

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy and Commissioner Dehmer Announce Award of \$42 Million to Fund Preschool Facilities Projects Across New Jersey

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TRENTON – As part of the Murphy Administration’s goal to provide New Jersey families with access to universal high-quality preschool, Governor Phil Murphy and Acting Education Commissioner Kevin Dehmer today announced the award of over \$42 million in federal grant funding to build and expand preschool facilities in 22 New Jersey school districts.

“High-quality preschool can positively impact the trajectory of a child’s life, which is why we have made it our mission to expand access to these critical programs,” **said Governor Phil Murphy**. “During our administration, we’ve seen remarkable success in bringing high-quality, state-funded preschool to hundreds of New Jersey communities. These grant awards to support preschool construction and expansion projects represent an investment in our children’s futures and will help bring us closer to our goal of realizing universal preschool in New Jersey.”

High-quality preschool is an investment that will help students for years to come, both in their formative years and throughout their academic careers. Increased access to early education opportunities benefits children and their families, building upon our work to make New Jersey the best place to raise a family and educate a child.

“Families and educators in many school districts have been eager to establish new, high-quality preschool programs in their community,” **said Kevin Dehmer, Acting Commissioner of Education**. “However, we’ve also heard from many school leaders that the biggest obstacle they face has been the lack of adequate facilities needed to house those programs. This initiative marks a significant step towards universal access to high-quality preschool as it makes funding widely available to help school districts build, expand, or renovate school facilities specifically for preschool students.”

The \$42 million is the second round of Universal Preschool Facilities Expansion Grant funding, part of \$120 million made available through an allocation of federal American Rescue Plan Act Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund money in the Fiscal Year 2023 State Budget. The first round provided over \$74 million in preschool facilities funding, including nearly \$52 million announced in November 2023 and additional Round 1 projects approved after that announcement.

The facilities funding is one component of New Jersey’s approach to deliver universal preschool by blending district-provided preschool programs with classrooms contracted in licensed childcare providers and Head Start programs.

Awards were based on four priorities, in the following order:

1. Proposals to increase available preschool seats by at least 10 percent, ranked by percentage of increased seats.

2. Proposals to enhance preschool facilities by increasing the capacity of existing classrooms or by constructing/rehabilitating restrooms.
3. Proposals to expand preschool programs from half-day to full-day.
4. Proposals to expand classroom capacity to house new preschool programs and guarantee additional seats.

Universal Preschool Facilities Expansion Grant funding, Second Round:

County	District	School	Estimated Project Cost	State Share	Additional PreK Seats
Atlantic	Hamilton Township School District	Joseph C. Shaner Memorial Elementary School	\$5,720,000	\$2,788,643	60
Atlantic	Hammonton School District	Hammonton Early Childhood Educational Center	\$5,220,377	\$2,757,805	120
Bergen	Palisades Park School District	Charles R. Smith Early Childhood Center	\$5,100,152	\$2,040,061	105
Burlington	Cinnaminson Township School District	Cinnaminson Memorial School	\$375,000	\$150,000	45
Burlington	Palmyra Public School District	Delaware Avenue School	\$2,625,000	\$1,050,000	86
Camden	Pennsauken Township School District	Baldwin Elementary School	\$12,294,478	\$7,672,922	120
Cumberland	Commercial Township School District	Commercial Township School	\$1,540,004	\$1,028,105	30
Essex	West Orange Public Schools	Mount Pleasant Elementary School	\$3,640,000	\$1,456,000	66
Hunterdon	Clinton Township School District	Spruce Run Preschool	\$580,000	\$232,000	48
Hunterdon	Readington Township School District	Three Bridges School	\$520,908	\$208,363	30
Middlesex	Carteret Public School District	Columbus Elementary School	\$10,644,935	\$5,858,632	120
Middlesex	Dunellen Public School District	John P. Faber Elementary School	\$6,055,970	\$3,463,300	120

County	District	School	Estimated Project Cost	State Share	Additional PreK Seats
Middlesex	Highland Park Borough School District	Irving Primary School (two projects in one school)	\$1,433,100	\$573,240	30
Middlesex	Piscataway Township School District	Fellowship Farms Elementary School	\$5,671,250	\$2,268,500	135
Monmouth	Township of Ocean School District	Wayside Elementary School	\$219,082	\$87,633	62**
Monmouth	Township of Ocean School District	Ocean Township Elementary School	\$115,291	\$46,116	
Monmouth	Township of Ocean School District	Wanamassa Elementary School	\$368,093	\$147,237	
Ocean	Lacey Township School District	Mill Pond Elementary School	\$3,375,000	\$1,350,000	75
Ocean	Point Pleasant Borough School District	Ocean Road Elementary School	\$234,255	\$93,702	0*
Passaic	Wayne Township Public School District	Preakness Early Childhood Center (two projects in one school)	\$12,535,176	\$5,014,070	103
Sussex	Franklin Borough School District	Franklin Borough School	\$527,672	\$211,069	0*
Sussex	Sandyston-Walpack Consolidated School District	Sandyston Walpack School	\$1,000,000	\$400,000	15
Union	Rahway Public School District	Franklin Elementary School	\$2,755,914	\$1,102,366	23
Union	Rahway Public School District	Roosevelt Elementary School	\$2,676,661	\$1,070,664	25
Warren	Great Meadows Regional School District	Liberty Elementary School	\$2,593,875	\$1,037,550	75
Total			\$87,822,193	\$42,107,979	1,493

* Renovations to restroom facilities only; no additional seats.

** Number of seats added is inclusive of all three projects in the Township of Ocean School District.

Governor Phil Murphy

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