



RESOLUTION # \_\_\_\_\_

ITEM # \_\_\_\_\_

**BOARD ACTION**

Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_

For: \_\_\_\_\_

Against: \_\_\_\_\_

Abstain: \_\_\_\_\_

Abs/Excd: \_\_\_\_\_

Vote Req: \_\_\_\_\_

Other Action: \_\_\_\_\_

**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE ACTION**Adopted: For: 1Against: 0Abstain: 0Abs/Excd: 2

**TO: HONORABLE MEMBERS OF THE LA CROSSE COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS**

**RE: APPROVE USE OF AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDING FOR A CHILD CARE NEIGHBORHOOD MODEL**

**WHEREAS**, La Crosse County was allocated \$22,923,224 through the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, which must be obligated by the end of 2024 and spent by the end of 2026; and,

**WHEREAS**, the County Board has reserved funding for eight project priority areas as outlined in Resolution #55-1/22 including \$3.3 million for a child care neighborhood model; and,

**WHEREAS**, The Parenting Place reported there were 450 child care businesses in La Crosse County in 1998, but by 2021 that number dropped to 92.

**WHEREAS**, The State of Wisconsin funds the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy Program, which supports eligible families, earning equal to or less than 185% of the Federal Poverty Level for the family size, by funding a portion of the cost of child care while parents are working or participating in an approved activity such as seeking employment; and,

**WHEREAS**, La Crosse County Economic Support reports that due to a lack of eligible providers, the number of families receiving the Wisconsin Shares Child care Subsidy dropped from 572 in 2011 to 187 families in 2022.

**WHEREAS**, the School District of La Crosse presented a child care model that could be replicated by two additional La Crosse County school districts agreeing to the guidelines established for a child care center, including serving families receiving Wisconsin Shares and a plan for sustainability; and,

**WHEREAS**, La Crosse County, the School District of La Crosse and the City of La Crosse have collaborated to increase the number of child care spots, along with enhancing existing child care services, increasing wages and enhancing child care structures; and,

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED**, that the La Crosse County Board hereby approves the allocation of \$3 million of American Rescue Act dollars as reserved in Resolution #55-1/22 for any school-based child care center that follows a model of shared funding between La Crosse County and a La Crosse County School District.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the County Administrator, County Board Chair, Finance Director and County Clerk are authorized to take all appropriate actions to effectuate the purpose of this resolution subject to approval as to form by the County Corporation Counsel.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the Executive Committee shall serve as the oversight committee overseeing final program guidelines for operation of a Neighborhood Child Care model in collaboration with a La Crosse County School District.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that if funds are not obligated to child care projects with additional La Crosse County School Districts by the end of 2024, the County Board may reallocate the remaining funds to another American Rescue Plan Act eligible use of funds.

**RE: APPROVE USE OF AMERICAN RESCUE PLAN ACT (ARPA) FUNDING FOR A CHILD CARE NEIGHBORHOOD MODEL**

**FISCAL NOTE: FISCAL NOTE:** This three-year project with the La Crosse School District is estimated to cost La Crosse County a total of \$696,000 (\$162,000 per year for ongoing costs and \$210,000 for one-time remodeling costs) for the program with no additional obligation by La Crosse County beyond this period. Costs will be tracked in the 295.770.3744 division with the County financial system, Account 60300.04 Child Care Services.

Date: 4/13/2022

Kim Cable

**COMMITTEE CHAIR**

Date: 4-13-22

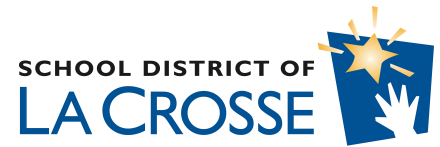
R.T.H.

**RECORDING CLERK**

	Reviewed Only	Recommended	Not Recommended	
Co. Admin.		<u>SO</u>		Requested By: Jane Klekamp Date Requested: March 30, 2022 Drafted By: County Administrator
Fin. Director	<u>[Signature]</u>			
Corp. Counsel				
Board Chair				

Adopted by the La Crosse County Board this \_\_\_\_\_ Day of \_\_\_\_\_, 2022

# Neighborhood-Based Child Care Proposal



At neighborhood elementary schools we will create diverse child care opportunities that are affordable and accessible to families experiencing poverty.

Investment in children at the earliest age through affordable, accessible, high quality child care will make a positive, generational impact on our children and our community.

## THE PROBLEM

Child care is too expensive and doesn't pay well enough, making it hard to find.

- Child care is unaffordable.
- Child care is inaccessible.
- There is a limited child care workforce.

## WHY THE SCHOOL DISTRICT?

- We have a vested interest, we want children to get the best possible start.
- We have space available at underutilized schools in local neighborhoods.
- We want to attract and retain employees.
- We can produce child care workers.

## ACCESS

- The school district provides day care at two neighborhood sites.
- The sites serve children ages six weeks to four years of age.
- 30 spaces will be available to children who qualify for the Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy program, serving students who need it the most.
- 30 spaces will be available to children of school district employees.

## AFFORDABILITY

- We are able to take advantage of existing custodial, maintenance, and food service structures to lower costs.
- Wisconsin Shares will reduce the cost of day care to eligible families.
- ARPA funding will be used to offset initial start up costs and to offset costs for families in poverty. This will eventually be replaced by funding through a new foundation that supports access to child care.

## WORKFORCE

- We will increase Family and Consumer Science classes leading to child care certifications with the goal of graduating 60 highly qualified child care workers a year.
- Using our efficiencies, we can shift expenses from operational costs to wages, paying child care workers between \$15-\$18 an hour.

## SUSTAINABILITY

- School districts across Wisconsin are setting up day care models that are affordable and accessible to school district residents and employees.
- Expandable to any school district.
- We will work with the community to create a foundation that will provide offsets to day cares and families for reserving spaces for children who qualify for Wisconsin Shares.

## ARPA FUNDING ESTIMATE

Renovation and resources (one-time)	\$190,000
Child care credentialing (one-time)	\$20,000
Child care class tuition at WTC (annual)	\$5,000
FCS teacher subsidy (annual)	\$25,000
Operational offset for families in poverty (annual)	\$137,000

**Contact:** Dr. Aaron J. J. Engel, Superintendent, [aengel@lacrossesd.org](mailto:aengel@lacrossesd.org), 608-789-7628



## County Administration

Date: April 13, 2022  
To: County Board Supervisors  
From: Jane Klekamp  
Re: Neighborhood-Based Child Care Project

**Values:** Equity, quality of life, and collaboration

**Summary:** The Neighborhood Child Care Model has the potential to create a new and sustainable child care program, in collaboration with school districts, that would assist families experiencing poverty. At the same time, it would help address labor shortages in the sector by training child care workers and would provide high-quality child care staffed by workers paid a livable wage.

**Effect on Existing Child Care Facilities:** On April 6, 2022, the Parenting Place reported 71 open child care positions and over 1,200 children on waiting lists for child care. The effect of the Neighborhood Child Care Model on existing child care facilities is unknown but as the initial phase would create only 60 spots is likely to be minimal. Additionally, half of those spots will be reserved for children eligible for Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidies, answering an unmet need in La Crosse County. The Neighborhood Model, by training child care workers, also should help alleviate the chronic staffing shortage faced by private child care providers. The Get to Capacity Grants model, which the board did not reserve funding for, does not have a path to sustainability, and would not increase the number of child care slots for families receiving Wisconsin Shares.

**Background:** The Child Care Task Force recommended two child care projects for consideration; Get to Capacity Grants and a Neighborhood Model. The Get to Capacity Grants model would provide short-term funding to existing child care programs with staff openings. Child care businesses would be able to fill open positions as well as retain experienced staff by offering bonuses, increased wages, or provide other incentives. The program wouldn't necessarily make child care less expensive for parents but would shore up the struggling child care sector. The Neighborhood Model is designed to provide child care in multiple neighborhoods for families with the least stability and with less expense for the families. This proposal was designed to engage local philanthropists to be part of the child care solution and provide assistance to some of the most impoverished neighborhoods.

**Current Status:** After reviewing both proposals, the La Crosse County Board of Supervisors reserved funding for the Neighborhood Child Care Model, and as a result, La Crosse County and the School



District of La Crosse are collaborating on a pilot project to provide sustainable, replicable and equitable child care in schools in La Crosse County.

**Sustainable:** The School District of La Crosse has agreed to invest its financial resources, physical space and fundraising strategies to sustain two child care centers into the future. The School District of La Crosse is estimating new expenditures to the school district to be approximately \$460,000/year for a center director, teachers and professional development. That cost does not include other expenses such as infrastructure costs. The estimated expenditures for La Crosse County are between \$190,000-210,000 for one-time facilities costs, and between \$160,000-190,000 annual costs for three years to supplement the operations of the facility. The numbers are the best estimates that can be made at this time based on current information.

The school district is committed to work with local organizations and individuals to create a foundation that will support families that cannot pay the full share of child care. There is also a commitment to train high school students to become child care teachers upon graduation from high school, increasing the number of child care staff in the community.

**Equitable:** The two child care centers, located at Hintgen and Northside Elementary, will serve a total of 60 students, with half of the child care slots reserved for families receiving Wisconsin Shares, the Wisconsin child care subsidy program. This allows more parents to enter the workforce due to available and affordable child care, while increasing the use of Wisconsin Shares in the community, which is currently underutilized due to the lack of qualified child care centers in the area. The other half of the slots will be utilized by staff of the school district, which will help the district with staff recruitment and retention across a range of key roles. The school district is committed to paying a livable wage for staff, which will include a center director, teachers, and assistant teachers. This model would be replicable across school districts in La Crosse County.

**Replicable:** La Crosse County is developing an agreement in consultation with the School District of La Crosse which will include the following criteria: La Crosse County will fund one-time facilities modification, provide additional reimbursement to the school district through 2026 to cover unfunded costs, and provide funding for staff development. The school district will serve children between six weeks to age four years, with 30 students utilizing Wisconsin Shares Child Care Subsidy, commit to continue the program without further La Crosse County support after 2026, provide a sustainability plan, pay a livable wage, adopt a nationally recognized child care curriculum, and operate the child care center to meet the requirements for a Youngstar rating of 5 stars.

If the Neighborhood Child Care Model is approved by the County Board of Supervisors, staff will reach out to other school districts to share the model, answer questions, and review any submitted proposals. Additional proposals will be reviewed and voted on by the Executive Committee.

**User Cost:** Unless eligible for Wisconsin Shares, school district staff will be required to pay the full cost of child care as determined by the school district. Families receiving Wisconsin Shares will be further supported with funding from La Crosse County by providing reimbursement of operational costs to the school district.

**Why Hintgen and Northside Elementary Schools?:** The original recommendations were Hamilton and Northside neighborhoods. Due to space availability, Hintgen and Northside Elementary will be utilized.