

# Preparing for Preschool Expansion in New Jersey



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# Agenda

- Welcome
- NJ Preschool Story
- Where are we now?
- Benefits for programs
- NJ Pre-K requirements
- Districts and providers
- Clearing up misconceptions
- Anticipated application timeline
- What can you do?
- Outreach to districts

# NJ Preschool Story

## **New Jersey Supreme Court Case, Abbott v. Burke**

- Two preschool decisions (1998 and 2000) mandated preschool implementation with quality standards
- Most districts implemented mixed delivery

## **School Funding Reform Act of 2008**

- Preschool expansion included in the formula
- Funding stalled until FY 2018 state budget

## **Preschool Expansion Aid**

- Included in last seven state budgets
- Political climate for expansion is positive

## NJ PreK: What did we find by 10<sup>th</sup> grade in the “Abbott” Districts?

Lasting effects on achievement in language arts and literacy, math and science

Achievement effects roughly twice as large for 2 years as for 1 year of pre-K from 3<sup>rd</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> grade

Grade retention reduced 15 percentage points

Special education 7 percentage points lower

# Where are we now?

- There are currently more than 200 school districts offering state-funded preschool through the NJ Department of Education (NJDOE)
- Proposed FY 2024 budget includes \$40 million for expanding public preschool in new districts in SY 2023-2024
- School districts must apply to NJDOE and be approved for funding
- The program can be implemented through a “mixed delivery model” of public preschool, child care and Head Start classrooms
- Districts can work with providers who participate through a contractual agreement to serve district children (at 15 children per classroom)

# What are the benefits to your program?

- Access to funding to increase your program quality
  - Districts are required to provide funding that is comparable to their district salary scale for teachers
  - Districts provide funding for materials and supplies
- Opportunity for professional development for all staff
  - Coaching
  - Curriculum and assessment training
- Increased access to district services for children
- Opportunity to provide parents with access to free program

# NJ's Pre-K Requirements

- Classroom space requirements 950 sq. ft. or 750 sq. ft. instructional space
- Certified teachers and trained assistants paid at K-12 parity
- Full school day (6 hour)
- Maximum class size of 15
- Strong curricula/ aligned child and classroom assessment with support for fidelity of implementation
- Inclusion with support for potential learning difficulties
- Coherent and comprehensive professional development/coaching

# Districts and Providers

- Many districts are unaware what child care programs exist in their community.
- Districts are more open to collaboration when providers approach them & offer to help with the application process.
- Districts don't always know how to connect with providers or how to collaborate.
- Most districts do not have the space to serve all their eligible students in district.

# Clearing up Misconceptions

- Provider teachers do not become employees of the district
- Center must use same curriculum as districts
- Center can contract for as little as one classroom
- Children with disabilities can be served in provider classrooms
- Programs can collaborate with districts in neighboring communities
- Programs can contract for district children already being served

# Budget and Application Timeline (estimated)

- In February, Governor Murphy gave his annual budget address for FY 2024, including funding for preschool expansion
- Budget process will continue until the budget is approved on or around June 30
- NJ Department of Education (DOE), Division of Early Childhood Services will announce a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO) and hold mandatory meetings for interested districts
- District applications are required to be submitted to DOE on or about **August 1**, with funding awards announced on or around **September 1**
- Newly funded classrooms will need to be open on or about **October 1**

# What can you do?

- Determine whether your district is on the list of potentially eligible districts
- Assess your program and expenses
- Consider options for additional space
- Learn about your district's program
- Reach out to your district

# List of Districts Eligible in 2022-23 School Year\*

- **Atlantic:** Corbin City
- **Bergen:** Carlstadt, East Rutherford, Edgewater Boro, Elmwood Park, Fair Lawn, Fort Lee, Hasbrook Heights, Leonia, Lyndhurst, Maywood, New Milford, Ridgefield, Rochelle Park, Saddle Brook, South Hackensack, Wallington, Westwood
- **Burlington:** Bass River, Bordentown, Cinnaminson, Delanco, Delran, Florence Twp., Hainesport, Riverton, Southampton, Woodland
- **Camden:** Barrington, Berlin, Cherry Hill, Haddon Twp., Hi Nella, Laurel Springs, Stratford
- **Cape May:** Sea Isle City, West Cape May, West Wildwood
- **Essex:** Bloomfield
- **Gloucester:** Greenwich, Harrison Twp., Kingsway, Newfield, Franklin, Woodbury Heights
- **Hudson:** Secaucus
- **Hunterdon:** Bloomsbury, East Amwell, Flemington-Raritan, Frenchtown, Lebanon
- **Mercer:** East Windsor, Ewing, Hamilton Twp.
- **Middlesex:** Dunellen, East Brunswick, Edison, Middlesex, Milltown, Old Bridge, Spotswood, Woodbridge
- **Monmouth:** Deal, Hazlet, Middletown, Tinton Falls
- **Morris:** Butler, Lincoln Park, Mine Hill, Mount Arlington, Mount Olive, Parsippany-Troy Hill, Riverdale, Rockaway Twp., Rockaway Borough, Roxbury
- **Ocean:** Lacey Twp., Long Beach Island, Point Pleasant Beach, Seaside Park, Toms River
- **Passaic:** Hawthorne, Little Falls, North Haledon, Pompton Lakes, Totowa, Wanaque, West Milford
- **Salem:** Oldman's Twp.
- **Somerset:** Bedminster Twp., Bridgewater-Raritan, Somerset Hills, South Bound Brook
- **Sussex:** Lafayette, Sandyston-Walpak, Stanhope, Sussex-Wantage, Vernon
- **Union:** Garwood, Kenilworth, Summit City
- **Warren:** Alpha, Blairstown, Hackettstown, Knowlton, Mansfield, Washington Twp., White Twp.

**\*Note that this list does not include partially funded districts that are also eligible to expand and that a list of eligible districts for 2023-2024 school year has not yet been released by DOE.**

# District Outreach

- Who do you formally contact?
  - Letter or phone to schedule a meeting with the superintendent
  - Show you that you did your homework, and are ready to partner
  - If at first you don't succeed, try, try again
- Who can you informally contact?
  - Who do you know? School board members, teachers if you educated their children.
- Other ways you can connect
  - Offer to be on your district's early childhood advisory council



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