

## Governor Phil Murphy

# ICYMI: New Jersey Department of Education Announces \$33 Million to Fund Preschool Facilities Expansion Projects

05/1/2024

**Trenton, NJ** – As part of the Murphy Administration’s campaign to provide families with universal access to high-quality preschool throughout the state, Governor Phil Murphy and Acting Education Commissioner Kevin Dehmer today announced the availability of \$33 million in federal grant funding to support crucial preschool facilities projects in New Jersey school districts.

“We’ve been committed to bringing universal preschool to as many communities as possible, and an important element of our initiative is providing funding for new and expanded preschool facilities,” **said Governor Phil Murphy**. “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 benefit children and their families, building upon our work to make New Jersey the best place to raise a family and educate a child.”

“Many communities that want to establish high-quality preschool programs have faced the challenge of securing adequate facilities to house those programs,” **said Acting Education Commissioner Kevin Dehmer**. “This first-of-its-kind funding for New Jersey school districts helps overcome those barriers and brings us one step closer to realizing our goal of universal preschool for all children.”

The \$33 million is made available through the second round of Universal Preschool Facilities Expansion Grants funding. The first round, announced in March 2023, marked the first time that preschool facility expansion grants were available to help build, expand, and renovate preschool facilities in Regular Operating Districts in New Jersey.

A total of \$120 million for the grants was made available through an allocation of federal American Rescue Plan Act Coronavirus State Fiscal Recovery Fund dollars in the Fiscal Year 2023 State Budget. To date, \$86.9 million of that amount has been allocated to a total of 35 projects in 27 school districts, creating over 3,500 preschool seats. As one component of New Jersey’s vital mixed-delivery approach to universal preschool, district facility improvements like these are designed to complement and enhance other State efforts bolstering district, licensed childcare provider, and Head Start capacity to provide high-quality preschool services to additional students.

Eligible proposals will be prioritized by category in the following order:

- Proposals to increase available preschool seats by at least 10 percent, ranked by percentage of increased seats.
- Proposals to enhance preschool facilities by increasing the capacity of existing classrooms or by constructing/rehabilitating restrooms.
- Proposals to expand preschool programs from half-day to full-day.



- Proposals to expand classroom capacity to house new preschool programs and guarantee additional seats.

The New Jersey Department of Education will be accepting grant applications from Regular Operating Districts from May 1 to June 3, 2024. Districts may submit an application to the Department via the Electronic Web Enabled Grants system (EWEG) in the [NJDOE Homeroom \(https://t.e2ma.net/click/jgg4tl/fd1rrbm/nzfo28\)](https://t.e2ma.net/click/jgg4tl/fd1rrbm/nzfo28) portal. Approved projects must be completed no later than August 31, 2026.

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