



# A Funding Model for Child Care

## School Board Community Service Fund

More than 50% of Wisconsinites, including 70% of rural residents, live in a child care “desert,” where there is only one licensed available child care slot for three or more children under age 5. In response, communities are using innovative approaches to address their child care needs, including the use of a taxing option through their school district, called Fund 80.

Local school boards can vote to utilize Fund 80 (Community Program and Services) to provide funding support for initiatives and programs that benefit the broader community, like child care.

In order to utilize Fund 80, a school board must establish a Community Service Fund and adopt a budget for it. Any tax necessary to operate the fund is considered an operation levy on the school’s property tax base outside of state revenue caps.

For more information on Fund 80, visit the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction’s [website](#).



### Impact on Child Care

- More than 180 Wisconsin child care programs are supported by a blend of Fund 80 dollars and other funding sources.
- Some of these programs are the only child care providers in their small communities.
- The child care availability offered through the Fund 80-supported programs influence school district enrollment and attract new families and teachers to the community.
- Educators have identified child care programs’ positive impact on children’s kindergarten/school readiness.

### Factors to Consider

- Requires a vote by the local school board
- Child care slots must be available to anyone in the community
- Potentially increases taxes across the school’s property tax base, although for many districts the amount levied and the tax impact is minimal.
- Each program supported by Fund 80 dollars has a unique structure.
  - » Some districts contract for child care space and/or services with existing providers.
  - » Others use existing space in their K-12 school buildings and hire child care staff.



For more information on Raising Wisconsin and/or other child care funding models, visit: [raisingwisconsin.org](http://raisingwisconsin.org)    [contact@raisingwisconsin.org](mailto:contact@raisingwisconsin.org)    608.729.1069



# Community Snapshots

## Amery School District The Clubhouse Childcare Center

- Enrollment: 56 infants/toddlers; 75 children before/after school
- Ages served: 6 weeks to 12 years
- Started in 2015
- Amount levied annually: \$12,000
- Population of Amery: 2,819
- School district enrollment: 1,447
- Director: Nina Hutton, [huttonn@amerysd.k12.wi.us](mailto:huttonn@amerysd.k12.wi.us)

A 2014 Amery School District poll found that many children were leaving the district

via open enrollment. The lack of child care in the community resulted in parents taking their children to child care programs elsewhere. Once the children reached kindergarten age, many were enrolled in the K-12 schools in those communities where child care was available.

The Amery School Board approved the decision to use Fund 80 to support the creation of a child care program housed in the elementary school. They saw the program as a financial decision that would stop or slow the district from losing students via open enrollment by creating a child care feeder system into the K-12 school.

## Wausaukee School District Wausaukee Little Learners Center

- Enrollment: 50 children
- Ages served: 6 weeks to 13 years
- Started in 2016
- Amount levied annually: \$30,000
- Population of Wausaukee: 521
- School district enrollment: 372
- Director: Mindi Kempinski, [kempinski@wausaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:kempinski@wausaukee.k12.wi.us)

School board members started the initial Fund 80 conversation. After polling the

community to assess the community child care needs and its impact on K-12 enrollment, the board authorized the use of Fund 80 to help sustain a child care program.

The Little Learners Center is located in the Wausaukee K-12 school building using empty space created by declining enrollment.

Wausaukee's elementary school teachers have said they see the impact on the children's kindergarten readiness after attending the Little Learners Center.

## Frederic School District Roots and Branches Community Early Learning Center

- Enrollment: 134 children
- Ages served: 8 weeks to 11 years
- Started in 2016
- Amount levied annually: \$70,000
- Population of Frederic: 1,099
- School district enrollment: 428
- Director: Lisa Jensen, [jensenl@frederic.k12.wi.us](mailto:jensenl@frederic.k12.wi.us)

A community survey found that parents were open enrolling their children out of the district and into communities with child care programs. This data helped build the

community and school board support to use Fund 80.

Since the creation of the child care program, which is located in one wing of the district's elementary school, there has been a surge of open enrollment into the district.

*"The additional revenue from these enrollments helps foster support from our board and community. We also have created jobs for the community and been a child care resource for companies and businesses in our town."*

-Lisa Jensen, Roots and Branches Community Early Learning Center Director