolstering security for the child and self-sufficiency for the parent(s).

Each year, Xxxx provides at-risk preschool children the opportunity to begin their academic careers at the same level as their peers. On May 6, 2024, fifty-two children graduated from Xxxx's preschool program and 93% of those children started kindergarten meeting or exceeding the state expectations for kindergarten readiness. The quality early childhood education provided by Xxxx puts at-risk children on a path to educational success. With a strong beginning to their school careers, these children are more likely to stay in school and graduate, pursue postsecondary education, and successfully transition to adulthood.

Evaluation: Yearly, the overall outcomes of the Kindergarten Readiness program include:

- One hundred percent (100%) of children in the PreK4 program will graduate from Xxxx preschool.
- Ninety-three percent (93%) of children graduating from pre-kindergarten will begin kindergarten meeting or exceeding state standards for kindergarten readiness.
- Eighty percent (80%) of children in younger, non-graduating age groups will be at their age appropriate academic and social/behavioral levels at year-end.
- Eighty percent (80%) of parents will attend and participate in the required number of scheduled parenting sessions annually.
- One hundred percent (100%) of children will receive a nutritious breakfast, lunch, and snack daily while in attendance.

The program is measured against the most robust and rigorous national standards on education, health and safety. We are committed to maintaining NAC national accreditation and [REDACTED] accreditation. Reliable and researched based assessments are used to measure and monitor success. They include: The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale, Infant/Toddler Environment Rating Scale, e-DECA, the STAR Early Literacy Assessment, LENA, and ASQ/ASQE assessments. We also utilize the Gold Online and Classroom Assessment Scoring System assessment tools as quality measures of school readiness and teacher effectiveness.

With your support, we can continue to build brighter futures for children from these low-income, single parent, and at-risk families. We need your help. Together, we can make a difference for the future success of the children and their families.

Respectfully Submitted,

Executive Director

2024 Xxxx Graduates

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