

MLP Preschool News

September 2018

Dear MLP Families:

There is an existing NJ law that promises high quality preschool to tens of thousands of 3- and 4-year-olds. Governor Murphy used his first budget address in March 2018 to commit to universal pre-k and promised access to it within four years. Here is the timeline of events that occurred since that date:

- June 29th- over 90 districts were informed that they would be eligible to participate in a competitive grant process to request funding for their district. Funding would be used for required high-quality standards, with small class size, and teachers who receive training in early childhood best practices.
- July 13th- interested districts attended a meeting in Trenton where information was distributed for districts to apply for this funding.
- August 1st- the deadline for grant submission.
- August 31st- the Division of Early Childhood would notify districts if they were awarded the grant money to expand their programs.

For the past two years, MLP has had a waiting list of preschoolers for our program. Therefore, I wrote a grant in order to expand our preschool program by adding one classroom. We had 2 classrooms with the capacity to teach a total of 36 preschoolers. The new funds would allow us to add one new classroom and teach 45 preschoolers. On Thursday, August 23rd, MLP was notified that we would be awarded the funding to expand. This gave me 6 days to hire a teacher and an aide, move classrooms within the school to make space for the new room, and set-up the new room with furniture, materials and supplies so that all preschoolers could begin their school year on time.

Parents had been calling throughout the summer to ask if we were accepting 3-year-olds. We were not at the time but took all names and numbers of interested families. Since we still had openings in our program in late August we began accepting 3-year-old students in the order in which we received their calls. By the 2nd day of school, all classrooms were full to capacity. We now have a waiting list to accept more 3-year-old students. I requested additional funding to add more preschool classrooms. I will be informed later this Fall if the funds will be available. Please do not hesitate to add your child's name to our waiting list.

Preschool expansion is an increased priority in our state and within our district. I am so pleased to be a part of this initiative. Our students will receive a quality preschool education which will benefit them for a lifetime.

Sincerely,

Dr. Shelley Marie Magan