

State of New Jersey

Governor Phil Murphy

Murphy Administration Announces NJ Preschool Development Collaboration Initiative

01/8/2019

State to Receive \$10.6 M in Federal Funding to Align Early Education Programs and Childcare, Improve Quality of Services, Create Smoother Transition to Elementary School

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy and members of his Administration today announced that New Jersey will receive \$10.6 million in federal funding for a new initiative – The NJ Preschool Development Collaboration. The initiative will advance cooperation and alignment among state and local childcare resources, as well as early childhood education programs, which will improve coordination, consistency and quality.

"New Jersey's children deserve access to the highest-quality education possible, regardless of location or socioeconomic status," **said Governor Murphy**. "The NJ Preschool Development Collaboration will foster critical educational opportunities and provide children and educators with the opportunity to work together to ensure that our children receive the tools they need to achieve their greatest potential."

"We look forward to working with our partners in state government, as well as other community stakeholders, to create an integrated system of early childhood education that meets the needs of all NJ residents, builds on best practices, promotes partnerships and collaboration, and gives childcare providers and pre-K teachers the tools they need to be effective," **said New Jersey Department of Children and Families Commissioner Christine Norbut Beyer**. "The NJ Preschool Development Collaboration moves us closer to realizing the Governor's promise of a fairer, stronger New Jersey in which all children have access to the educational opportunities that will serve them well in their academic pursuits and future successes in life."

The NJ Preschool Development Collaboration program – funded through \$10.6 million awarded to the Garden State through the US Department of Health and Human Services' Preschool Development Grant Birth Through Five (PDG B-5) – represents an interdepartmental partnership to foster collaboration and improve quality among early childhood and pre-K educational programs. Under the New Jersey program, the State will conduct a periodic needs assessment of the availability and quality of existing early childhood education programs, and will develop a strategic plan to improve coordination among existing programs and local educational agencies, specifically to create an easier transition from early educational programs to elementary school.

"A child's earliest years are a critical time during which rapid brain development occurs. These milestones inform their cognitive skills, health, and behavior throughout life. Therefore, investing in pre-school education is vitally important for the development of childhood education. Pre-K education also gives a child a jumpstart on her academic career and prepares her for challenges beyond the classroom," **said Education Commissioner Lamont O. Repollet**. "We are grateful this grant will help track the effectiveness of early intervention programs to children from high-need populations."

The NJ program would also improve the quality of early childhood education programs by developing and implementing evidence-based practices and best and leading practices in educational opportunities for children and professional development for early childhood education providers. Finally, the program will focus on maximizing parental choice, knowledge and involvement in early childhood education for family members – particularly in underserved populations that have historically experienced disparity in access and availability to high-quality programs.

"The Murphy Administration knows that early childhood education and development, especially quality child care and preschool, are crucial to building a stronger future for our families and our children. New Jersey worked hard to develop a strong proposal, and we are delighted to have secured this important funding to support New Jersey's families," **said Human Services Commissioner Carole Johnson**. "We also recently announced new investments in child care to help more families find the services they need and to advance quality child care throughout our State."

With this new initiative, we will continue to collaborate across State government to help families and children be well prepared for their future. I look forward to working with Commissioners Beyer and Repollet on implementing this funding and advancing Governor Murphy's commitment to a stronger New Jersey for everyone."

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