



PRE-K OUR WAY

Prepared for school, ready for success.

NJ State Budget signed; includes \$25 million for pre-k expansion funding!

The NJ State Budget signed for the year beginning July 1, 2017 includes \$25 million for pre-k expansion. The funding is the initial step in bringing NJ's full-day, state-funded pre-k to 50,000 3- and 4-year-olds across hundreds of NJ's communities. It is "the first significant expansion in nearly a decade." (NJ Spotlight, 06/23/17)

Pre-K Our Way believes that this is an important initial step in expanding NJ's high-quality, state-funded pre-k per the 2008 law. Funding for pre-k expansion in the recently signed NJ State Budget demonstrates the raised priority of pre-k across our state, and the bipartisan commitment to pre-k expansion from our elected officials.

Support for NJ's pre-k expansion has grown tremendously in the past 18 months and is now a state priority: pre-k was part of every gubernatorial debate and had 4 major candidates supporting it. Pre-k expansion is part of the discussion in Trenton and throughout our state. Pre-K Our Way's goal remains unchanged: funding for pre-k expansion in the first budget of a new governor in 2018.

Following is the signed budget language re: preschool expansion funding in the amount of \$25 million (page 1 of 5 in <http://politi.co/2tMGcHw>)

"From the amount hereinabove appropriated for Preschool Education Expansion Aid, the Commissioner of Education shall provide State aid to districts for the purpose of providing free access to full-day preschool for three- and four-year-old children residing in the school district in accordance with the preschool quality standards adopted by the Commissioner. The commissioner shall determine which districts shall receive Preschool Education Expansion Aid based on a district's demonstration of its readiness to operate a preschool program consistent with the preschool quality standards."