



Preschool Expansion Update

--A component of the School Funding Reform Act of 2008 with the goal of providing high-quality preschool to at-risk 3 and 4 year olds in NJ.

--Based on the successful outcome data for preschool students in Abbott districts. Children who attended these programs performed statistically significantly better on language (100%) and math (70%) measures than those who did not attend. These difference were still observable at the end of the kindergarten year.

--Districts will have 6 years to fully implement the program and will be required to offer either a targeted or a universal preschool program.

--Universal (approximately 120 districts)- these districts are required to offer a six-hour preschool program to all 3 and 4 year old children in the district, including students with disabilities, regardless of family income.

--Targeted (majority of districts)- these districts are required to offer the six-hour program only to children eligible for free and reduced lunch. In addition to eligible general education students, preschoolers with disabilities who are also eligible for free & reduced lunch must be offered the six-hour/day program. Children with disabilities who do not meet the income criteria would receive a program of at least 10 hours per week, unless the IEP team determines otherwise. The IEP takes precedence!

--Requires comprehensive curriculum and assessment. One certified teacher and teacher assistant for every 15 children.

--District may contract with community based providers (such as typical child care centers) or other districts to fulfill the requirements.

--Tuition may be charged for non-eligible children that meet the age cutoff.

--Refer to N.J.A.C. 6A:13A for more information. www.nj.gov/education/ece/code/