

Budget Revision Application **DRAFT UNTIL APPROVED**

02CH011434-02 Year Two Continuation Funding

**Budget Revision Application**

Total amount awarded under 02CH011434-02: \$4,627,445

Projected Spend by 3/31/2022: \$4,627,445

Amount awarded under line-item (d) Equipment: \$76,278

Revised amount requested under line-item (d) Equipment: \$146,164

Variance to amount awarded under line-item (d) Equipment: +\$69,885; offset in 'Personnel'

Washington County Economic Opportunity Council, Inc. (herein known as LEAP), under the Head Start Act section 640(b) and administrative requirements detailed in 45 C.F.R. §75.308 (c)(iv), is requesting a revision of the budget awarded under the Notice of Award dated May 21, 2021, for the purchase of a vehicle that requires prior approval from the Office of Head Start. LEAP program and administrative staff, with approval from the Policy Council and the LEAP Board of Directors, have identified this purchase as a high need for the program due to the circumstances outlined below.

**Transportation as a need within our community and program:**

As identified in the agency's Community Needs Assessment (2019), reliable, affordable transportation continues to be a great need for residents in Washington County, specifically within the low-income population. L.E.A.P. meets this need by providing bus transportation to children living in the Hudson Falls, Fort Edward and Whitehall areas. This was outlined in greater detail in our Continuation Application (Year Three of Five) submitted on 12/21/2021.

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Meeting the transportation needs of all the families is an ongoing challenge. Transportation is very expensive. The NYS Department of Transportation has rigid standards regarding bus inspections and safety. While these inspections are important for the safety of the children, repairs can be both costly and time-consuming. In 2021, two aging buses were removed from our fleet due to the repair costs exceeding the value of the assets.

**Challenge due to the pandemic:**

Since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, LEAP has continued to provide both center-based and home-based services to our Head Start and Early Head Start children and families. In order to do so safely and effectively, and in response to the pandemic, many aspects of our day-to-day operations have been revised in order to ensure the health and safety of our staff as well as our clients. This includes but is not limited to social distancing measures while transporting children to and from our Centers. LEAP is currently transporting only 14 children on each bus to ensure that all (non-sibling) children are socially distanced while being transported.

The children in our program are some of the most vulnerable in our community at present due to the following conditions. Children under age five are not yet eligible to become vaccinated (as of the date of this application), have a harder time wearing a tight-fitting mask, and struggle to keep themselves safely distanced from their peers, teachers and others LEAP support staff due to the curious nature of this age-group. This vulnerability, coupled with the high rate of transmission of the omicron variant that is currently spreading within our community, in addition to the lack of backup vehicles that the program has available to meet the need, has led

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to the decision to pursue the purchase of a new school bus using surplus dollars within the 'Personnel' line-item of the approved budget. This personnel budget surplus is driven by unprecedented vacancies and turnover within the program over the last 12 months. We believe that this is a secondary result of the pandemic and what observers are calling an impact of the 'Great Resignation' on organizations nationwide. While the human services sector has dealt with an already high level of burnout comparatively, the impact of the pandemic has only further impacted the burnout rate of the frontline workers within our Head Start program.

## Budget Line Item (d) Equipment

Approved: \$76,278: \$10,916 Office Equipment (Xerox); \$65,363 Vehicle Fleet Lease

(Enterprise).

Requested: \$146,164: \$12,614 Office Equipment (Xerox); \$68,550 Vehicle Fleet Lease

(Enterprise); \$65,000 A-2 bus

Total amount of variance +\$69,885: \$4,885 (minor) variance in estimated vs. projected cost of copier and fleet lease expense; \$65,000 in new cost for purchase of an A-2 bus. Funding to be sourced from a surplus within the Personnel line. Note. Across all categories of the budget, we do not anticipate a variance in projected vs. approved funding that is +/- 10% of the total budget. The chart below outlines the variances anticipated.

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Sort1 Description		Reforecast - Head Start Year 2 Grant 4/1/2021 - 3/31/2022			
Sum of Yearly Budget					
Total Description	Approved Budget	Revised Budget *	Variance from original budget		
A. Personnel	\$ 2,911,267	\$ 2,742,339	-3.7%	\$	(168,928)
B. Fringe Benefits	\$ 973,208	\$ 1,071,928	2.1%	\$	98,720
D. Equipment	\$ 76,279	\$ 146,164	1.5%	\$	69,885
E. Supplies	\$ 110,595	\$ 64,888	-1.0%	\$	(45,707)
F. Contractual	\$ 78,508	\$ 108,363	0.6%	\$	29,855
H. Other	\$ 469,029	\$ 493,458	0.5%	\$	24,429
Travel - Out-of-Region	\$ 8,559	\$ 305	-0.2%	\$	(8,254)
(blank)					
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$ 4,627,445</b>	<b>\$ 4,627,445</b>		<b>\$</b>	<b>0</b>

**Use (and location)**

LEAP is ready to respond to what is an urgent need within our program, and formally requests permission to purchase a Type A2 school bus, with customized specifications that meet our need. Based on a quote dated 12/10/2021, the current estimated base price is \$56,311, with options to address capacity and safety needs equal to an additional \$13,382. The total quote, inclusive of discounts and fees is \$69,815. The agency has received three quotes that range in cost from \$61,925 - \$69,815 and is therefore using a flat \$65,000 as a placeholder (estimate) for purposes of projecting spend. This new bus will be located at our Dix Avenue Head Start Center in Hudson Falls. We anticipate having funds spent-in full by the end of our current grant year (two of five); 03/31/2022. The new vehicle will ensure that we are able to safely transport children living within the Hudson Falls and Fort Edward community; one of many ways in which our agency has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic to-date. *Please note that due to market conditions out of our control, the total cost may fluctuate if and when we are approved to move*

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*forward with this acquisition. Due to both staffing and inventory issues within the automotive market, it is difficult to provide an amount that is 'fixed' without a contract in place.*

**Ongoing costs associated with a one-time purchase:**

While a new vehicle translates to additional permanent costs over-time, LEAP has identified efficiencies and cost savings in other parts of the program that will enable us to maintain a new vehicle year-after-year, beyond the term of this one-time funding.

**Governing Body Approval:**

The Policy Council approved this application at a meeting with management on February 15, 2022. The LEAP Board of Directors approved this application at a meeting with Key Staff on March 7, 2022. We believe that we have and continue to make significant progress in safely providing Head Start and Early Head Start services in Washington County and we hope that you will consider our request to purchase this bus during the 2022-2023 grant year.