

# **New Jersey's State Funded Preschool Program: A Parent's Role in Bringing it to Their Community**

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# New Jersey's Preschool Story Started with A Court Case ....

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

- Two preschool decisions (1998 and 2000) mandated preschool implementation with quality standards
- 31 districts affected by the Court decisions
- Most districts implemented mixed delivery



# State Funded Preschool: Chapter 2

## 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
- Districts must be “eligible” to receive funding

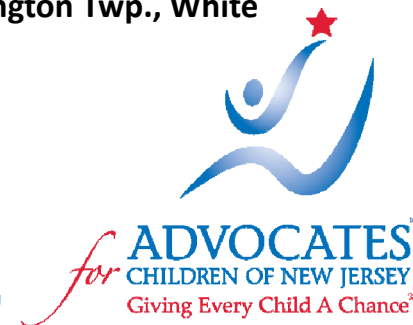
# Early Childhood in New Jersey: Where are We?

- There are currently more than 200 school districts offering state-funded preschool
- Proposed FY 2024 budget includes an additional \$109 million for preschool expansion, \$40 million of which will go towards expanding public preschool in new districts, bringing the total state spending to over \$1 billion
- The list of eligible districts has only slightly varied from year to year is Little is known about which children are benefiting from preschool
- “External” advocacy in trying to convince eligible districts to apply has not been successful
- “Internal” advocacy, i.e. from individual communities is needed



# List of Eligible Districts for 2022-23 School Year

- **Bergen**: Carlstadt, Edgewater Boro, Fort Lee, Maywood, New Milford, Ridgefield, Saddle Brook Twp.
- **Burlington**: Bordentown, Delran, Florence Twp., Riverton, Southampton, Westampton, Woodland
- **Camden**: Cherry Hill, Haddon Twp.
- **Cape May**: Sea Isle City, West Cape May
- **Gloucester**: Harrison Twp., South Harrison
- **Hudson**: Secaucus
- **Hunterdon**: Flemington-Raritan, Frenchtown, Lebanon
- **Mercer**: Hamilton Twp., Lawrence Twp.,
- **Middlesex**: East Brunswick, Edison, Milltown, Old Bridge Spotswood
- **Monmouth**: Deal, Hazlet, Middletown, Tinton Falls
- **Morris**: Butler, Lincoln Park, Mine Hill, Mount Arlington, Mount Olive, Parsippany Troy Hill, Riverdale, Rockaway, Roxbury
- **Ocean**: Lacey Twp., Long Beach Island, Toms River
- **Passaic**: North Haledon, Wanaque, West Milford
- **Salem**: Elsinboro, Oldmans Twp.
- **Somerset**: Bedminster Twp., Somerset Hills Regional
- **Sussex**: Lafayette, Stanhope, Sussex-Wantage, Vernon
- **Union**: Garwood, Kenilworth, Summit City
- **Warren**: Blairstown, Knowlton, Washington Twp., White Twp.



# Preschool Expansion and the Budget Timeline

- On February 28<sup>th</sup> Governor Murphy gave his annual budget address outlining his funding vision for FY 2024, which included an additional \$109 million for preschool expansion
- Budget process will continue and eventually end on or around June 30<sup>th</sup>
- NJ Department of Education (DOE), Division of Early Childhood Services announces a Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO) and holds mandatory meetings during the first/second week of July
- District applications are required to be submitted to DOE on or about **August 1** with funding awards announced on or around **September 1**

# What Does That Mean for Parents?

- Parents in eligible districts can be advocating for this program NOW through “formal” and “informal” conversations.

## FORMAL

- Speaking at School Board meetings
- Meeting with the Superintendent
- Sending a “Letter to the Editor”
- Meeting with other parents, including educating and meeting with them

## INFORMAL

- Meeting with Board Members you know
- Meeting with administrators/teachers you know



**Don't Hesitate to Reach Out!**

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