



Jonathan Hart, Ph.D., *Superintendent*
Jason M. Bohm, CPA, *Business Administrator/Board Secretary*

jhart@readington.k12.nj.us
jbohm@readington.k12.nj.us

P.O. Box 807 • 52 Readington Road • Whitehouse Station, NJ 08889 • (908)-534-2195 • (908) 349-3042 fax

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Dear Readington Community,

At Tuesday night's Board of Education meeting, the Board voted to submit an application with the New Jersey Department of Education (DOE) to fund universal preschool for Readington three- and four-year-olds through the Preschool Education Aid opportunity. If we receive this funding **no cost (free) preschool** will be available to up to 105 Readington three- and four-year-olds starting on January 2, 2024.

The application was discussed at the July Board of Education meeting in order to submit prior to the August 11, 2023 DOE-imposed deadline. The application submission includes a plan to fund preschool beginning on January 2, 2024 but also outlines a 3–5 year plan to expand preschool to more Readington children until all preschool students have a space in a free preschool classroom. Beginning this year, and if we receive the funding, we plan to provide preschool in partnership with our already-existing local preschool centers. These centers already provide an exemplary early childhood education and meet DOE eligibility requirements as state-approved child care centers.

Preschool classrooms are planned as follows:

- Three Bridges School - one (1) preschool classroom
- Whitehouse School - two (2) preschool classrooms
- Whitehouse Prep - two (2) preschool classrooms
- Stanton Learning Center - one (1) preschool classroom
- Berry Patch - one (1) preschool classroom

With a maximum enrollment of 15 students these classrooms will be able to serve 105 students this year. Our plans include looking into more classrooms at these provider locations, investigating leasing space, and/or adding to our current facilities in order to ensure we increase the number of children we can serve in future years.

If funding is provided, we will communicate with Readington residents regarding parent applications to our program. Since we are limited to 105 student seats, we will likely have to use a lottery system for this school year with hopes of expanding preschool options and eliminating the need for a lottery in future years.

If funding is not provided, we will communicate with our community and commit to the strong preschool program that already operates at Three Bridges School. We will also reapply for DOE funding next year when the preschool application is available. Our goal is to provide an exemplary early childhood learning experience free of charge for our Readington residents. We are very excited about this opportunity and are hopeful the state will provide preschool funding!

Sincerely,

Jonathan Hart, Ph.D.
Superintendent of Schools