



PRE-K OUR WAY

Prepared for school, ready for success.

www.prekourway.org

PRE-K OUR WAY NEWS

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER **OCTOBER 2015**



YOU'RE BEING HEARD: PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT THE POWER OF PRESCHOOL

On September 21, Pre-K Our Way was invited to testify at the State Senate Education Committee hearing called by State Senator M. Teresa Ruiz. The hearing invited advocates, organizations, teachers, researchers and others to discuss the importance of quality early childhood education within the state of New Jersey.

We're proud that Pre-K Our Way was invited to present testimony from a panel of speakers, including two of our Leadership Group members, Brian Maher and Lynda Anderson-Towns, as well as supporter Ruth Piatt. As co-owner of Little Lamb Preschool-Keener Kids in Vineland, Ruth spoke about the importance of mixed delivery and the impact of her school on the community. Brian provided a business leader's perspective, and Lynda spoke about the success of Woodbine School District's high-quality pre-k program. Other presenters included Advocates for Children of New Jersey's Executive Director and Pre-K Our Way Leadership Group member Cecilia Zalkind. Testimonies from these and many other presenters can be found at prekourway.org/hearing-testimonies/; you'll see perspectives from people across New Jersey about why they want to bring pre-k their way.

BRING PRE-K YOUR WAY

Pre-K Our Way has been visiting local communities throughout New Jersey and listening to people share why they want to bring expanded pre-k access to their towns. Let us know about events in your community—PTA/PTO meetings, back-to-school nights, Chamber of Commerce meetings, Rotary or Women's Clubs— by contacting our Community Organizer, Milan, at milan@prekourway.org. Here's some of the places we visited in September:

- Belleville "Just a Party"
- Sea Isle City Street Fair
- Point Pleasant Seafood Fair
- Harrison Fest 175th Anniversary Street Festival
- Beverly Community Day
- Little Falls Fall Fest

GROWING LIST OF COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORT PRE-K OUR WAY

Individuals and organizations from across New Jersey are showing their support for expanding high-quality preschool access to more of New Jersey's 3- and 4-year-olds. This past month, Pre-K Our Way welcomed the New Jersey YMCA State Alliance.

"The YMCA Alliance represents 37 YMCA associations engaging over 561,605 residents, including 284,268 children under the age of eighteen. As one of the leading providers of quality preschool programming in the State of New Jersey, the Alliance and its member organizations have historically been champions of promoting access to effective school and community-based early learning opportunities to all eligible children. Pre-k is the gateway to the future academic, social, emotional and economic success for children who access services."

— Bill Lovett, Executive Director of the New Jersey YMCA State Alliance

In addition to the YMCA Alliance, individual YMCAs who joined with Pre-K Our Way—each a leading member of their local community—include:

Westfield Area YMCA • Meadowlands Area YMCA • The Community YMCA • Garfield YMCA • The Gateway Family YMCA • Summit Area YMCA • Metropolitan YMCA of the Oranges • Hunterdon County YMCA • Cumberland/Cape Atlantic YMCA • YMCA of Greater Bergen County • Somerset County YMCA • Metuchen Edison YMCA • Greater Trenton Area YMCA • Fanwood-Scotch Plains YMCA • YMCA of Montclair • Madison Area YMCA • YMCA of Salem County • YMCA of Burlington and Camden Counties • Hamilton Area YMCA • Lakeland Hills Family YMCA • Plainfield YMCA • Randolph YMCA • Gloucester County YMCA • Greater Morristown YMCA • Raritan Bay Area YMCA • Ridgewood YMCA • YM/WCA of Newark and Vicinity • Princeton Family YMCA • Camp Ockanickon YMCA • Wyckoff Family YMCA • Ocean County YMCA • YMCA of Western Monmouth

You can learn more about their commitment to helping New Jersey expand our high-quality preschool program at prekourway.org/our-supporters.

IN THE NEWS

New Jersey residents are sharing why preschool is a top priority issue across the state. Here's a recap of some of the news resulting from the September 21 State Senate Education Committee hearing.

Should N.J. Expand its Public Preschool Program?

NJ.com

On September 21, Senator M. Teresa Ruiz held a State Senate hearing on early childhood education. Advocates from across New Jersey and from different organizations testified on the benefits of preschool, and all testifiers noted one need: the need for expanded preschool access.

Kindergarten Kids' Drawings, Numbers Graphically Show Why Pre-K is Key

NJ Spotlight

At the September 21 State Hearing on early childhood education, Randee Mandelbaum, a Freehold Kindergarten teacher, showed drawings that clearly indicated which of her students had received pre-k education. The drawings made a definitive point of the educational benefits a child receives with high-quality preschool education.

Preschool Can Help Some Kids Avoid Crime, NJ Cop Says

New Jersey 101.5

Fight Crime: Invest in Kids' Chief James Abbott of West Orange, New Jersey, speaks on the positive social outcomes for children who receive New Jersey's high-quality preschool program.

SHARE YOUR STORY

Pre-K Our Way values the insights of supporters of expanded pre-k access. Share your opinion about why you want to expand pre-k access to more of New Jersey's 3- to 4-year-olds at prekourway.org/share-your-story. Your story could be the inspiration for others to become advocates for expanded high-quality preschool.

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: I've shown my support for expanded pre-k access for more of New Jersey's 3- to 4-year-olds. Now it's your turn: sign up at www.prekourway.org and help bring @PreKOurWay today.

Tweet: I've shown my support for expanded pre-k for more of NJ's 3-4 y.o. Now it's your turn: sign up at prekourway.org & help bring @PreKOurWay today.

Have questions? Contact us at info@prekourway.org

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