



PRE-K OUR WAY

Prepared for school, ready for success.

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PRE-K OUR WAY NEWS

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER WINTER 2016



What a month for expanding pre-k to more of New Jersey's 3- and 4-year-olds! Legislators are hearing your voices, and the media coverage is echoing your support for expanded pre-k in NJ. In addition, Pre-K Our Way began the local community meeting initiative to bring pre-k to 100+ communities throughout NJ.

On February 4th, 2016, the State Senate and the State Assembly each saw introduction of separate bills for pre-k expansion. In the State Senate, State Senators M. Teresa Ruiz (D-29) and State Senate President Stephen M. Sweeney (D-3) introduced a bill for pre-k expansion and another to study an alternative way of financing early childhood education. On that same date, the Assembly introduced bipartisan legislation to expand high-quality, publicly funded preschool through the implementation of the 2008 expansion law. On February 9th, the bill's sponsors formally announced the Assembly bill at a public event: Assemblywoman Mila Jasey (D-27), Assembly Speaker Vincent Prieto (D-32), Assemblyman Patrick Diegnan (D-18) and Assemblywoman Betty Lou DeCroce (R-26). Sponsors of the Assembly bill hosted the announcement event at Clifton School #17—a school district and community targeted for pre-k expansion.

Want to bring pre-k your way? You can thank all six of these legislators for sponsorship of their bills. Call or email each of them by visiting prekourway.org/take-action/; let them know you appreciate their efforts in ensuring pre-k comes YOUR way.

LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT HAPPENS NOW

The recent bill introductions are an important step in expanding preschool for 3- and 4-year-old children. It is only the beginning of a long process of education—education of our legislators and education of the public to build and develop public will and support. Visit Pre-K Our Way's website for an explanation of recent bill introductions and what happens now at prekourway.org/pre-k-expansion-bills-explanation/. Please share these documents and other resources!

HELP BRING PRE-K TO YOUR COMMUNITY: ATTEND A LOCAL COMMUNITY MEETING

Coincidentally, February 9's Assembly bill announcement also marked the date of Pre-K Our Way's first local community meeting. Pre-K Our Way is working with the growing list of advocate organizations – currently numbering more than 50 – to hold local community meetings to get the word out and to make our voices heard. Working with organizations across New Jersey, Pre-K Our Way will co-host local community meetings and workshops on how to bring New Jersey's existing high-quality pre-k to your community and make it yours.

In recent weeks, Pre-K Our Way has co-hosted local community meetings with the Junior Leagues of New Jersey, Bergen County Office for Children and the Central Ocean Rotary. Attendees included representation from nearly two dozen different targeted pre-k expansion communities across 5 different counties: Cliffs Park, Elmwood Park, Fairview, Hackensack, Lodi, Moonachie, Palisades Park, Wallington, Dover, Belleville, Berkeley Township, Eagleswood Township, Lakehurst, Lakewood, Manchester Township, Ocean Gate School District, Seaside Heights, Tuckerton, Hillside, Linden, Rahway, Roselle and Winfield Township.

Visit prekourway.org and watch for a meeting near you! We've already started scheduling for March, when we'll be bringing pre-k your way to nearly 30 different communities in Monmouth, Atlantic, Cumberland and Cape May counties. You can also contact milan@prekourway.org if you or your organization is interested in co-hosting a community meeting.

IN THE NEWS

[Clifton School #17 Pre-K Welcomes State Representatives](#)

Clifton School #17 welcomed NJ State Assembly members, pre-k advocates, community leaders and media to a glimpse of its preschool program while discussing statewide plans for expansion.

[Legislative Action on Pre-K Expansion: What Happens Now?](#)

The NJ Legislature is considering several bills on pre-k expansion. Read about them, find out Pre-K Our Way's position on each bill, and learn what happens now

SPREAD THE WORD

Encourage others to help bring pre-k to your community. This month, we shared a new video called [Pre-K Our Way: Get Involved](#). Watch it and then share it with others to let them know how important it is for all of us to raise our voices. Need help using our materials? Contact us at info@prekourway.org and we'll be sure you have what you need.

LET'S GET SOCIAL

Want to show your support? Share one of our pre-drafted posts or tweets and inspire others in New Jersey to bring pre-k their way.

Facebook Post: It's time for more New Jersey communities to have access to high-quality pre-k programs. Show your support for the education of New Jersey's 3- to 4-year-olds by signing up at prekourway.org today.

Tweet: NJ needs more high-quality pre-k. Support the education of New Jersey's 3- to 4-year-olds by signing up at prekourway.org today.

Have questions? Contact us at info@prekourway.org

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