



## PRE-K OUR WAY

Prepared for school, ready for success.



# IT'S TIME TO BRING PRE-K OUR WAY

Where a child lives shouldn't determine whether or not they have access to high-quality preschool. New Jersey has one of the best, most successful, high-quality public preschool programs in the country. In 2008, NJ law provided pre-k to 35 school districts but promised to expand pre-k to more communities. The first funding for that promise occurred nearly a decade later – in mid-2017 for the 2017-2018 school year. Significant funding – nearly \$83 million – was included for the 2018-2019 school year as part of the first budget of the Murphy Administration. Although more than 100 communities now have NJ's pre-k, there are tens of thousands of 3- and 4-year-olds still waiting for access to NJ's pre-k. They are waiting across hundreds of communities – your communities. Pre-K Our Way's strategic messaging, targeted communication and focused engagement efforts helped pre-k expansion become a NJ priority! Want confirmation of that? As part of his first budget message, Governor Murphy committed to universal pre-k within four years.

### WE NEED HIGH-QUALITY PRE-K IN OUR COMMUNITY

High-quality preschool is so important that New Jersey has an existing law to bring it to young children. Today, there are 100+ school districts with state-funded pre-k. Under the law, the number should now be in the many hundreds. Our state's existing high-quality, full-day pre-k program for 3- and 4-year-olds should be in more New Jersey communities – and available to the tens of thousands of kids waiting every year. It's up to us to change that. Together, we have a great opportunity to bring pre-k our way. NOW is the time for us to raise our voices. New Jersey has many challenges and important priorities – we want pre-k for our kids as one of those priorities.

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## NEW JERSEY'S PRE-K PROGRAM MAKES A BIG DIFFERENCE

Access to high-quality preschool is critically important for children. When it's available, those who get it do better in school; those who don't start behind and have trouble catching up. Children who experience one or two years of New Jersey's high-quality preschool demonstrate greater proficiencies in language arts and math in the 5th grade than those who didn't attend an early education program. In fact, children who attend New Jersey's pre-k programs achieve at a higher rate, with a 20-40% increase in elementary school test scores. They struggle less in school – they are 40% less likely to repeat a grade – and they overcome barriers to learning to the point where schools see a 31% drop in the need for expensive special education services.

## YOU CAN BRING PRE-K YOUR WAY

New Jersey's successful and high-quality public preschool program is one of the best in the country. Why? Because the communities that have it are allowed to adapt the program to their individual local community needs. The existing law, as well as current discussion of expansion of pre-k in New Jersey, are clear and support local community choice. Your community chooses: Public pre-k can be implemented through public schools, community for-profit, nonprofit or faith-based providers, or private providers. New Jersey law supports what is called 'mixed-delivery'; a system of public supports and public and private implementation. Federal programs and laws also incentivize public and private service delivery.

## TOGETHER WE CAN BRING PRE-K OUR WAY

No one is more important in this effort than you, your colleagues, family, friends and neighbors. Your input, involvement and voice is critical to sending the message that your community wants New Jersey's high-quality pre-k program to come your way. Here's what you can do:



### SHOW YOUR SUPPORT

Like Pre-K Our Way on Facebook and follow @PreKOurWay on Twitter and sign up for email updates at [www.prekourway.org](http://www.prekourway.org).



### TELL YOUR COLLEAGUES, FAMILY, FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS

Show your support for New Jersey's high-quality pre-k on your social media pages – Facebook, Twitter, blogs. Wherever you're already talking to your friends, families and neighbors, make sure they know about this critical issue.



### LET GOVERNOR MURPHY KNOW THAT YOU SUPPORT PRE-K EXPANSION

Email Governor Murphy at [prekourway.org/contact-the-governor/](mailto:prekourway.org/contact-the-governor/). Share your reasons for bringing pre-k to more communities as promised – tens of thousands of NJ kids are waiting!



### LET YOUR LEGISLATORS KNOW THAT YOU SUPPORT PRE-K EXPANSION

Email your legislators at [prekourway.org/write-your-legislator/](mailto:prekourway.org/write-your-legislator/). Share your reasons for expanding NJ's Pre-K NOW! – tens of thousands of NJ kids are still waiting!



### VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR CONTACT US

Learn more. Get involved. Sign up for updates. Download the tools you need to bring quality pre-k to our communities. Visit [www.prekourway.org](http://www.prekourway.org) today. Email us at [info@prekourway.org](mailto:info@prekourway.org) or call us at 609-246-0034 ext 2.