

RESOLUTION NO. _____

COUNCIL OF THE CHEROKEE NATION

A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING CHEROKEE NATION CHILD CARE AND DEVELOPMENT TO SUBMIT AN APPLICATION FOR PARTICIPATION IN THE STATEWIDE EARLY CHILDHOOD PILOT PROJECT

WHEREAS, the Cherokee Nation since time immemorial has exercised the sovereign rights of self-government in behalf of the Cherokee people;

WHEREAS, the Cherokee Nation is a federally recognized Indian Nation with a historic and continual government to government relationship with the United States of America;

WHEREAS, the Cherokee Nation recognizes the needs of children and families to receive quality child care and supportive services;

WHEREAS, the need of such citizens to receive child care that allows families to work and attend school;

WHEREAS, Cherokee Nation Child Care and Development wishes to expand capacity for serving infants and toddlers through high quality early childhood services;

WHEREAS, Cherokee Nation Child Care and Development will be awarded funding from the State with a matching fund requirement ranging from a minimum match of \$85,514.00 to a maximum match of \$171,027.00.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CHEROKEE NATION, that the Council of the Cherokee Nation authorizes Cherokee Nation Child Care and Development to accept funds from the State of Oklahoma for participation in The Statewide Early Childhood Pilot Project and that the Principal Chief (or his designee) is authorized to negotiate and execute all official documents in this regard.

CERTIFICATION

The foregoing resolution was adopted by the Council of the Cherokee Nation at a duly called meeting on the ____ day of _____, 2007, having ____ members present, constituting a quorum, by the vote of _____ yea; _____ nay; _____ abstaining.

Meredith A. Frailey, Speaker
Council of the Cherokee Nation

ATTEST:

Don Garvin, Secretary
Council of the Cherokee Nation

Approved and this ____ day of _____, 2007.

Chadwick Smith, Principal Chief
Cherokee Nation

ATTEST:

Melanie Knight, Secretary of State
Cherokee Nation

**FY-08 Application for Participation in
The Statewide Early Childhood Pilot Project**

Program name: Cherokee Nation Child Development Center

Provide the number and location of proposed *enhancement* slots.

Sixteen enhanced slots are proposed, all located at the Cherokee Nation Child Development Center in Tahlequah, Oklahoma.

Describe staffing plans for each classroom, including ages of children, group size, ratio, the number of Lead and Associate Teachers and Aides needed, and if staff with Pilot Program required qualifications are currently employed.

Toddler I Classrooms (a and b) – Children are approximately one to two years old. Two classrooms of 8 children will be included in the program enhancement. The group size for each room will be 8 children with two full time and one part time Associate Teachers per room. One Lead Teacher will have responsibility for managing both classrooms, including the supervision of staff, development of lesson curriculum and lesson plans, and supervision of the children. Current staffing includes one Lead Teacher with a bachelor's degree in Early Childhood and two Associate Teachers with CDA credentials (one credential pending, employee has met all requirements, her observation has been completed she is waiting for a review from the national office) Additional Teachers as listed above will be hired.

Provide the number and location of proposed *expansion (new)* slots.

Twelve to sixteen new slots are planned at the Cherokee Nation Child Development Center in Tahlequah.

Describe staffing plans for each *new* classroom, including ages of children, group size, ratio, and the number of Lead and Associate Teachers and Aides needed.

Two classrooms of six to eight children are planned. We are exploring the feasibility of mixed age grouping. Eight children would be enrolled in each room, the children ranging in age from six weeks through two years. Another option under consideration is two classrooms with six infants in each class. We would add one toddler as the infants become older. We have not however, made a final determination which plan will fit in to our overall program and transition needs from the infant/toddler program to preschool. Two associate teachers will be hired for each classroom. One Lead Teacher will have responsibility for both rooms.

In proposed funded classrooms, what percentage of children meets income eligibility requirements?

Current enrollment in the Toddler I classroom has 80% children who meet income eligibility guidelines. Due to a planned change in the classroom structures in May, it will be possible to enroll 100% eligible children in this classroom.

If you maintain a waiting list, how many children by age are on it? If possible, please indicate the number/percentage of children on the waiting list that meet the Pilot Program income eligibility guidelines.

There are currently Seventy children on the waiting list for enrollment. Nineteen children are zero to twelve months, sixteen children range in ages from twelve to twenty four months, nineteen children are twenty four to thirty six months and sixteen children are thirty six to forty eight months old. Beginning in May we will no longer accept school age children, due to the high demand for full year care for younger children. The Child Development Center plans to convert the school age classroom to another classroom for younger children. As indicated in the parent's application for enrollment, sixty four children meet eligibility guidelines for subsidy; however eligibility is not verified until the time of enrolment.

Provide proposed schedule, to include hours of operation and days closed.

Cherokee Nation Child Development Center operates from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. We close for 11 Cherokee Nation recognized holidays (see attachment – 2007 Holiday Schedule). Additionally the facility generally closes for approximately three days during the year for staff training and development. This is usually between the Christmas and New Years holiday, as we found our enrollment drops during that week.

Describe your current and proposed efforts to involve and support parents, including plans for family support staff and their qualifications.

Currently teachers have the main responsibility for parent involvement and support. Each classroom holds a parent meeting every quarter. Meet with each parent individually each year to review developmental progress. A center wide family activity is also scheduled on time per quarter. Parents are invited to eat with the children any time but we specifically invite family to join their children to celebrate Mother and Fathers day, Grandparent day, Thanksgiving and other special celebrations.

On an informal basis, Teachers have organized fund raising events for families in need. Due to the level of service need, and the classroom responsibilities of teachers, it is often a challenge to adequately address the needs of many of the families. Usually our involvement is limited to providing parents with resource information.

The addition of family support staff would enable us to provide more in depth services to families. We would be able to assist families through the social services system form location services, to completing applications for eligibility, to follow up. Social Work staff would be required to have a minimum of a bachelor's level degree in social work, a masters preferred.

Describe your current and proposed efforts to meet the health, dental, mental health and nutritional needs of children.

. Staff are trained in appropriate health practices and follow the good heath handbook and National Health and Safety Performance Standards for out of home child care programs. . Cherokee Nation operates a clinic for employees,. Children enrolled in the Child Development Center are also eligible to receive services at the Ga-Du-Gi clinic We consult with the clinic staff, provide information on well baby checks and take the children to the clinic with the permission of parents when there is a health concern. Vision and hearing screening have been provided through the NSU School of optometry and the Speech and Hearing clinical students. We recently coordinated with the WW Hastings Dental clinic to begin dental screenings of the children. The Child Development Center has utilized the services of the mental health consultant through the Cherokee County Health Department. Generally the Child Development Specialist has provided classroom observation, and consulted with teachers. Services for individual children including an in depth assessment are not included in current service delivery.

The addition of a social services staff will allow us to more consistently insure provision of services which we have begun, and provide follow up and recommendations to parents. It has been a challenge, when health and mental health follow up is evident through initial screening, for teachers and administrators, along with their other duties, to assist parents in locating appropriate services, and to monitor and encourage follow up when needed. Particularly with developmental or mental health issues which may be identified or suspected in initial screenings, parents may be in a phase of denial about the potential issues. Continued support and encouragement form a professional social worker would provide us with more assurance that appropriate services would be received by the child.

Mental health needs will be addressed though a contract with a mental health professional who will be able to conduct developmental and mental health assessment for those children for whom the teachers may identify possible delays or behavioral issues.

What experience do you have in serving children with special needs?

Children with special needs are a priority for enrollment. We have had, and currently have, children enrolled with a variety of health care needs, developmental disabilities and mental health needs.

Describe any current or proposed efforts to observe and document children's development.

We use the LAP to complete a developmental assessment of children each year. Teachers will transition to use of the assessment with creative curriculum. The services of the Cherokee County Health Department will be utilized to provide more comprehensive assessment of children who are identified with potential delays through teacher assessment.

If you are currently accredited, by which organization and for what time period?

The program is accredited by The National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) through 8-2010.

Summarize your licensing compliance record during the last year.

1-30-06 - no non compliance
5-12-06 – no noncompliance
8-31-06 - no non compliance
1-26-07 - no noncompliance

Describe your efforts to obtain private donations and attach any letters of commitment.

See attached

Signature

Title

Date

Email: susan.kruk@smartstartok.org

Mail: Susan Kruk
Statewide Early Childhood Pilot Project Coordinator
Community action Project of Tulsa County c/o
Smart Start Oklahoma
421 NW 13th Street, Suite 270
Oklahoma City, OK 73103

Cherokee Nation Act/Resolution Proposal Form

ADMINISTRATIVE CLEARANCE:

Program/Project Manager:
 [Signature] 8/7/07
 Signature Date

Department Director:
 [Signature] 8/7/07
 Signature Date

Group Leader:
 Norma Merrin 8/7/07
 Signature Date

Finance Approval (if needed):

 Signature Date

Government Resources Group:
 Lita May 8/7/07
 Signature Date

Administration Approval:
 [Signature]
 Signature Date

Act Resolution

TITLE: Participation in The Statewide Early Childhood Pilot Project

Department Contact: Laurie Hand, Director of Child Care and Development

Resolution Presenter: Norma Merriman, Group Leader Human Services

Council Sponsor: Bill John Baker

NARRATIVE:
 (See Attached Outline for Information Needed)
 The purpose of this resolution is to accept funds from the State of Oklahoma that would allow the Cherokee Nation Child Development Center to participate in the Statewide Early Childhood Pilot Project. This project would be an enhancement to and expansion of the services already provided by the Child Development Center in Tahlequah. An expansion of classrooms, new slots for children, and staff are planned.

A Cash Match of ranging from a minimum match of \$85,514.00 to a maximum match of \$171,027.00. The range is dependent on funding available from outside private funding sources, which is currently being solicited.

This funding will supplement child care and child development operations and supportive services to children and families. Those families in need of quality child care will directly benefit from this funding.

LEGISLATIVE CLEARANCE

Legislative Aide:
 [Signature] 8/7/07
 Signature/Initial Date

Standing Committee:
 Community Service
 8/17/07
 Next Meeting Date

Chairperson:

 Signature/Initial Date

Returned to Presenter: _____
 Date