



# STATE OF NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**For Immediate Release**

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## **New Jersey Department of Education Announces Availability of \$20 Million to Bring High-Quality Preschool to More School Districts**

***Fiscal Year 2025 Funding Supports Partnerships with Local Child Care Providers and Head Start Programs***

**Trenton, NJ** – The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) continued the Murphy Administration’s campaign toward universal preschool by announcing today the availability of \$20 million to help school districts expand or establish new high-quality preschool programs in the 2024-2025 school year. This funding is part of the \$124 million increase in preschool aid included in the Fiscal Year 2025 budget Governor Murphy signed last week, bringing the State’s total FY25 investment to more than \$1.2 billion. Since FY2018, the Murphy Administration has increased preschool funding by over \$550 million.

“Increased support for early childhood education directly aids young families in communities across our state,” **said Governor Phil Murphy**. “Our strategic investments into new and expanded pre-K seats benefit more and more children each year as we work toward realizing universal pre-K for all New Jersey families. We have seen the positive impact access to high-quality early childhood education has on young learners, acting as the cornerstone of lifelong academic success, which is why it is critical that we continue momentum in investing in a brighter future for our children.”

The initiative also continues a recent requirement that school districts applying for funding must demonstrate due diligence in engaging with licensed child care providers and Head Start programs operating locally or in neighboring communities that are willing and able to meet all preschool program requirements.

“We understand how valuable high-quality preschool is to the success of young students, and we also understand the importance of partnerships with local licensed child care centers,” **said Acting Education Commissioner Kevin Dehmer**. “We want to ensure that students receive the best preschool programming possible, and that our system relies on the strength of all of the relevant stakeholders in the community.”

A high-quality preschool is a full-day program for 3- and 4-year-old children that features a certified teacher, an aide, and a curriculum aligned with the New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards. High-quality preschool programs must be inclusive of special needs children. Since taking office, Gov. Murphy’s administration has made state-supported, high-quality preschool programs available in 211 additional school districts, opening seats for nearly 15,000 more children.

School districts have until noon on August 14, 2024, to submit to the NJDOE their Application for Preschool Expansion Aid. The NJDOE will announce the recipients of the funding in the fall.

For more information, visit the NJDOE’s Division of Early Childhood Education [webpage](#).



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