



Unaffiliated Organizations Operating Request

Child Nutrition

Prepared for City of Stamford
Board of Representatives
March 20, 2025

Executive Summary

Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County (CLC) is requesting \$106,000 in FY26 to support CLC's nutrition program that provides breakfast, lunch and snack to more than 700 children every day in our Early Care and Education programs.

This support makes a big impact in Stamford. 97% of CLC families live in Stamford and one third of Stamford Public Schools Kindergartners are typically CLC graduates.

About CLC

Children's Learning Centers of Fairfield County (CLC) has been a leader in developing and implementing high-quality and affordable early childhood education and care programs since 1902. All of the nonprofit agency's six locations are accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) or approved by Federal Head Start.

The organization's comprehensive early childhood education includes nutrition, health and family support for children 6 weeks old to kindergarten eligible. CLC's mission is to build nurturing and innovative early childhood educational experiences for all children and their families.



Locations and Children Served



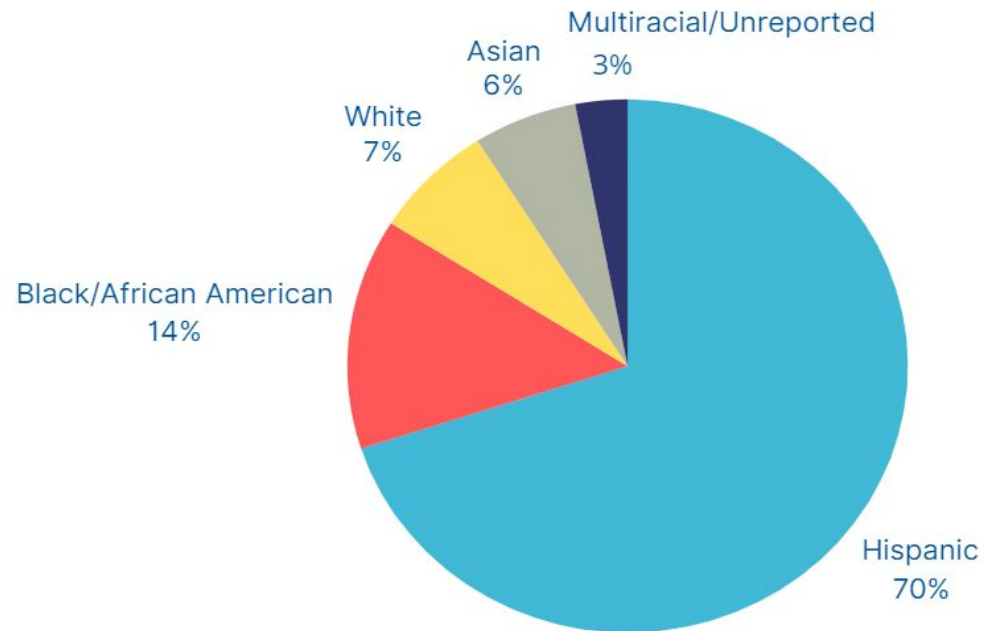
CLC Palmers Hill – 64 Palmers Hill Road (170)
CLC William Pitt – 195 Hillandale Avenue (320)
CLC Maple Avenue – 90 Maple Avenue (195)

CLC Early Head Start – 72 Franklin Street (48)
CLC Lathon Wider – 137 Henry Street (58)
CLC Westover – 412 Stillwater Road (20)

CLC LOCATIONS



CLC 's Diverse Population



CLC currently serves over 800 children per year.

CLC provides breakfast, lunch and a snack each day meeting **80%** of children's daily nutritional needs at no additional cost to families.

80% of CLC children come from low-income families, including more than **50%** with incomes at or below the Federal Poverty Level.

CLC is a Community Organization

- CLC collaborates closely with SPS on curriculum, professional development and serving children with special needs
- SPS Early Childhood Education Director and Assistant Director are actively involved on CLC's Education Committee; Chief Academic Officer joined CLC's Board of Directors
- Partnership with other area nonprofits (for example)
 - Family Centers
 - Filling in the Blanks
 - Building One Community
 - Stamford Cradle to Career



THANK YOU!

Children's Learning Centers

FY25 Budget vs. Actuals & Forecast
January 2025

	YTD Actuals thru Jan 2025	YTD Actuals thru Jan 2024	YoY YTD Actuals Variance	FY25 Total Budget	FY25 Total Forecast	FY25 Total Variance
Revenue						
Fees	1,514,668	1,589,610	(74,942)	1,920,000	2,570,101	650,101
Govt Grant Income	6,744,501	7,228,713	(484,213)	12,590,000	11,601,453	(988,547)
Other Income	296,567	331,825	(35,258)	70,000	438,159	368,159
Contributions/Fundraising	469,290	547,133	(77,843)	1,800,000	1,615,250	(184,750)
Special Events Revenue	0	0	0	125,000	142,250	17,250
Total Revenue	9,025,026	9,697,281	(672,256)	16,505,000	16,367,213	(137,787)
Expenses						
Salaries	6,257,496	6,255,115	2,382	10,385,000	10,684,000	(299,000)
Benefits and Taxes	1,329,520	1,321,231	8,289	2,475,000	2,300,868	174,132
Lunches and Snacks	494,631	587,325	(92,694)	1,020,000	829,490	190,510
Program Supplies & Activities	68,178	236,957	(168,779)	260,000	126,591	133,409
Occupancy	969,592	1,089,145	(119,553)	1,575,000	1,613,943	(38,943)
Training	56,679	102,039	(45,361)	60,000	77,962	(17,962)
Professional Fees	317,357	439,262	(121,905)	361,000	399,045	(38,045)
Delegate and Collaborations	223,320	214,588	8,731	385,000	384,383	617
Office Expense	48,674	13,753	34,921	200,000	86,809	113,191
Telephone / Internet	69,091	87,293	(18,202)	140,000	119,327	20,673
Interest Expense	62,315	71,053	(8,738)	40,000	113,270	(73,270)
Other Expenses	122,577	118,108	4,469	80,000	199,807	(119,807)
Contingencies	0	0	0	100,000	100,000	0
Total Expenses	10,019,430	10,535,869	(516,438)	17,081,000	17,035,497	45,503
Operational Income (Loss)	(994,405)	(838,587)		(576,000)	(668,283)	(92,283)
One-Time Costs					150,000	
Total Income (Loss)				(576,000)	(818,283)	
Depreciation and Amortization	(164,159)			(416,660)	(328,317)	
In-Kind Rent					(416,000)	
Bond Revenue for Building	2,942,500				2,942,500	
Change in Net Assets	1,783,937	(838,587)		(992,660)	1,379,900	

Children's Learning Centers

Draft C

For year July 1, 2024 to June 30, 2025

	Approved Budget 2023-2024	Current Year End Forecast	Forecast versus 23-24 Budget	Budget Draft C 2024-25	Accuracy %	Budget Draft C vs Budget 23-24	Rough 24-25 versus Est 23-24	Possible Reasons for Variance
Revenue								
Fees	1,945,848	1,825,000	(120,848)	1,920,000	90% + -	(25,848)	95,000	+ Redebt calculations - Not fully enrolled, redbt
Care 4 Kids	844,848	1,025,000	180,152	1,250,000	80% + -	405,152	225,000	+ Additional families qualify and enroll - available openings in the program
Govt Grant Income	11,563,801	12,200,000	636,199	11,340,000	95% + -	(223,801)	(860,000)	+ Head Start COLA increase more than 3% and CACFP reimbursement rate over 3%
Billable Services	0	0	0	0		0	0	- Unfilled slots in the state run programs
Other Income	76,600	115,000	38,400	70,000	80% + -	(6,600)	(45,000)	Change in E-rate funding
Sub-Total	14,431,097	15,165,000	733,903	14,580,000		148,903	(585,000)	
Contributions:								
Contributions/Fundraising	1,500,000	1,450,000	(50,000)	1,800,000	80% + -	300,000	350,000	- Increase of 25% over current year estimate
Special Events Revenue net	0	0	0	125,000	80% + -	125,000	125,000	- Increase of 25% over current year estimate
Fund-Raising Sub-Total	1,500,000	1,450,000	(50,000)	1,925,000		425,000	475,000	
American Recovery Funding								
		0	0	0		0	0	
	0	0	0	0		0	0	
	0	0	0	0		0	0	
Total Revenue	15,931,097	16,615,000	683,903	16,505,000		573,903	(110,000)	
Direct Operating Expenses								
Salaries	10,737,375	10,325,000	(412,375)	10,385,000	95% + -	(352,375)	60,000	+ Open positions, cut in OT - Head Start COLA increase more than 3%
Benefits and Taxes	2,900,516	2,400,000	(500,516)	2,475,000	85% + -	(425,516)	75,000	+ Less enrollees in Health Plan - More enrollees in health plan or 401K match, Increase in WC, more
Lunches and Snacks	927,800	970,000	42,200	1,020,000	90% -	92,200	50,000	+ Able to lock in meal orders - contract increase more than 4%, meal ordering not closely monitored
Program Supplies & Activities	249,000	305,000	56,000	260,000	90% + -	11,000	(45,000)	+ Costs for paper goods comes down - Cost of paper goods go thru the roof
Occupancy	1,442,815	1,675,000	232,185	1,575,000	85% + -	132,185	(100,000)	+ Electric rates - Electric rates, increase in min wage, equipment breakdowns
Training	80,000	66,000	(14,000)	60,000	90% +	(20,000)	(6,000)	+ Reduced rates for training sessions
Professional Fees	686,450	758,000	71,550	361,000	80% + -	(325,450)	(397,000)	Legal Fees
Marketing	0	0	0	0		0	0	
Delegate and Collaborations	375,000	375,000	0	385,000	95% + -	10,000	10,000	Change Head Start State or Federal funding
Office Expense	226,300	240,000	13,700	200,000	90% + -	(26,300)	(40,000)	Inflation - drop in costs
Telephone / Internet	152,400	147,000	(5,400)	140,000	95% + -	(12,400)	(7,000)	Most costs are contracted so there should not be much movement either way
Interest Expense	36,900	35,000	(1,900)	40,000	90% + -	3,100	5,000	CHEFA and EIDL loan payments
Other Expenses	96,400	75,000	(21,400)	80,000	85% +	(16,400)	5,000	+ As we continue shift to electronic communication with families less printing needs
Contingencies	100,000	100,000	0	100,000	0% + -	0	0	- Work and storage units at Palmers Hill finally collapse
Total Expenses	18,010,956	17,471,000	(539,956)	17,081,000		(929,956)	(390,000)	
Operational Income (Loss)	(2,079,859)	(856,000)	1,223,859	(576,000)		1,503,859	280,000	
Depreciation and Amortization	(500,000)	(500,000)	0	(416,660)		83,340	(500,000)	
Net Budget Income/(Loss)	(2,579,859)	(1,356,000)	1,223,859	(992,660)		1,587,199	(220,000)	



2025 City of Stamford Unaffiliated Organizations Operating Request

January 8, 2025

Mayor Caroline Simmons
c/o OPM Department
Stamford Government Center
888 Washington Boulevard
Stamford, CT 06901

Dear Mayor Simmons:

I am respectfully requesting \$110,000 to support CLC's nutrition program which provides breakfast, lunch, and afternoon snacks to more than 700 children each school day. This program addresses the pressing issue of food insecurity in our community supplying 80% of each child's daily nutritional needs at no cost to our families.

Rising costs have increased our nutrition program expenses by 4% to \$6.14 per child per day, compared to \$5.92 last year. This figure does not include essential items like plates, utensils, or staffing required to manage the program and ensure compliance with government standards. Beyond meal provision, our nutrition team conducts annual growth assessments and provides nutrition counseling as needed, supporting the physical health and development of our children.

CLC's mission is to build nurturing and innovative early childhood educational experiences for all children and their families. We operate the Federal Early Head Start and Head Start programs as well as state-subsidized preschool programs, all of which are either free or offered on a sliding scale to ensure accessibility for families in need. 95% of CLC families are considered low or moderate income. Of those, 60% live at or below the Federal Poverty Level (\$31,200 for a family of four).

CLC has a large economic impact on Stamford, enabling hundreds of parents and caregivers to work while providing the crucial educational foundation that young children need to learn and thrive when they enter Stamford Public Schools. 97% of the families that CLC serves live in Stamford and, annually, one third of each SPS Kindergarten class comes out of CLC programs. We also contribute to the community, with nearly 200 employees (two thirds of whom are union members).

Demographically, 74% of CLC's children are Hispanic, 14% are Black/African American, 8% are White, 3% are Asian, and 1% are multi-racial or unreported. Additionally, 16% of our children have an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) or Individualized Family Service Plan (IFSP) for special needs, reflecting an increase from the pre-pandemic rate of 8-9%. Furthermore, 83% of the children we serve are Dual Language or English Language Learners.

In 2024, CLC underwent transformative leadership transitions, welcoming a new CEO, Board Chair, and several senior leaders and Board members. These changes inject fresh perspectives and align CLC for

long-term success. As we continue to evolve, our efforts this year focus on three strategic priorities to strengthen our foundation and deliver on our mission:

1. **Staff Clarity, Experience, and Accountability:** We are restructuring organizational frameworks to improve efficiency, clarify leadership roles, and streamline decision-making. These enhancements empower our educators to focus on providing high-quality early learning experiences.
2. **Programmatic Excellence:** CLC is implementing the latest Creative Curriculum across programs, ensuring synchronized lesson planning and assessment timelines. This alignment enables leadership to track developmental trends and drive targeted improvements. Additionally, the adoption of the Teaching Strategies Gold assessment tool offers real-time data to optimize teaching practices and improve outcomes for all children.

Our deep partnership with Stamford Public Schools ensures alignment between our programs and the public school system. The Superintendent's involvement in our Leadership Council, along with the presence of SPS's Chief Academic Officer on our Board, fosters strong collaboration. Monthly meetings between SPS Early Childhood Education leadership and CLC's education team, as well as integrated classrooms with SPS special education teachers, create inclusive environments that benefit all children.

3. **Financial Stability and Transparency:** CLC continues to face systemic issues impacting early childhood education statewide. Key barriers include a lack of affordable, high-quality slots, chronic workforce shortages, inadequate funding, and rigid infrastructure that discourages participation in the field.

We estimate that it costs \$18,000 per child annually to provide comprehensive programs, but state reimbursement is only \$10,900. This funding gap limits our ability to offer competitive wages, invest in growth, and address operational needs.

To ensure the longevity of our programs, we are reinforcing financial management practices through enhanced budgeting, forecasting, and accountability measures. Additionally, we are expanding development and marketing efforts to drive fundraising growth, increasing community engagement and building a sustainable financial future.

These organizational advancements reflect CLC's unwavering commitment to staff development, program quality, and financial health. I believe that with these priorities and the ongoing support of our Board, Leadership Council and greater community, we are poised to build on CLC's 120+ year history of impact and ensure every child in our care receives the nourishment and education they need to thrive.

Thank you for your consideration and continued support of CLC's vital mission. Please don't hesitate to contact me at 203-653-1326 or monicamaccera@clcstamford.org if you have any questions.

Sincerely,


Monica Maccera Filppu
CEO

Supplemental Note Regarding Financials

CLC's Audit for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024 is currently underway. The 2023 audit is included in the package.

We will begin the budgeting process for the 2025-2026 fiscal year in February for June 2025 Board approval.