

# FUNDING APPLICATION

## GENERAL INFORMATION

### Organization Information

<b>Legal Name:</b> Educational First Steps		<b>Federal Tax ID#:</b> 75-2334053		<b>501(c)(3) Public Charity</b> 509 (a)(1)	
<b>Address:</b> 2815 Gaston Ave		<b>City:</b> Dallas		<b>State:</b> TX	
				<b>Zip Code:</b> 75226	
<b>Website:</b> educationalfirststeps.org		<b>Fax:</b> (214) 824-7940		<b>United Way Funded:</b> No	

### Head Of Organization

<b>Name:</b> Samantha Moya		<b>Title:</b> Interim Executive Director	
<b>E-Mail Address:</b> smoya@educationalfirststeps.org		<b>Phone:</b> (214) 824-7940	

### Application Contact

<b>Name:</b> Elizabeth Nelson		<b>Title:</b> Development Director		<b>E-Mail Address:</b> enelson@educationalfirststeps.org		<b>Phone:</b> (817) 535-0044	
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### Previous Najim Funding

Year	Funding \$
2015	\$25,000
<b>Total</b>	\$25,000

### Has the organization applied to the Najim Family Foundation in the past and been declined?

Yes  
2016 - LOI request for \$30,000

<b>Grant Amount Requested \$:</b>	<b>Total Project Budget \$:</b>	<b>Organization's Annual budget \$:</b>
\$25,000	\$3,043,979	\$3,043,979

### Mission Statement:

The mission of Educational First Steps (EFS) is to increase the number of economically disadvantaged children receiving high-quality early childhood education.

## PROJECT INFORMATION

### Program / Project Title:

To support Four Steps 2.0 and Accredited Partner Economic and Enrollment Services.

### PROJECT TIMELINE

<b>Start Date</b>	<b>End Date</b>
06/01/2019	05/31/2020

### Harvey E. Najim Family Foundation Priorities:

Childcare

### Program / Project Description:

In 1990, Educational First Steps (EFS) was formed with a clear vision: to transform childcare centers in economically disadvantaged communities into high-quality early childhood education facilities thus closing the educational gap that often exists between children who grow up in poverty and their more affluent peers. EFS achieves this mission by partnering with centers at no cost to directors, teachers or families. It provides centers with mentors who help them achieve national accreditation by improving the quality of care and education. EFS also helps these businesses become financially sustainable.

The prevailing consensus in the field of neuroscience is that extraordinary brain development occurs from birth to age 5. These early years form the foundation, not just for intellectual ability throughout one's life, but most important, emotional well-being and social functioning which undergird cognitive learning. Cognitive, social and emotional learning are interconnected and interdependent. The most important variable which contributes to positive brain development during these crucial years is the time-intensive and attention-intensive nurturing and care of adults. Positive, appropriate teacher-children interactions form the basis of "high-quality" in early childhood education along with safe and healthy environments. Unfortunately, many children in disadvantaged communities like those served by EFS do not have access to high-quality childcare but instead spend 8-10 hours a day in environments without appropriate and positive teacher interactions; they may spend most of this time in front of screens. Improving teacher-student interactions is a key focus of the work of EFS staff in its partner centers.

EFS uses a two-pronged approach in its work with childcare centers. After initial evaluation and acceptance of a center into the partnering system of EFS, a mentor is assigned to that center. The mentor, under the supervision of a manager, provides professional development to the center director and teachers. Teachers are given the opportunity to take Child Development Associate (CDA) certification classes through EFS. This mentoring is a labor-intensive, hands-on, one-on-one effort. The presence and constant availability of mentors (they make a visit at least once a week to their assigned centers and are otherwise available by phone) allows them the immediacy of action when they see deficits or areas in need of improvement. They can recommend upcoming classes, webinars or other online or in-person instruction to address the problem at hand. This intense relationship is an important key to the success EFS has experienced over the past 28 years. Mentors know the directors, they know the teachers and often times they know the parents of children. Other programs which do similar work might provide mentors but few if any programs spend as much time in centers as the EFS mentors do. EFS also equips centers with educational age-appropriate materials and resources including books, manipulatives, art supplies, and toddler-size furniture. EFS provides enrichment opportunities for children including field trips.

The second part of the EFS strategy is to provide business mentoring to centers which are close to or have achieved accreditation. EFS enrollment specialists work with the center director and/or owner to address financial sustainability, primarily focusing on maintaining and increasing enrollment through better marketing, management and budgeting skills. This service was introduced in 2015 and has become an integral part of the work of EFS.

There is a structural and a process part of the work EFS does. It is a deft balance to simultaneously institute both. Most parents make an initial assessment of quality based on structural measures such as cleanliness and appearance of the center, often ignoring the fact many of these centers offer little more than babysitting. Professionals in the field understand that effective quality occurs mostly at the process level, improving the interactions between teachers and students. Enrollment hangs in the balance as EFS mentors must carefully help childcare directors implement both. The approach of EFS, with mentors helping teachers develop the skills they need - organization, planning, use of appropriate vocabulary and most important, loving and nurturing interactions - and our business specialists helping to ensure center directors understand marketing techniques, are the basic tools for the success of EFS. Eventually, parents along with directors and teachers comprehend the importance and necessity of process improvements, in addition to structural changes.

EFS currently serves 8,563 children 0-12. There are 6,499 children ages 0-5. Of these, 4,239 are in high-quality environments, 1,958 are in classrooms which are on the way to quality, 302 are in home-based care and 2,064 are in after school programs. EFS has seen a 15% increase in the number of children served and a nearly 10% increase in the number of children in quality centers in the past year. It is one of the largest and most successful non-government entities working with centers to improve their quality of care. EFS constantly seeks new partnerships to address chronic issues plaguing the early childhood education industry, especially teacher attrition. In the past year, EFS has implemented Teachstone's CLASS (Classroom Assessment Scoring System) with SMU's Simmons School of Education. This program establishes a baseline assessment for teacher-child interactions, then tracks progress over time. EFS has also implemented a pilot program with the Momentous Institute to work with center directors to look at their interactions with their staff. Both collaborations seek to support teachers in a precarious industry in which pay continues to be abysmal compared to the important task they perform educating the youngest and most vulnerable children in our communities.

**Evaluation Plan:**

EFS uses proprietary software, MAAP, to collect enrollment and demographic data on centers over time. The software also has a Teacher Competency Profile which tracks teacher's progress through the quality spectrum during their EFS career.

In December of 2018, EFS received a \$100,000 infrastructure grant from the Lyda Hill Foundation, which grant will be matched allowing EFS to invest \$200,000 in a much-needed upgrade to MAAP. This upgrade will provide greater accuracy in program data collected, more comprehensive reporting capabilities, and better data visualization.

Measuring something meaningful is difficult and costly. EFS is closely tracking the recent work of Child Trends and its efforts to develop a "Healthy and Ready to Learn" survey. Though this data will initially be collected at the national and state level, the categories selected show real promise at what metrics local organizations should be tracking to measure the efficacy of their work in the communities served.

**Plans to sustain project beyond the term of this request:**

Due to the generosity of the community in Dallas and the greater North Texas area and the confidence in the program EFS offers, EFS feels poised to reach its goals for the coming year. EFS prudently manages its funds to hold financial assets that can buffer oscillations in the philanthropic community. This ensures EFS can honor the long-term nature of its partnerships with childcare centers. Thus, so long as the programs remain needed and effective, EFS is confident it can support them.

**Children Impacted:**

<b>How many unduplicated children will the TOTAL PROJECT INITIATIVE impact?</b>	<b>How many unduplicated children will NFF REQUESTED FUNDS impact?</b>
8,563	8,563

**Please provide the percentage of each group below that will be served by the project in which funds are being requested. Do not leave any area blank. If that specific group will not be served, include zero. The percentage should total 100%.**

<b>A. Population Served Age</b>		<b>B. Population Served Ethnicity</b>	
Infants (0-5)	76%	African American	55%
Children (6-13)	24%	Asian American	1%
Young Adults (14-18)	0%	Caucasian	20%
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100%</b>	Hispanic/Latino	21%
		Native American	0%
		Other and Define	3%
		<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>100%</b>

**City Council District for Which Children are Being Served:**

Outside San Antonio

**Counties applicant is in:**

Bexar

**Line item Budget:**

<b>Line Item Description</b>	<b>Total Project Funds Allocation</b>	<b>Najim Funds Allocation</b>
Mentor Personel Expenses	\$1,944,615	\$20,000
Program Materials/Accreditation Expense	\$311,940	\$5,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$2,256,555</b>	<b>\$25,000</b>

**OTHER FUNDING RESOURCES****For Project being Requested: Funding sources and amounts, pending and committed.****PROJECT - PENDING**

<b>Funder Name</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>
The Sid W. Richardson Foundation (2019)	\$200,000
Rees Jones Foundation (2019)	\$300,000
The Simmons Foundation (2019)	\$300,000
The Ryan Foundation (2019)	\$50,000
The Hoglund Foundation (2019)	\$75,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$925,000</b>

**PROJECT - COMMITTED**

<b>Funder Name</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>
Rainwater Charitable Foundation (2018)	\$330,000
The Sid W. Richardson Foundation (2018)	\$200,000
The Paul E. Andrews, Jr. Foundation (2018)	\$25,000
The Miles Foundation (2018)	\$66,000
The Morris Foundation (2019)	\$150,000
The Dallas Foundation (2019)	\$100,000
The Eddleman-McFarland Fund (2019)	\$25,000
R4 Foundation (2019)	\$20,000
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$916,000</b>

**Other funding sources and amounts, pending and committed not specific to this request.****ALL OTHER ORGANIZATION REQUESTS - PENDING**

<b>Funder Name</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>
	\$0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**ALL OTHER ORGANIZATION REQUESTS - COMMITTED**

<b>Funder Name</b>	<b>Amount Requested</b>
Lyda Hill Foundation (2018)	\$110,000

	\$0
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$110,000</b>
<b>BOARD OF DIRECTORS</b>	
<b>What percentage of your board contributes financially to the organization?</b>	
100%	
<b>If Board giving is not at 100%, please explain why?</b>	
<b>How are board members expected to participate in your organization?</b>	
The board at EFS actively engages in development. This past fall, the board attended a "board responsibility seminar", focusing specifically on fundraising at the individual donor level. Several board members participate in enrichment program at childcare centers, teaching yoga and cooking classes. All board members serve on at least one committee within the organization.	
<b>LIST OF BOARD DIRECTORS</b>	
<b>Name &amp; Office Held</b>	<b>Corporate Affiliation</b>
Bob Appel	Retired CPA
Lydia B. Addy	Community Volunteer
Peggy Allison	Community Volunteer
Alice Barnett, Chair of Education Committee	Attorney, Retired
Marsha Brito, Vice Chair	Educator, Retired
Audrey Decherd	RN, Baylor University Medical Center
Beth Gold	Community Volunteer
Martha Fry	Community Volunteer
Marnie Glaser	Director of Early Learning, Texas Education Agency
Rachel Goldberger	Community Volunteer
Cathy Golden	Community Volunteer
Paige Harwell	Vice President, The Ayco Company
Amy Nickell Jacobs	Adv. Consultant, Employment Practices Solutions, Inc.
Roy Johnson, Treasurer	VP Commercial Real Estate, Bank of Texas
Suzanne Keohane	Vice President, Service Delivery, Fidelity Charitable
Brett Kirstein, Chair of Board	Chief Revenue Officer, US Renal Care
Kathryn Lake, Immediate Past Chair	TWL Consulting
Brett Levy	Community Volunteer
Michelle Lockhart	Community Volunteer
Bill Mattes	Events Manager, YPO
Jennifer Mosle, Development Committee	Community Volunteer
Georgia Scaife	Retired, AT&T Headquarters
John Selzer, Secretary	Founding Director, Septariate
Margaret Spellings	Community Volunteer
Julie Smith, Chair Elect	Podcaster/Author
Gail Stoke	Retired, Fossil

Norma Stone	Community Volunteer
Jane Taber	Partner, Scheef & Stone
Carolyn Westberry	Community Volunteer
Giffen Weinmann	Managing Director, Waverly Capital
Sandra Estess, Life Member	Community Volunteer
Barbara Garton, Life Member	Community Volunteer
David Munson, Life Member	Co-Founder of EFS
Joyce and Linus Wright, Life Members	Co-Founders of EFS
<b>Signature</b>	
Samantha Moya	