

## **Greenwich United Way Early Education Scholarship Process**

This process document provides details on how the Greenwich United Way will manage the selection and distribution of early education scholarships. G UW leadership held a call with its auditor, who has approved the initial scholarship process outlined below and incorporated key elements from that discussion into this document.

### **Overview**

Connecticut and Greenwich does not require families to enroll their children in pre-school education programs. Greenwich continues to have an academic achievement gap. Research indicates that children provided with a high-quality pre-school experience show significant positive developmental differences when compared to children from similar backgrounds who did not attend a high quality pre-school program.

### **History**

G UW has been the Town's largest funder of pre-school scholarships for the last 10-plus years. In the last two years, G UW has awarded over \$500 thousand dollars in early childhood education scholarships.

### **Why Are We Shifting Now?**

After reviewing reports and updates over the last two years, it has been difficult for G UW staff to ascertain exactly which families were benefitting from the scholarship dollars raised. This new process will allow the G UW to better track the scholarship dollars, get the funds into the hands of Greenwich families who really need it and be better stewards of our donor dollars.

With the increase in the ALICE population and with the closing of the YMCA Early Childhood Center, the G UW would only be providing early childhood scholarships to one provider, Family Centers. Yet, early childhood access is in high demand and the cost to attend an early education program is increasing and will continue to increase.

>Link to Economic Policy Institute (EPI) on the cost of childcare:  
<https://www.epi.org/how-does-your-state-stack-up-annual-infant-care-costs/#>

>2020 Greenwich ALICE Report (attached)

### Benefits of the new process:

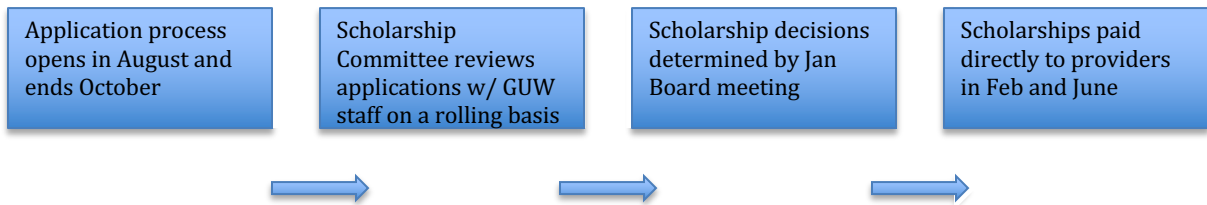
- Allows G UW to reach more families who may be eligible to apply for scholarships
- G UW will have more oversight of the scholarship determination and selection process
- Ensures more Greenwich families receive a scholarship, in case they are being missed

-Low-income families who are eligible can be referred to ECAGS and other local human services

Considerations of the new process:

- Additional staff time to collect and organize the applications
- Additional administrative time to monitor new process
- Additional Grants Committee time to review and make scholarship decisions

**Selection Process and Distribution Process:**



G UW staff and the Scholarship Committee (Committee TBD) will review the applications, from October through December, and make determinations by the January Board meeting.

The scholarship assistance scale is to be determined. Scholarship awards will be determined using a sliding scale and will be based off the family household size, income, information collected in the application and emergency needs. Please see attached sample financial aid assistance scale for reference (this is not the scale we will use but will be similar).

The Scholarship Committee will use a rubric to evaluate the scholarship applications.

**Fiscal:**

There will be few changes to the fiscal process that is already in place and will mirror the way the Community Investment Process operates, from a financial standpoint.

All revenue will be recognized and recorded in the same way the Community Investment Process functions and will follow G UW fiscal policies and procedures.

All expenses will be recorded under the 'Grants and Board Designated' expenses on the expense report. The scholarship awards will be recorded under a new expense line 'Early Education Scholarships.'

Below is the proposed expense lines:

**Grants & Board Designated**

Grants to Agencies	675,000
Early Childhood Scholarships ( <b>example</b> )	200,000
Special/Critical Grants	5,000
<b>Total Grants &amp; Board Designated</b>	<b>\$880,000</b>

Funds used for this for 2020-2021 scholarship process will come out of what the Board has approved for grants in 2020-2021.

All scholarship information will be stored electronically to meet all internal audit guidelines and recommendations.

Verification of residency and additional documents will be done internally. If it is suspected that information has been falsified, G UW will contact the appropriate parties to address the situation.

The G UW assumes no responsibility for the performance or nonperformance of the scholarship recipient. The G UW shall not be responsible for any issues related to program payment or nonpayment and occurrences at the program site of the scholarship recipient.

**Payment:**

All families awarded a G UW Scholarship will receive an award letter in February with the amount and the provider they have been approved for.

Each provider will receive a letter notifying them which families have been awarded and the amount they expect to receive.

Scholarship awards will be paid in February and June, directly to the early childhood education provider, similar to the Community Investment Process.

Like GPS, children are eligible to receive a scholarship regardless of a child's immigration status.