



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: March 29, 2023
To: State-Funded Preschool Local Educational Agencies
Route To: School Business Administrators, Early Childhood Contacts Receiving Preschool Education Aid
From: Cary A. Booker, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Early Childhood Services

Guidance: Preschool Education Aid Funding for Transportation and Renovations

As local educational agencies (LEAs) begin considering the utilization of Preschool Education Aid (PEA) funding, the New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) would like to provide the following information and clarification to focus budget allocations for the purposes of preschool transportation and major or minor school facility renovation.

Transportation Allowances

PEA funds can be utilized for home-school transportation services based on the eligibility requirements established pursuant to N.J.S.A. 18A:39-1. Specifically, LEAs must provide transportation services to a preschool student if the distance between home and school exceeds two miles and if the school of attendance is in another district, at a Head Start or Private Provider.

In the event that a preschool student is eligible for mandated transportation services, the LEA must include the preschool students on the District Report of Transported Resident Student (DRTRS) and the LEA will begin to receive transportation aid to cover the cost of transporting eligible students. Therefore, PEA will not support the cost of transporting these DRTRS-funded students.

If the LEA does not qualify for transportation service, and elects to provide courtesy bussing for their *entire* LEA, the following must occur prior to charging transportation cost:

- All mandated preschool program positions and components must be in place before the LEA may request to expend PEA for nonmandated transportation; and
- The per-pupil allocation for courtesy bussing charged to PEA cannot exceed the per-pupil amount a student would receive in transportation aid. LEAs must use other funding sources if the cost exceeds the transportation aid amount.

Note: PEA can be used to provide a bus aide, purchase car seats, and field trips as part of budget submission.

Facilities Major and Minor Renovations

PEA funds can be utilized in accordance and alignment with pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:26-1.2, *et. seq* *School facilities projects shall be reviewed and approved by the Office of School Facilities.*

Capital (Major) improvement projects must be approved according to N.J.A.C. 6A:26-7. LEAs seeking major improvements to school facilities must include those projects in the LEA's long-range facilities plan (*i.e.*, HVAC systems, replacement/repairs of roofs, major electrical projects, hot water heaters, sidewalks, and fencing; anything requiring a building permit). PEA will not cover the cost of those major improvements.

PEA will cover the cost of the following routine maintenance improvements (minor renovations):

- Classroom painting
- Filter replacements
- Ceiling tiles
- Classroom carpets
- Replacing and/or lowering bathroom sinks
- Replacing and/or lowering bathroom toilets.

PEA funding is designed to support the educational components and to provide a high-quality preschool program. Other minor renovation projects will be considered if all mandated program positions and components are in place; then the LEA may request to expend PEA on renovations.

If you have additional questions, please contact Selina Foreman, Fiscal Specialist at Selina.foreman@doe.nj.gov or your district liaison.

c: Members, State Board of Education
NJDOE Staff
Statewide Parent Advocacy Network
Garden State Coalition of Schools
NJ LEE Group