Project title: Billiken Early Childhood Center

One sentence project description:
This project aims to develop a partnership between Saint Louis University and a currently operating Early Childhood Center external to the university, resulting in an on-campus early childhood center, serving children ages 6 weeks - 5 years, to meet the needs of employees, students, alumni, and local families.

1. One paragraph summary of project:
The purpose of this proposal is to provide a high-quality, inclusive, accredited, nonprofit early childhood program for families in and around the SLU community. The Billiken Early Childhood Center will incorporate a constructivist approach to curriculum. Certified teachers will provide meaningful learning experiences which build on children’s curiosities and interests. The child-centered facility and age-specific programs will be intentionally designed to support children’s play through authentic explorations and project work. Staff members will foster each and every child’s love for learning while nurturing the development of confidence and problem solving skills. Individualized services will be provided using a wrap-around model to support the “whole child”. This includes supporting cognitive and physical developmental, social and emotional development, mental health, and families’ unique needs. The center will address the concern of access to quality childcare for all families by providing a sliding scale for tuition based on household income. The proposed partnership with an external childcare center will provide Saint Louis University students from a variety of disciplines (e.g. education, social work, nursing, pediatrics, psychology, physical therapy, occupational therapy, speech pathology, etc.) opportunities to gain field experience and become agents for change by directly improving access to high quality childcare for families in the community. The proposed center will become a catalyst for collaborative and cooperative research, teaching, and service endeavors across the university, as well as with community members and regional stakeholders. This project will meet the need within the SLU and Midtown communities for a comprehensive, high quality, developmentally appropriate childcare center using innovative programming to deliver services to the “whole child:” physically, spiritually, intellectually, socially, and emotionally.

2. Expected timeline for implementation, including stages or phases if necessary:
Fall 2016: Finalize partnership agreement between external childcare provider and Saint Louis University
Fall/Winter 2016: Build/renovate existing space to accommodate childcare space needs
Spring 2017: Begin advertising early childhood center; apply for funding from Missouri and federal sources
*Fall 2017: Opening of center
**This timeline is subject to change based on the time needed to renovate space.
3. **Positive financial impact on SLU (additional revenue), including business model:**

This proposal details a total center capacity of 164 children with a lead teacher and teaching assistant model for each classroom. Paraprofessionals will be included for before and aftercare hours. The proposed numbers include classrooms for 32 infants and toddlers, 32 two year olds, and 100 preschoolers (ages 3-5 years). The teaching staff includes 26 full-time lead teachers with a minimum of a bachelor’s degree in early childhood education and/or early childhood special education and 26 full-time teaching assistants with a minimum of an associate’s degree in education. The proposal also includes 8 part-time paraprofessional positions. The proposal accounts for a reduced administrative staff compared to what the proposed partner has at a currently operating location because of the projected lower number of at-risk children, the absence of a development staff, and the potential for University partnerships with students/faculty. The proposed numbers include a Program Director, Office Manager, Mentor Teacher, ½ time Family Partnership person and ½ time Mental Health Coordinator. The proposed full-day tuition rates for families are at 95% median of market ($310 per week for infants/toddlers, $261 per week for two year olds, and $238 per week for preschoolers). The proposed partner currently has waiting lists for all of their classrooms.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Year 1</th>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
<th>Year 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenue</td>
<td>925,538</td>
<td>1,401,160</td>
<td>1,886,203</td>
<td>1,905,045</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td>1,135,014</td>
<td>1,449,477</td>
<td>1,714,513</td>
<td>1,761,994</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital Investment</td>
<td>70,000</td>
<td>32,500</td>
<td>32,500</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Net income</td>
<td>-279,476</td>
<td>-80,817</td>
<td>139,190</td>
<td>143,051</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This above table was completed with numbers provided by the proposed partner. This table assumes revenue to grow 1% a year and not growing Head Start revenue at all. Expenses grow at 2% and payroll at 3%.

The proposed partnership assumes the external partner hires staff, manages tuition and payroll, and registers students. In addition, the model assumes Head Start funding and some state subsidy funding for the children from families with low incomes.

4. **Positive non-financial impact on SLU:**

According to Ezra and Deckman (1996), work and family balance is an essential aspect of employee job satisfaction. The researchers reported that onsite childcare helps employees, and in particular, mothers, balance work and nonwork priorities. Onsite childcare was also identified as a high priority for recruitment and retention.
The potential for collaboration and cooperation across the university as well as within the community benefits the university through enhanced research, teaching, and service opportunities. The document Magis: Saint Louis University’s Strategy for the Future (2015) states “We are an urban university deeply involved in the communities that surround our campuses and call us to action on the challenges and opportunities these communities put before us”. The need for access to childcare in the SLU and Midtown communities is great. This is an opportunity for Saint Louis University to be an agent for change in strengthening families, our relationship in the community, and our practices within the University. The Magis document also states, “We will deepen the partnerships needed to support more vibrant research and more robust academic programming”. The transdisciplinary model of services provided at the proposed Billiken Early Childhood Center would create opportunities for collaborations across schools and programs with research, teaching, and service opportunities for students and faculty. In addition, being nonprofit will allow faculty to apply for and obtain grants to help fund the facility.

The Saint Louis University Pregnant and Parenting Student Assistance Committee (PPSA) was recently nationally recognized by Students for Life of America as a top 10 school (ranked as number 6) for pregnant and parenting students. The SLU PPSA committee philosophy states “no student should have to choose between having a child and having an education”. The committee has worked to bring the need for an on-campus childcare center to the attention of University leadership as a necessary resource for current students and a recruitment measure for prospective students. An on-campus early childhood center would support the outstanding work of this nationally recognized student organization.

5. Alignment with Jesuit mission and strategic plan of the University:
As a Jesuit university, SLU is focused on service to the community. The addition of an early childhood center will not only provide a much-needed service for our employees, students, and alumni but will also serve the Midtown community. The early childhood center will address an important need within the Midtown community: access to high quality childcare for children ages six months to five years old. Currently, there are 479 children of SLU employees who could benefit from this service. Additionally, the proposed partner’s current facility has long waiting lists because their current facility is at capacity. This proposal aligns with SLU’s mission to “seek excellence in the fulfillment of its corporate purposes of teaching, research, health care and service to the community”. Furthermore, the proposed early childhood center will allow SLU to “foster programs that link University resources to local...communities in collaborative efforts to alleviate ignorance, poverty, injustice and hunger…and improve the quality of life for all persons.” As an institution focused on promoting social justice, the proposed center will allow access to high quality early childhood programming for all families. The center will be fully inclusive, offering services to children with disabilities. Families will pay on a sliding scale, based on annual income. This is consistent with the mission to serve the community and to “be men and women for others”. Lastly, the proposed partner’s mission is
consistent with the mission of Saint Louis University, but has been excluded here in order to maintain the confidentiality of the partner.

SLU is dedicated to the dissemination and integration of knowledge and skills across disciplines. Through collaborations among various disciplines (e.g., education, social work, nursing, pediatrics, psychology, physical therapy, speech pathology, etc.) SLU students and faculty will take an active role with the center’s children and families. This will provide SLU students with the chance to gain quality, hands-on educational experiences while simultaneously serving the community. This dissemination of knowledge includes shared learning within the SLU community, the Midtown community, and the broader research community. The transdisciplinary services provided by programs in education, social work, nursing, pediatrics, psychology, physical therapy, speech pathology, etc. will support each child and his/her family as a whole. This transdisciplinary approach “wisely allocates its (the University’s) resources to maintain efficiency and effectiveness in attaining its mission and goals” while providing individualized personal care the children and families aligned with the Jesuit value of cura personalis.

The strategic plan goal one states “We will intensify our commitment to excellence in undergraduate, graduate, and professional education as we build upon our Jesuit academic heritage by creating new opportunities to facilitate students’ development as leaders and agents of change.” The on-campus early childhood center will give students the opportunity to view the university’s service leadership in action and to take part in this work to be agents of change for the children and families of our community.

6. **What’s needed, including budget (i.e. startup capital needed) and other resources (i.e. physical space, personnel, etc.):**
   - The proposed partner has asked for **$389,000** to cover the first 3 years. If funding can only be provided for year 1, funding for the first year of operation would be **$279,500**.
   - Salaries for hiring for maintenance and janitorial positions
   - Physical space - Il Monastero Banquet Center and Boileau Hall have both been identified as spaces that would fit the needs of a childcare center in terms of square footage. In addition, there is still question of whether the new SLU hospital, old hospital, or the Law Clinic Annex could serve as an appropriate space.

7. **Potential obstacles:**
   - Saint Louis University will need to agree to a building and renovation for the new Billiken Early Childhood Center. This is the most significant obstacle.
   - The proposed partnership will need to be finalized with both parties in agreement of roles and responsibilities.
   - There is a need to promote the new location within the community and recruit families for registration. An updated needs assessment of the SLU community would determine
the number of spaces needed for each age level (the most recent needs assessment was completed in 2010).

- Funding will need to be secured through Early Head Start and Head Start.
- Communication between SLU programs will be essential in support the proposed transdisciplinary approach. This includes coordinating field experiences for undergraduate and graduate students at the center.

8. **How this project relates to what other universities or programs are doing [OPTIONAL]:**

Local universities including Washington University, University of Missouri St. Louis, University of Missouri-Columbia, and Harris-Stowe State University each have early childhood centers and/or intergenerational care centers. Universities within the Midwest such as Marquette University, University of Chicago, and University of Dayton also have childcare centers. This would allow us to provide a service our employees, students, and alumni need, as well as be competitive in recruiting potential faculty, staff, and student applicants who expect and/or would utilize this service for their families. Specific to both undergraduate and graduate students, applicants in areas that work closely with the center would see this as an innovative opportunity for learning, research, and service.

9. **Questions that still need to be answered [OPTIONAL]:**

- How much money is needed for renovations? Will this come out of the GrowingSLU budget, or facilities?
- Will SLU or the childcare partner pay for utilities?
- Is the new SLU hospital already designed? Is it possible a childhood center could help fill this space?
- Is the former SLU Law Clinic Annex on Spring Ave available? How large is the space?
- Will there be room for the center to grow in the future to accommodate mildly sick children, so their parents can still go to work?
- Will the center be able to potentially grow to accommodate adult day care as well (intergenerational daycare)?