

Woodstock Nursery School

Project Overview

Woodstock Nursery School is asking for 20,000\$ to help cover our operating costs and hire an additional teacher for the 2022-2023 school year.

Grant Request

20,000

Total Project Budget

40,000

Applicant Information

Name of Applicant / Organization / Business

Woodstock Nursery School

Mailing Address

P.O. Box 586 Woodstock, VT 05091

Name of Project Coordinator

Wendy Krygier

Contact's Email Address

Telephone

802-457-7098

Organization's Website URL

www.woodstocknurseryschool.org

EIN

Applicant / Organizational Description

Woodstock Nursery School (WNS) has been supporting local families for the past 70 years. Our mission is to provide consistent, high quality early education to children and families. WNS offers an intimate early education setting that focuses on a play based, child guided and developmentally appropriate curriculum. We have a low student to teacher ratio, go on daily outdoor and community explorations, and work to ensure each child is capable to meet their own needs, compassionate for others, and connected to the natural world around them.

If you are applying on behalf of an organization, what is your total organizational budget?

\$75,000

Project Information

Detailed Project Description

Woodstock Nursery School provides a vital and essential service to the smooth running of our community. Without quality childcare young families cannot survive in Woodstock. The last couple of years have shown just how important early education is and we are proud to provide a nurturing, loving, stimulating environment for young children to learn and grow. We are a small, dedicated team and are passionate about instilling a strong sense of community, connection and safeguarding our values and the importance of our environment. We provide the traditional school curriculum of early literacy, math, science, art and music, as well as a strong focus on social emotional intelligence, awareness and regulation. Our goal is to help nurture kind, compassionate, and conscientious young children.

We are proposing financial assistance of \$20,000 from the Woodstock Economic Development Committee to help continue the essential service we provide to the residents of Woodstock and the surrounding communities. We will use these funds to pay our rent and supplement the salary of a new teacher we need to hire for the upcoming school year.

Project Timeline

The timeline of our project is the 2022-2023 school year. Woodstock Nursery School is asking for this assistance to support our program for the next operating year. We currently have an enrollment list for the Fall of 2022 that is close to our pre pandemic enrollment and feel that tuition from this next year will be able to springboard our program back into a viable operating margin.

Project Champion

Woodstock Nursery School's Director, Wendy Krygier, and Woodstock Nursery School's Board of Directors are proposing the Town of Woodstock help support the operating costs and staff salaries at Woodstock Nursery School for the 2022-2023 school year. Wendy and the Board are all community members and parents who work in Woodstock Village. The Board and their families all live in Woodstock.

Project Budget Narrative

Woodstock Nursery School (WNS) resides in the basement of the Little Theater and pays \$17,000 in rent to the Woodstock Recreation Department for our 10 month lease. WNS does not operate during the summer months. WNS started at the Little Theater in 2019 and every year our rent has increased. We are an early education center and our only income is from tuition from families that attend our program and tuition assistance from Act 166 funding from the State. We chose to increase our tuition in 2019 to support our program when we entered the Little Theater but did not feel it prudent to do so during the pandemic and continue to hold that view. We want to keep our program as affordable for families as possible. When we reopened in 2020, after closing for 5 months due to the pandemic, many families chose to keep their children home instead of send them to school as the pandemic was still very unknown. Our enrollment dropped to half our normal enrollment. This meant our income dropped to half as well. To start the 2021 school year, vaccinations for our preschool population were not yet available. Many families chose to keep their children home one more year. This again means that our income is less than a typical year but our operating costs are still the same. We also reduced our staff to two teachers in 2021 to reflect the lower enrollment numbers.

In addition to rent assistance, WNS is asking for assistance in supporting the wages of our staff. Woodstock Nursery School currently has two staff members and will need to hire a third teacher for the 2022-2023 school year. Our teaching staff have not had a raise through the pandemic and are still not being compensated in a direct relation to their quality of work, level of responsibility, and importance to our community. The reality is that high-quality early education is costly to operate, and our teaching staff have

borne a significant portion of the costs in the form of lower wages and little to no benefits.

Woodstock Nursery School acknowledges that this is not a typical ask of the Economic Development Committee but felt it necessary to reach out to all possible funding opportunities.

Project Budget - Itemized

Income Category	Total	Applicant	EDC	Other	In-Kind
EDC Grant			20,000		

Expense Category	Total	Applicant	EDC	Other	In-Kind
Rent	17,000		17,000		
New Hire	13,000	10,000	3,000		

What will success look like?

Success for us will be when we have achieved financial security. Success for us will be when we are able to pay our staff a more viable wage to thrive in this community, rather than live paycheck to paycheck.

Success for us will be when our school isn't existing on the edge but has a comfortable margin so we are able to make our program even better by adding another teacher, and improve our facility by making our play yard more stimulating with a play structure and small garden. Success will be when we are financially comfortable, rather than in survival-mode.

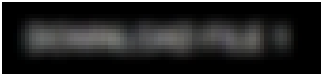
Community support for this project

Our school Board (all community members) has been very involved and supportive of our teaching staff and our goals. Board members have engaged in fundraising ideas, such as this grant ask. Board members have participated in our goal of bettering our play-yard by donating their time and energy to clean up days and volunteer plant days. A grandfather of a student (also a community member) donated his time and skills to build us a play house this fall. Our hope is to continue to organize days where school parents and community members can volunteer to help us with short-term goals such as these mentioned above.

Community support for this project

Looking forward to the 2022-2023 school year we are anticipating being more financially secure because our enrollment looks promising as families adapt to the new norm of COVID and are sending their 3-5 year-olds back to Preschool. If we get the full enrollment we used to pre-COVID, our school will be able to function much more comfortably. However, the necessity of hiring another staff member, and of giving our two existing staff members the raises they did not receive during COVID still requires additional funds, hence our application. The last several years have brought on a shift in the dialogue around early education in terms of how vital it is to the smooth functioning of society, and also in terms of early educators being able to viably live off of the very low salary for their essential work. At the Woodstock Nursery School we are passionately committed to providing the best possible environment for our children, and in order to do that—in order to be our best selves as teachers—we need to not be on the financial brink. The recent closures at the Rainbow Play School have shown how precarious the whole structure is to failure in our community. One way that we, at our school, can bolster the whole system in our community is by our staff being able to pay for childcare for our own children so we are able to come to work, and to better achieve that, we need more money. It's a hard truth, and somewhat uncomfortable, as for decades early educators have been extremely underpaid women. COVID has shifted the conversation in our favor, if not yet in practice. Our

ultimate grand goal, is to better our own situation, and by so doing, better the situations of all families in our community.



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