

Project: Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts Expansion

Applicant: Pennsylvania Office of Child Development and Early Learning

Pennsylvania’s history of supporting high quality early education provides a strong foundation upon which this Preschool Expansion funding will build. Already, Pennsylvania’s state-funded preschool program, Pre-K Counts, is serving 13,819 children. This represents a significant number of Eligible Children, but the Office of Child Development and Early Learning (OCDEL) is prepared to do more.

OCDEL will utilize a two pronged strategy of enhancing all Pre-K Counts programs and expanding the number of slots for existing Pre-K Counts programs in High-Need Communities. Therefore, an additional 2,314 children be served and OCDEL will ensure that all Pre-K Counts programs, serving a total of 16,113 Eligible Children, meet the definition of High-Quality programs and are serving Pennsylvania’s children who are most in need. By expanding and enhancing the existing infrastructure of Pre-K Counts programs and the monitoring and professional development system, OCDEL will be able to successfully reach full enrollment within a matter of months.

OCDEL will rely heavily on existing partnerships in order to accomplish these ambitious, but achievable, goals. First, OCDEL will convene a group of stakeholders to identify areas in the existing Pre-K Counts guidelines that will need to be reworked in order to ensure all programs are meeting the definition of High-Quality programs. Then, these changes and additional funding for classrooms will be communicated to programs and all programs will be required to implement those enhancements to Pre-K Counts classrooms. All 161 current Pre-K Counts programs will be subgrantees for the enhancement of Comprehensive Services. Concurrently, Pre-K Counts programs in High-Needs areas will expand their programs to serve additional children. For the expansion of slots, the following Pre-K Counts providers were identified as serving High-Need areas and will receive additional slots based on capacity and need:

Pre-K Counts Programs to Receive Additional Slots		
Big Beaver Falls Area School District	Delaware Co. Intermediate Unit #25	Chester County Intermediate Unit #19
Erie City School District	Bradford Tioga Head Start	ARIN Intermediate Unit #28
School District of Lancaster	Allegheny Intermediate Unit #3	Seton Hill Child Services, Inc
School District of	Berks Community Action	Community Action Program of

Pre-K Counts Programs to Receive Additional Slots		
Philadelphia	Program	Mercer County
Greater Nanticoke Area School District	STEP, Inc. aka Lycoming-Clinton Head Start	PIC of Fayette & Westmoreland Counties
Community Services for Children	Erie City School District Pocono Service for Families and Children	Allegheny Lutheran Social Ministries
Pittsburgh Board of Education	School District of the City of York	Lancaster Lebanon Intermediate Unit #13
Child Development Inc.	McKeesport Area School District	Chester-Upland School District
Cen-Clear, Inc.	Kings College	Pathone Inc.
Pottstown Area School District	Wilksburg Borough School District	Scranton Lackawanna Human Development
Child Development Inc. Keystone Human Service, aka Capital Area Head Start	<i>* West Philadelphia is a Federally designated Promise Zone and included in the subgrant.</i>	

The monitoring and professional development for these programs is currently provided through a partnership with the Pennsylvania Key (PA Key) and the Regional Keys. The PA Key and the Regional Keys will provide state and regional leadership in the development of an integrated and coordinated system of program quality improvements and professional development supports for early childhood education. Both the PA Key and Regional Keys will be expanded to ensure adequate support and monitoring of Pre-K Counts programs under this Preschool Expansion.

As a result of this Preschool Expansion funding, OCDEL will:

- Expand the number of children served in Pre-K Counts programs from 13,819 to 16,133;
- Ensure that every new Preschool Expansion classroom serving Eligible Children will meet the definition of High-Quality;
- Improve state funded Pre-K Counts by requiring Comprehensive services;
- Expand the monitoring and support capacity of the PA Key and Regional Keys; and
- Increase the number of Eligible Children ready for Kindergarten.

Nearly all of this funding will go directly to preschool programs and it will be matched at least 92% by other funding sources. This is possible because Pennsylvania’s strategy builds upon an existing, successful state-funded preschool program and will join a statewide array of successful programs and initiatives dedicated to increasing the availability of and access to High Quality early childhood services.