Preschool Funding Opportunity

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July 18, 2023 Board of Education Meeting

Introduction

The DOE announced the availability of Preschool Education Aid (PEA) to increase access to high-quality preschool for New Jersey **three-** and **four-** year old children.

Funding will be determined in the following priority order according to free and reduced price lunch (FRLP):
Tier 1: Districts at 20% or more FRLP
Tier 2: Districts at 15-19% FRLP
*Tier 3: Districts at 10-14% FRLP
Tier 4: Districts at 10% or less FRLP

Research and Strategic Work: Where does preschool fit?

The Research

Growing evidence demonstrates that high quality early childhood education help prepare children for school and public funding is increasing (Ansari, et al., 2019). Public preschool programs have substantial impacts on children's early learning and quality preschool education is a profitable investment (Yoshikawa et al., 2013).

Strategic Plan

Inquisitive Learning: Preschool curriculum is based in creative, play-based investigation for children.
Partnerships: There is desire to enhance community partnerships - preschool programs allow this.
Social Awareness: Evidence suggests positive social outcomes from preschool programs.

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Requirements

Requirements: Eligibility

Complete an application that develops a plan to provide preschool to 90% of our universe (preschool population) over a 5-year period;

- Readington's universe is **266** students (133 3-year olds and 133 4-year olds).
- 90% would be **240** students.

Currently operating full-day Kindergarten programs.

Requirements: Curriculum

Adopt one of New Jersey approved preschool curriculums:
- Connect4Learning
- Creative Curriculum
- High Scope
- Tools of the Mind

Conduct screenings for students in preschool:
- Developmental screenings upon entry
- Health screenings throughout the year

Overall, the program must meet the elements of a high quality preschool set forth in N.J.A.C. 6A:13A.

Requirements: Personnel and Facilities

Staff:
- Hire 1 teacher and one paraprofessional per class, class size is no more than 15;
- Hire a preschool coach;
- Hire a preschool intervention specialist;
- Have/hire the community/parent liaison (CPIS);
- Have/hire a nurse dedicated to the preschool program.

Facilities:
- 950 sq. ft. total classroom space (including bathroom, closet, etc.) with 750 sq. ft. for instruction;
- Bathroom in classroom or "in line of sight."

Requirements: Community

Community Collaboration and Family Engagement are cornerstones of a successful preschool program.

The preschool application requires the formation of an Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC). The ECAC ensures a coordinated system of services are provided for families of preschool children.

Membership includes: stakeholders in the community, parents, private providers, local Head Start (if applicable), and 2 elected co-chairs to coordinate and run quarterly meetings.

Community Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS) and Social Worker are also part of the family engagement team.

02

Mixed Delivery

Preschool Classrooms: Where is there room?

In-district Potential Classrooms:
- One (1) existing preschool classroom at TBS
- One (1) existing classroom which will be connected to a bathroom at WHS (not currently preschool)
- One (1) existing classroom which will be connected to a bathroom at HBS (not currently preschool)

Providers in our Township:
- Whitehouse Prep
- Berry Patch
- Magnolia Montessori
- Stanton Learning Center
- Global Pioneer Academy

Mixed Delivery

Applications for funding give priority to mixed delivery models.
Mixed delivery models use a **combination** of in-district facilities along with contracts with Head Start and/or private preschool providers.

Potential Model includes:
- 3 classrooms in Readington Schools
- Unknown (as of now) classrooms at provider locations. Goal would be at least 1-2 classrooms at one location.

Other vacant facilities could be used such as:
- Church preschools that are no longer in use
- Unicom-owned Early Learning Center

03

Budget

Budget Preparation

Uses the ASSA count to project enrollment;

Allocations are provided based on actual and projected enrollment;
Expenditure allowable uses can include:
- Staff
- Supplies
- Facility upgrades
- Transportation

04

Timeline

Timeline 2023-2024

August 11

Application is due

September 8

Award notice

January 2

Program must start

"A first class system of early childhood education is the hallmark of a caring and civilized society."

—Andy Hargreaves

Thanks!

Do you have any questions?

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References

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