

Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy, Acting Commissioner Dehmer Announce \$11 Million in Funding to Bring High-Quality Preschool to 16 School Districts

03/12/2024

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy was joined by Acting Commissioner of Education Kevin Dehmer at Millridge School in Secaucus to highlight the impact access to preschool is having on New Jersey families as part of his administration’s record investment to expand access to preschool statewide. The visit coincides with the announcement of another round of Fiscal Year 2024 (FY2024) Preschool Education Aid (PEA) that will allow an additional 16 school districts across the State to establish or expand high-quality preschool programs.

“Access to early childhood education helps set the tone for the rest of a child’s educational career by providing innumerable benefits that will follow young learners throughout their lives,” **said Governor Phil Murphy**. “From advanced literacy skills to enhanced social and emotional development, access to high-quality preschool programs has a tangible impact on our children. That is why I am proud to announce continued investments to expand access to preschool for families across the State. Today’s announcement builds upon our work to make universal preschool a reality in New Jersey so that more children have the tools and resources necessary to succeed.”

The funding is projected to provide 827 additional seats for children to access high-quality preschool education. This second round of funding for FY2024 builds on the \$25 million investment in preschool funding announced last October that provided for an additional 1,715 preschool seats in 26 school districts. High-quality preschools are full-day programs that have a certificated teacher and aide, limited class size, curriculum aligned to the New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, and are inclusive of special needs children.

“We know that high-quality preschool sets the foundation for a child’s success and is linked to improved student outcomes for years to come,” **said Kevin Dehmer, Acting Commissioner of Education**. “That’s why bringing high-quality preschool to more communities can be so transformative, and one that is well worth our investment.”

Today’s announcement builds on the Murphy Administration’s campaign to put New Jersey on the path to universal preschool, providing every three- and four-year-old child in New Jersey with access to free, full-day preschool. Additionally, the Governor’s FY2025 budget proposes an additional \$124 million for preschool education, including \$20 million to expand high-quality, full-day preschool programs into new school districts. Since taking office, Governor Murphy has increased preschool funding by over \$427 million and added more than 14,600 preschool seats in New Jersey school districts.

“I am thankful the Secaucus school system was chosen to receive pre-K Expansion Aid, which will provide the funding necessary to start a full day pre-K program for 3 and 4 year olds. As the pre-K program develops, I look forward to working with the Governor’s Office and our school administration to more completely understand and prepare for the impacts this expanded program will have on our school system. I have no doubt the early educational benefits afforded by this funding will help our children perform better as they advance. I am grateful to Governor Murphy and his administration for advancing this important educational initiative,” **stated Secaucus Mayor Michael Gonnelli**.



“Today marks a significant step forward in our commitment to early childhood education. Our recent acceptance of the Pre-K Expansion Aid marks a pivotal moment in offering free Pre-K to our families. This initiative is not just an investment but also a commitment to our community to lay the groundwork for universal access to early education. Our goal extends beyond the current horizon. In collaboration with our Mayor and Town Council, we are committed to expanding our district’s reach, to ensure that every family in Secaucus has access to high-quality pre-kindergarten programs. This move towards inclusive education reflects our dedication to nurturing the potential of every child. It fosters a community where every family has the support and resources to thrive. Together, we are building a brighter, more equitable future for Secaucus, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to Governor Murphy for his unwavering commitment to prioritizing education in New Jersey,” **said Erick Alfonso, Ed.D., M.B.A., Superintendent of Secaucus Public Schools.**

The following is a list of the 16 additional 2023-2024 school districts receiving PEA funding for preschool programs:

County	District	Projected Funding
Burlington	Cinnaminson Township	\$290,280
Burlington	Tabernacle Township	\$522,504
Cape May	Upper Township	\$458,568
Hudson	Secaucus	\$1,583,647
Hunterdon	Bloomsbury	\$193,206
Hunterdon	Delaware Township	\$341,826
Hunterdon	Holland Township	\$535,032
Hunterdon	Union Township	\$772,824
Mercer	Lawrence Township	\$923,486
Mercer	Robbinsville	\$2,661,014
Monmouth	Atlantic Highlands	\$322,718
Salem	Oldmans Township	\$171,600
Sussex	Fredon Township	\$363,775
Sussex	Stanhope	\$145,510
Union	Roselle	\$934,496
Warren	Great Meadows Regional	\$935,644

County	District	Projected Funding
Total		\$11,156,130

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