

LIAISON REPORT

AGENCY: ACPC LIAISON: Andrea Rich

1. Need for Program. Describe who the target population is and whether their numbers are increasing or decreasing. Indicate the source of this information. Also, indicate how the program/service is different and how it is similar to others and what would happen if the program/service ceased to exist. List the priorities established by ASSET Funders, which the programming addresses.

ACPC provides services for children 18 months to 5th grade. The main center has 115 children aged 18 months to five years. ACPC also provides before and after school care to school age children at five schools and two churches throughout the Ames community. School-aged care is expanded to full day during no-school days and summer vacations.

ACPC provides childcare on a sliding-fee scale to allow lower income families access to high quality, dependable child care. ACPC serves a diverse cross-section of the Ames community, which includes a mix of cultures, ethnicities and incomes.

2. Program Strengths. Pick two to four factors that contribute most importantly to the program/service outcomes. Do not list everything that is satisfactory. We will assume that things not mentioned are okay. For each strength describe some supporting evidence.

ACPC has partnered with Raising Readers (co-located within the ACPC building) to provide enhanced curriculum.

ACPC has an active and engaged board of directors who involved in improving ACPC. The current center (previous Wilson-Beardshear school) has outstanding outdoor play areas.

3. Program Weaknesses. Select factors that detract most from the program/service achieving its outcomes. Present details as described above. Recommendations for reducing these weaknesses should follow the discussion of each weakness.

ACPC continues to have an ongoing waiting list for families seeking enrollment, which is a community wide issue (wait-lists for child care is a concern throughout Ames and the surrounding area). The current location would allow for expansion; however, it would require significant modification to the existing underutilized space. The building is currently in need of significant infrastructure improvement before any expansion can take place. No immediate plans to expand will be considered until the infrastructure needs have been addressed.

4. Financial Outlook. Current funding concerns should be described. In addition, the assessment of the program's plan to cope with shrinking resources should be given.

ACPC has known that boilers would need to be replaced, but that work uncovered the need for new electrical system and a new air handler system. This requires a significant cash outlay that is significantly larger than was initially expected when ACPC took over the building from the school district. However, ACPC is ahead of schedule on their mortgage which will make the other building improvements more feasible.

ACPC continues to have difficulty finding qualified staff. ACPC has to compete with the school district which is able to pay higher wages, and now wages from retail outlets are creeping up. ACPC is also facing federal regulations which require additional 19 hours of pre-service training for all staff (in addition to the 11 hours previously required) which causes a financial burden with frequent staff turn-over. Insurance benefits are also seeing an increase of 20% in 2016, which is putting a strain on the personnel line in the budget.

5. Internal Management Practices. Summarize your assessment of the management of the agency, and the role of the Board. If there are deficiencies, details should be provided. Conclude with recommendations when appropriate.

ACPC leadership was engaging and forthcoming during interactions with ASSET volunteers.

6. Agency Suggestions/Comments. Make note of any suggestions, comments or questions agencies may have with regard to the ASSET process, budget forms and or anything else that relates to the process.

ACPC discussed that this year's budget request would be impacted by the infrastructure and increased staffing needs.

GENERAL ASSESSMENT:

ACPC continues to fill a critical need in the community, by providing child care services for roughly 450 toddlers and youth. The agency utilizes ASSET funds to subsidize the sliding fee scale which allows for safe, high-quality, dependable, child care to be open to families that otherwise would not have access. Additional need has been identified, but ACPC has wisely opted for careful, sustainable growth.