

**Proposal for American Rescue Funds
Early Child Development Center – Parker Project
Cortland County Community Action Program (CAPCO) and Cortland YWCA**

Contact Information:

Lindy Glennon, Executive Director
CAPCO
607-753-6781
lindyg@capco.org

Kelly Tobin, Executive Director
YWCA
607-753-8774
kelly@CortlandYWCA.org

• **What the funding will be used for?**

The funding requested will be used to pay for two part time positions for two years to oversee the Cortland Community Early Learning Center (CCELC) being proposed at the recently closed Parker Elementary School. The two proposed positions will be responsible for coordinating efforts to organize and move the project forward and provide expertise not available through the YWCA and CAPCO staff. To date, there has been significant effort on the part of the two organizations (CAPCO and YWCA). This includes collaboration with the Cortland City School District and the City of Cortland in identifying the need for increased access to qualified, stable childcare, addressing the need for trained child care staff, safe secure state of the art child care accommodations. The Parker Elementary School facility has been identified as a good choice for location for this joint project. A Task Force worked to identify the preference of the larger community regarding the use of the property and the opportunity to coordinate with the Cortland School District to purchase this project. Funding has been identified and committed for the first phase of the construction and development of the project. Both collaboration partners have identified resources for the needed renovation to get the first phase started and classrooms in the facility. The next step is to hire staff with expertise in project management, grant management and construction to focus on the project steps and details to move it forward. This would include two part time positions:

- Construction Manager - To work with the Architect and Contractor in the details and completion of the project. Person responsible for approving work scope, day to day details of project.
- Project Manager - To organize details of the overall project working with all partners and funding sources. Coordinate the various funding streams, organize the overall project.

Funding is also being requested to cover the cost of adding air conditioning to the infant toddler classrooms. This is strongly recommended by child care licensing bodies when possible. The comfort and security of small children and adults caring for them is important. A/C insures a consistent controlled temperature level and fresh air circulating. Given the current ongoing concerns regarding COVID this is especially important. And, as we are working to develop the CCELC to be a standard of early child development and family support that other communities will look to replicate, this detail is important.

• **What is the perceived economic impact of the project?**

According to the Chamber of Commerce, businesses are finding it hard to attract, recruit, and retain workers to the workforce due to a lack of affordable childcare. The Cortland Community Early Learning Center will help stabilize the child care landscape and allow two of the largest childcare providers a collaborative approach to meeting the needs of the Cortland County workforce. The Parker School project is one step in the right direction to expanding access and providing more slots for the Cortland community at large. Without affordable, high quality and accessible care, there is a severe economic impact on the workforce. In addition to providing child care, this project is committed to training and supporting child care professionals. This will insure the high quality child care and development as well as prepare people for these professional positions. The YWCA and CAPCO are large employers in the Downtown area with more than 450 employees.

• **How will the project benefit the community?**

This project will benefit the community by responding to a crisis need for quality, dependable child care in our community. The vision is for the Parker Elementary School to be transformed into an Early Learning Community Center that provides high quality early learning along with a mix of services offered by both CAPCO and the YWCA Cortland ensuring that every child has the proper foundation to be school ready and set up for success. The vision also includes a commitment to professional development for staff creating a workforce that will benefit other child care providers in the community.

The Cortland Community Early Learning Center (CCELC) of the Cortland County will be an example of the commitment that Cortland and surrounding communities have for ensuring a child's optimal development during the first five years of life. The CCELC will be a collaborative community effort that offers high quality early childhood education and care with deeply enriching experiences for parents and families with young children.

The commitment to professional development of staff includes the opportunity for staff to earn the Child Development Associate (CDA) certification. Through a collaboration, the YWCA and CAPCO have secured funding to provide this certification training using staff that are Certified Facilitators. While earning their CDA, participants will be employed and/or earning a stipend for work in the classroom. This increases the opportunity for experience, adds additional qualified staff in classrooms, offers opportunity for professional development and creates a pipeline of trained professional staff for area child care providers. Area early childhood educators will be offered opportunities for professional growth in evidence-based practices through attending CCELC sponsored workshops, seminars and in-classroom educators will be offered experience in developmentally appropriate practices in all learning domains.

The CCELC will also be a center point for critical early childhood initiatives. These initiatives are evidenced based, recognized and used by NYS Department of Education, local school districts, National Office of Head Start and Office of Children and Family Services. They include, but not limited to:

- Early surveillance and screening for cognitive, physical and mental health development.
- Early childhood obesity prevention and intervention.
- Reducing the likelihood of child abuse and neglect by supporting children and families in developing crucial 'protective factors' that research has demonstrated can mitigate the impact of trauma and adversity.

• **What amount are you requesting?**

This application total ask is for \$500,000.

We are requesting assistance with salary for both a Construction Manager and Project Manager. We anticipate this will be \$100,000 per year and we are requesting funds for a two-year period totaling \$200,000.

We are also asking for \$300,000 to go towards the uncovered move in cost for air conditioning in the classrooms. The move in costs projected and covered to date do not include air conditioning. As we are working to develop the CCELC as a model that can be replicated in other communities, addressing the health and safety of the children and adults caring for them is critical. A/C to provide consistent comfortable temperatures and the flow/return of fresh air is important for licensing of these spaces. This is especially critical now as we deal with insuring safety of the small children with COVID concerns and protocols.

• **Are there other grants available to fund this project?**

There are other funds that have been identified for the CCELC project. None of those funds are available to fund this specific piece – the staff needed for the Project and Construction Managers and A/C for the first classrooms. As shared earlier, both the Executive Directors of CAPCO and the YWCA have been spearheading this project while running massive organizations. In order to have this project come to fruition and maximize the Federal, State and local dollars already secured for the project and those that are currently being worked on, these two positions are critical.

Significant funding for the project beyond this request has been identified. As you can see from the chart below, there has been a commitment of \$1.1 million to the City of Cortland through State and Municipality funding (SAM) directed to the City from Carl Heastie and Barbara Lifton. In addition, the City of Cortland secured an Empire State Development grant that will help fund 20% of the overall project scope to completion. Outside of the City of Cortland funding, the YWCA and CAPCO have also secured funding to help with capital and programming. There is anticipated funding coming in the next few months to help communities address child care deserts, stabilize the child care landscape, and to expand slots in communities. CAPCO and the YWCA are actively looking at these funding streams and will be

ready to apply.

Funder	Amount	Recipient	AWARDED	Notes
Alliance for Economic Inclusion	Asked for \$2 million	YWCA Cortland	\$629,000	Workforce Program starting 9.21
ESD (CFA)*	\$500,000	City of Cortland	20% of total project amount	Capital
Legislative Grants*	min \$990,000	City of Cortland	\$1,100,000	Capital
ARC	\$183,845	YWCA Cortland	\$183,845	Playground/Equipment
HeadStart	TBD	TBD	TBD	Capital
Schumer Line Item (United Way)	\$1,300,000	TBD	TBD	Move-in Costs
Cortland County	TBD	TBD	TBD	Project Manager Position
ARP	TBD	TBD	TBD	Move In and Operating
Marijuana Dispensary	TBD	TBD	TBD	Operating, 3% of sales

• **Have you applied for any grants to fund this project?**

Yes, other funding options have been explored and grants have been submitted. These are highlighted in the chart above.