



STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Memo from the New Jersey Department of Education

Date: April 24, 2024
To: Local Educational Agency Leads
Route To: Principals, Directors of Special Services, Early Childhood Directors.
From: Kathy Ehling, Assistant Commissioner
Division of Educational Services

Call for Applicants for the New Jersey Preschool Inclusive Education Project

The New Jersey Preschool Inclusive Education Project (NJPIEP) is a partnership between the New Jersey Department of Education's Office of Special Education (OSE) and the Montclair State University Center for Autism and Early Childhood Mental Health (CAECMH). This collaboration, led by the OSE, is designed to enhance school districts' capacity to implement inclusive practices for preschool students with disabilities effectively. Through professional learning opportunities and leadership development, the NJPIEP will engage educators and families in planning, implementing, and expanding inclusive opportunities and practices.

The NJPIEP will facilitate embedding inclusive practices into existing support and intervention systems. Professional learning topics include Preschool Inclusion 101, Universal Design for Learning (UDL), Stress and Young Children, Facilitating Play at All Developmental Levels, Integrating Related Service into the Classroom, and Reframing Autism. The NJPIEP will offer free support to school districts through one of two different avenues:

- A 7.5-hour Targeted Technical Assistance (TA) package for one of the above topic areas. The NJPIEP team will work with the school-based team to design a format for delivery of the TA package customized to meet staff's needs. Each package is designed to implement a mix of training, coaching, reflection, and assistance with implementation. Each site may select only one topic; or
- A Multi-Year Systemic Change program. The Systemic Change (SC) process involves a three-to-five-year commitment to becoming a more inclusive school. NJPIEP Inclusion Facilitators will provide on and off-site support through strategic planning meetings, professional learning opportunities, reflective discussions, coaching, and consultation. Each school will develop or utilize an existing team that will drive the implementation of best practices in inclusion. This team will meet monthly with an NJPIEP Inclusion Facilitator, who will work with them to identify and work toward implementing best practices.

These professional learning opportunities equip special and general education school administrators, educators, support staff, families, and caregivers with the skills and resources to implement inclusive education in preschools and learning environments. Schools can now apply for the NJPIEP for the 2024-2025 academic year. Twelve spots are available for Technical Assistance and three for Systemic Change.

For additional information, please visit the New Jersey Preschool Inclusive Education Project webpage [NJPIEP Applications](#). The deadline for Technical Assistance is May 10, 2024, while the deadline for Systemic Change is May 17, 2024.

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