



Summer Learning Program Grant Update and Award

To: Jeannine M. Durkin, Superintendent

From: Carolyn Rocheleau, Coordinator of Special Programs

Date: April 16, 2019

The Lowell Public Schools was recently awarded (April 11, 2019) a Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education grant entitled (FY19) ***Development and Expansion of High Quality Summer Learning***. The **\$43,620** grant will provide 6 weeks of summer learning for early childhood students.

The program is designed to address the urgent need for transition services for our early childhood population (ages 3-5). Students exiting early intervention programs, (students turning age 3 over the summer) often have to wait until September for services to begin. This program will welcome students, with and without disabilities, identified as high needs and provide a high quality learning program during the summer. This type of support is particularly important for young children on IEPs who traditionally would not have summer programs to help promote/sustain language and concept development.

The program design will follow a typical preschool day and include the following components. Arrival/breakfast/bathroom (30 minutes), songs and letter play (10 minutes) dialogic reading (10-15 minutes), and introduction to center (5 minutes), center time (90 minutes), small group (30 minutes), gross motor or outdoor activity (30 minutes), lunch, and dismissal (30 minutes).

Children will participate in programming four (4) hours per day, five (5) days per week for six (6) weeks. Total program hours in the classroom will be 120 hours. The program will be augmented with weekly home visiting sessions to support learning occurring in the program and extend the learning at home and will provide an additional thirty (30) hours of home based services.

All participating families will be asked to attend a weekly one-hour session with an Early Learning Specialist for one (1) hour to review what children are learning in preschool. Each week, the Early Learning Specialist will preview a book and toy integrated into the preschool program during the week with parents. Parents will then be given the book and toy to take home. A home visitor will follow up with a visit to each child's home.

Funds will support staffing for teachers, paraprofessionals, and support staff to work in the summer based on the needs of the enrolled students. A home visit component will also be provided to promote early literacy and development and get parents engaged in their child's education.

The Coordinator of Special Programs, Carolyn Rocheleau, and Early Childhood Coordinator, Lisa Van Thiel, were responsible for the writing of the grant proposal and will jointly oversee the implementation of the grant in the summer program.

The half-day program will be held at the Lincoln Elementary School from June 24 through August 2, 2019.