

Odyssey Community School

Budget Narrative Template

Please complete the tables below with your description of expenditures in each spending category and how they tie back to your program activities and SMART Goals. You may add additional rows in each table to highlight additional expenditures.

I.Salaries - \$5,000

Expenditure Description	Amount of Funds	Timeline (PLAN, IMP, BOTH)	Activity/ SMART Goal	Justification
Existing and new teachers and assistants (working only with the expanded seats) will need curriculum and other training before the first group of students arrive for 2024-25.	\$4,000	Planning and Implementation August 2024	SMART Goal 2	The planning period allows a short period of time for new teachers and assistants to perform pre-arrival development with existing OCS preschool teachers.
Preschool Screening (2 new teachers - and 2 new paraprofessionals)	\$1,000	Planning and Implementation August 2024	SMART Goal 2	New arrival of students (36) will be screened for academic and social emotional readiness.

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II.Benefits -

Expenditure Description	Amount of Funds	Timeline (PLAN, IMP, BOTH)	Activity/ SMART Goal	Justification

III.Services and Activities -

Expenditure Description	Amount of Funds	Timeline (PLAN, IMP, BOTH)	Activity/ SMART Goal	Justification

IV.Physical Plant -

Expenditure Description	Amount of Funds	Timeline (PLAN, IMP, BOTH)	Activity/ SMART Goal	Justification

V.Marketing and Development -

Expenditure Description	Amount of Funds	Timeline (PLAN, IMP, BOTH)	Activity/ SMART Goal	Justification

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VI. Supplies and Equipment - \$145,000

Expenditure Description	Amount of Funds	Timeline (PLAN, IMP, BOTH)	Activity/ SMART Goal	Justification
Shed	\$30,000	Planning and Implementation	SMART Goal 1	A new shed will be installed on school property and will be used for the storage of outdoor recreation items for our youngest students - able to be removed and transported to another location if needed.
Playground	\$31,000	Planning and Implementation	SMART Goal 1	A new play area will be installed on school property and will be used by our youngest students - able to be removed and transported to another location if needed.
Furnishings for new expansion grades (36 seats)	\$65,000	Planning and Implementation	SMART Goal 1	New classrooms will be equipped with classroom furniture and supplies to accommodate the 36 new seats.
Instructional Supplies	\$19,000	Planning and Implementation	SMART goal 2	Broken out in budget - this category includes technology for new teachers, (2) installed smartboards, books and libraries for two classrooms, and manipulatives like blocks and games and puzzles and other age-appropriate learning items.

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Part II:

Describe how the applicant intends to maintain financial sustainability after the end of the subgrant period ends and how the program fund will not supplant funding in your operating budget.

If awarded CSP, Odyssey Community School (OCS) will finish spending its CSP grant in by the fall of 2024 - inclusive of a 90-day lookback period to June 2024. The estimated start date for this grant would be September 15, 2024.

The intent of our CSP grant is exactly what the federal rules call for: to offset the planning and implementation costs of beginning a new school venture or expansion of seats. Supporting new seats comes with one time costs that are often not able to be supported by current state revenue. These requests in this grant add to approximately \$150,000.

Maintenance of Financial Sustainability - After CSP

Early startup and implementation costs do thankfully subside over time. For instance, there is no need to keep purchasing furniture and buy more computers once these initial commitments have been made. Post CSP, per pupil (State of Connecticut) revenue will be enough to cover typical operating expenses without such financial help from outside grants. In fact, charter schools should always assume no outside revenue to make their annual budgets and long-term forecasts work for a sustainable future.

Justification of Costs

These \$150,000 in requested costs fit the allowability guidelines in that they are one-time in nature and necessary to start serving the expanded population. The CSP budget referenced above includes allowable expansion expenses per the CSP GSCT program. They align with costs associated with only the 36 seats approved. Consistent with those rules are budget requests for school furnishings, teacher technology, pre-opening salaries, and outdoor play equipment. In this grant, there are no requests for services, facility or marketing support at all. Each line item in our budget was carefully considered for its value to our newly arriving students.

SMART Goal #1: (\$126,000)

During this grant, OCS will meet its expansion enrollment target of 36 seats.

Odyssey Community School will fill 100% of the available seats for preschool three and four-years old students throughout the 2004-2025 school year.

<i>Year</i>	<i>Expansion Enrollment Target (September 2024)</i>	<i>Expansion Enrollment Target (June 2025)</i>
2024-25	36	36

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Rationale for SMART Goal One - The funding for this CSP expansion opportunity relies on 36 students filling the seats. The purchases requested from CSP reflect a full set of seats whereby students are fully benefiting from this valued investment of federal CSP funds. If our enrollment of these 36 seats falls short, the investment of CSP funds will not be as impactful, resulting in an excessively high per-student CSP ratio. To keep that ratio lower and maximize CSP, we will use existing demand and a long waiting list to continuously fill these 36 seats.

Summary of SMART Goal One - CSP reimbursed expenses associated with improving the overall classroom and outdoor environment will assist OCS in creating developmentally appropriate learning spaces for our three and four-year old learners. Expenses such as storage shed for preschool equipment, as well as playground and classroom furnishings will assist us in creating a developmentally appropriate learning environment grounded in what we know about how young children learn at their various ages and stages of learning and development.

We know that children learn best when adults recognize their individual needs and interests and that children are encouraged to explore what excites their curiosity. Unlocking that curiosity is key to learning and OCS will create such an environment to enhance learning through a combination of explanation and experience. Such an environment will allow us to maintain our enrollment goal throughout the school year.

SMART Goal #2: (\$24,000)

During this grant, OCS will use CSP funds to increase achievement outcomes for expanded students.

80% of OCS preschool three and four-year old students will fall within their age's color band for at least 90% of all standards measured within **Teaching Strategies GOLD®** by June 2025.

Rationale for SMART Goal Two - Quality early childhood instruction and serving OCS students earlier in their lives provide the impetus for our seats expansion initiative. Based on year one (2022-2023) and two (2023-2024) of our early childhood population attending OCS, we are confident that students in this expansion cohort will demonstrate significantly higher skills after one year of attending OCS. Furthermore, we have acquired student data from the initial cohort of prek-3 and prek-4 learners which will serve as learning benchmarks for our expansion cohort in each of our three reporting trimesters.

Summary of SMART Goal Two - As noted on page 3 of the Executive Summary, learning and assessment in the early childhood classroom is an ongoing process. Preschool classrooms use *Teaching Strategies GOLD®*, an authentic observation-based assessment system for children. The primary purpose of this assessment system is to document children's learning over time and inform instruction. Using this information, teachers intentionally create environments and developmentally appropriate learning experiences for their students. The child's classroom teacher will provide formal documentation in a report card to families three times a year, in addition to conferences twice a year. Conferences provide an opportunity for parents/guardians

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to raise questions and engage in meaningful dialogue with teachers about their child's development and how our assessment practices meet the unique needs of their child. Families of students with IEPs meet for PPT meetings at least annually. At any time, a parent or guardian can request a conference. Teachers maintain state teaching certification specific to teaching and assessing young children.

SMART Goal #3: (\$0.00)

OCS students in grades 3-8 will improve their 2025-2026 *Next Generation Accountability Index* score from 72.7 to 73.7% as reported on the 2025-2026 CT Accountability Index.

Rationale for SMART Goal Three - Increasing achievement outcomes for all students at OCS remains our number one priority.. Each year, all students in grades three through eight participate in **SMARTER BALANCED** assessments, a national set of standards aligned national assessments. **SMARTER BALANCED** is part of **Connecticut's Next Generation Accountability System**, which is a broad set of 12 indicators, including scores in ELA, Math and Science, that help tell the story of how well schools are performing. This accountability system moves beyond test scores and graduation rates and instead provides a more holistic, multifactor perspective of the district and school performance (including children with high needs) and incorporates student growth over time. Investment in our school community through the addition of early childhood learning opportunities for more students provides meaningful and impactful learning intervention. At OCS, we believe that early intervention mitigates the expense of subsequent remedial action in primary and secondary schooling and results in academic productivity and social growth.

Summary of SMART Goal Three

Continued investment in early learning opportunities, provides all members of the OCS school community the motivation and impetus for school community growth and continued school improvement.