



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: May 10, 2023
To: Local Educational Agency Leads
Route To: School Business Administrators
From: Cary A. Booker, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Early Childhood Services
Deadline: To Be Determined

Preschool Expansion Aid (PEA) Guidance to Support Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Application Submission

As local educational agencies (LEAs) begin considering applying for Preschool Education Aid (PEA) for the 2023-2024 school year, the Division of Early Childhood Services (DECS) is providing guidance for planning and completing the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NFO) that is anticipated being released immediately following the adoption of the Fiscal Year 2024 state budget. Due to the short timeline of application release in early July, submission of applications award notification, and program implementation, the DECS recommends beginning the planning process now. To support LEAs in their efforts to submit a cohesive and comprehensive application for PEA, LEAs can reference the [2022-2023 PEA Application](#) as a guide in advance of the official application release for the upcoming year.

LEAs should be aware that this is not a grant; PEA becomes part of each LEA's state aid notice.

Section I – Program Information

- The availability of PEA increases access to high-quality preschool for three- and four-year-old children in the 2023-2024 school year. The program information section outlines the application qualifying criteria and expectations in the following subsection components:
 - Eligibility to Apply;
 - Statutory/Regulatory Source and Funding;
 - Dissemination of Notice;
 - Technical Assistance Workshop;
 - Proposal Submission;
 - Budget Reporting; and,
 - Disbursement of Funds.

Section II – Project Guidelines

- The project guidelines section outlines the guidelines/expectations within three (3) subsection components:
 - Program Requirements
 - To be eligible for PEA, LEAs must offer full day kindergarten.
 - All preschool classrooms must be offered as a full day program unless a student's individualized education program requires otherwise.
 - LEAs should be aware that preschool classrooms must be 950 square feet which includes 50 square feet for a bathroom and 100 square feet of storage. Waivers can be applied for

- classrooms that meet a threshold of 700 square feet of usable space. If bathrooms are not located within the classroom, they must be within line of sight.
 - Classrooms cannot be in a basement (lack of egress) or above the third floor.
 - Teachers in preschool expansion programs must hold a preschool – third grade (P-3) certificate from the NJDOE.
 - To assist in locating potential child care and Head Start providers, every county has a Child Care Resource and Referral Agency, through the New Jersey Department of Human Service’s [Childcare in New Jersey](#) webpage.
- Cost Proposal
 - Programs are funded based on the number of general education children being served.
- Allowable Use of Funds
 - LEAs can find information on allowable use of funds through the NJDOE’s [District Budget Planning Workbook Instructions](#).
 - The cost of special education students is not funded through PEA.
 - Please see [Guidance on the Use of PEA](#) for transportation and renovations.

Section III – Completing the Application

- This section outlines the requirements to complete application and should include the following components:
 - Operational plan;
 - 2023-2024 PEA Budget Workbook; and,
 - Application checklist to guide LEAs in ensuring all components are complete and included.

Section IV – Award Selection

- LEAs must complete the 2023-2024 PEA application which will be evaluated by NJDOE review committee based on quality, comprehensiveness completeness, accuracy and appropriateness of response to the guidelines and requirements provided.
- The following should be noted:
 - The NJDOE reserves the right to withdraw from consideration of any application that does not include each component to be scored in the evaluation process.
 - Eligible applications who meet the cut score will be ranked and funded in descending order from highest to lowest score with the required score eligibility of 70 points.

Section V – Application Narrative

- This application narrative section requires a comprehensive description of how LEAs will implement each required component of a high-quality preschool program for three- and four-year-old children as detailed in N.J.A.C. [6A:13A, Elements of High-Quality Preschool Programs](#) and the NJDOE [Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines](#).

The point allocation for each subsection is as follows:

- Operation Plan Overview (5 points)
- Outreach, Recruitment, Enrollment and Facilities (10 points)
- Community Collaboration and Family Engagement (10 points)
- Transitions (5 points)
- Preschool Administration and Health and Safety (10 points)
- Coaching Supports: Preschool Instructional Coach, PIRS/PIRT (10 points)
- Curriculum Implementation, Child Assessment, and Supporting ELL (15 points)
- Inclusion of Children with Individualized Education Programs (15 points)
- Program Evaluation and Professional Development (15 points)

- Monitoring and Budget Narrative (10 points)

Statement of Assurances

The duly authorized chief school administrator/school business administrator is required to sign and submit the statement of Assurances document with the understanding that submission of application to the NJDOE constitutes the creation of a public document and certifies that the applicant agency understands and agrees with all statement listed therein.

NFO Deadline Dates – To be determined following the adoption of the State’s FY2024 budget.

Contact information

The NJDOE looks forward to continuing to support districts in the PEA application process. For questions and additional guidance regarding content or expectation for the submission process, please contact doeearlychild@doe.nj.gov. For more detailed information on expectations for each section, LEAs should reference the [2022-2023 PEA Application](#) as a guide.

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