RI Expands Pre-K Classrooms and Opens the 2021-2022 Lottery for Families

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Providence, RI – Governor Dan McKee and Commissioner Angélica Infante-Green today announced that the Rhode Island Department of Education (RIDE), in partnership with the Department of Human Services, has expanded Rhode Island Pre-Kindergarten classrooms and opened the lottery for state-funded Pre-K programs for the 2021-2022 school year. RI Pre-K, which is entering its 13th year, provides free, high-quality Pre-K education to eligible four-year old children. In September, the state will open 22 new classrooms and bring the program to a new community, growing from 100 to 122 classrooms to serve nearly 2,300 students statewide.

“I believe strongly in ensuring all of our children have equitable access to high quality education. Our nationally top-ranked RI Pre-K program is an essential part of our educational strategy to accelerate learning and close opportunity gaps for our youngest learners,” said Governor Dan McKee. “In September, we will be able to reach more than 20% of four-year olds with the RI Pre-K program, and we look forward to continuing to expand this vital opportunity to more families and more communities.”

“Expanding Pre-K across Rhode Island communities is one of the best investments we can make to help more students reach their highest potential,” said Education Commissioner Infante-Green. “Research clearly shows that access to high-quality early learning opportunities helps pave a strong foundation for a child’s long-term educational success. I encourage families with eligible students to apply and take advantage of these additional seats.”
RI’s state Pre-K program has expanded each year to serve more communities and its children using a mixed-delivery model composed of Head Start programs, local schools and community based childcare providers. Rhode Island is expanding seats in 2021 using federal funding from the Governor’s Emergency Education Relief Fund (GEER) and the Preschool Development Grant Birth through Age 5 (PDG B-5). In addition, the RI Pre-K program will for the first time be leveraging other early learning funding, including the Child Care Assistance Program.

“RI Pre-K not only provides the highest-quality early learning experience for young learners at no cost to families, but also serves to strengthen our entire birth through age 5 system,” said Courtney E. Hawkins, Director of the Department of Human Services. “The Department of Human Services is proud to partner with RIDE to cost-effectively expand RI Pre-K, support the critical network of early childhood learning providers, and expand opportunities for young children and families.”

RI Pre-K programs are awarded through a competitive grant application process that evaluates the organization's demonstrated ability and experience to provide a high-quality early childhood program and a commitment to continued quality improvements. The 22 newly awarded RI Pre-K classrooms consist of current Pre-K providers who are expanded through additional RI Pre-K seats and classrooms and newly awarded providers. For the first time, South Kingstown will have a Pre-K classroom, continuing the expansion of Pre-K into new communities year over year.

The current RI Pre-K providers who are expanding by seats and classrooms in 2021-2022 are:

**Progreso Latino/Progreso Excellence Academy** - 626 Broad Street, Central Falls (401-728-5920)

**Cranston Public Schools** –
- Arlington Elementary School, 155 Princess Ave. (401-270-8179)
- Edgewood Highland School, 160 Pawtuxet Ave. (401-270-8065)
- Stadium Elementary School, 100 Crescent Ave. (401-270-8188)

**Tri-County Community Action** – 79 Waterman Avenue, North Providence (401-519-1979)

**Children’s Friend and Service** – 13 Legion Drive, Pawtucket (401-721-9209)

**Heritage Park YMCA** – 333 Roosevelt Avenue, Pawtucket (401-727-2050)

**Children’s Friend and Service** – (401-721-9209)
- Berkshire Center – 99 Berkshire Street, Providence
- Althea Center – 70 Union Avenue, Providence

**Providence Public Schools** –
Charles Fortes Elementary School – 234 Daboll Street (401-278-0501)
Harry Kizirian Elementary School – 60 Camden Avenue (401-456-9369)
Pleasant View Elementary School – 50 Obediah Brown Road (401-456-9325)
Young Woods Elementary School – 674 Prairie Avenue (401-278-0515)

**Tri-County Community Action** – 1935 Kingstown Road, Wakefield (401-515-2471)

**East Bay Community Action Program** – 790 Main Street, Warren (401-245-2833)

**Tri-County Community Action** – 34 Pond Street, Westerly (401-596-7272)

**Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association** – 204 Warwick Street, Woonsocket (401-769-1850)

The 2021-2022 newly awarded RI Pre-K providers are:

**Little Learners Academy** – 950 Phenix Avenue, Cranston (401-714-0088)

**Federal Hill House** – 9 Courtland Street, Providence (401-421-4722)

RI Pre-K is accepting applications from families with four-year old children living in one of 17 eligible communities: Central Falls, Coventry, Cranston, East Providence, Johnston, Middletown, Newport, North Kingstown, North Providence, Pawtucket, Providence, South Kingstown, Warren, Warwick, Westerly, West Warwick, and Woonsocket.

To be eligible to attend, children must be four years old by September 1, 2021 and be residents of one of the 17 identified RI Pre-K communities. For more information on the 2021-2022 RI Pre-K Programs and the lottery application process please visit our [RIDE RI Pre-K Page](https://www.ride.ri.gov/InsideRIDE/AdditionalInformation/News/ViewArticle/tabid/408/ArticleId/737/RI-Expands-Pre-K-Classrooms-and-Opens-the-2021-2022-Lottery-for-Families). Families may also contact the RIDE Pre-K team at RiPre-K@ride.ri.gov with questions.

Online applications are due by 11:59 pm on July 6, 2021.

As a testament to Rhode Island’s commitment to providing high quality early learning opportunities for all children, Rhode Island was once again recognized as a national leader in quality State Pre-K by the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) for 2020. RI Pre-K consistently meets all 10 of the NIEER quality benchmarks ranking Rhode Island as one of the nation’s top states for preschool quality standards. More information can be found on the [NIEER RI Pre-K Yearbook](https://www.nieer.org/preschool/yearbook/rhi) and the full report at [NIEER State of Preschool](https://www.nieer.org/preschool/state-of-preschool/rhode-island).