



For Immediate Release

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New Jersey Department of Education Awards Grants to Improve Student Literacy

Trenton, NJ – The New Jersey Department of Education (Department) is pleased to announce the awarding of two grants totaling nearly \$3.75 million to support local school districts and charter schools as they implement initiatives to improve literacy in the early grades.

“The BRIDGE and FOCUS Grants will strengthen New Jersey’s status as one of the best public education systems in the nation,” **said Governor Phil Murphy**. “Through providing millions of dollars for hundreds of school districts and charter schools to improve their literacy education, we will ensure that our young learners are confident readers capable of thriving academically and becoming thoughtful, informed citizens. By bolstering our efforts to improve literacy rates statewide, these grants will further our Administration’s goal of making New Jersey the best state in the country to raise a child.”

“These grants are an integral component of our early literacy initiative designed to give New Jersey schools the tools that will help implement the changes necessary to improve literacy skills among our youngest students,” **said Education Commissioner Kevin Dehmer**. “Literacy is a foundational skill that is needed for learning in all other subjects. Through this initiative we are providing schools the support they need, so every child begins their education fully prepared to become lifelong readers and successful learners.”

“A child who can read confidently can rewrite their future, and this funding will help ensure our students and teachers have the resources they need to turn the page, strengthen foundational literacy skills, and open the door to new opportunities,” **said Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz**. “This literacy initiative will help us build a more equitable and responsive education system – one where students are supported early and given the tools to succeed before it is too late. By intervening with urgency and intention, we can close achievement gaps and create a future where our children aren’t reading just to get by, but reading to get ahead.”

The grants assist school districts in implementing [P.L.2024, c.52](#), which was signed into law by Governor Murphy in August 2024 and sponsored by Sen. Ruiz, requires all school districts to conduct at least two literacy screenings each year for every kindergarten through grade three student to evaluate reading skills and offer any needed learning support.

The two literacy grants include:

- \$2.3 million was awarded for Funding for Optimal Comprehensive Universal Screeners, or FOCUS grants. This funding supports high-quality literacy-screening assessments that meet the criteria established by the Department. The funding can also be used to provide related professional development for teachers and student support.

Districts serving grades K-3 were eligible to apply, and all 277 school districts and charter schools that applied will receive funding, with award amounts based on student enrollment.

- \$1.4 million is being awarded to 19 districts and charter schools for Building Responsive Instruction through Data Guided Evaluation, or BRIDGE grants. The competitive grant will provide support for schools in the use of screening data to implement evidence-based literacy instruction in K-3 classrooms.

The funding was available to school districts and charter schools with 40 percent of their students receiving free or reduced lunch and 80 percent or more of grade-three students who did not meet expectations on the 2023-2024 New Jersey Student Learning Assessments in English Language Arts. The BRIDGE program calls on awardees to report on promising practices, innovative strategies, and lessons learned – which will be published on the Department’s website for sharing

with other districts and charter schools as they consider strategies to improve student literacy outcomes.

The grant programs will run until May 31, 2026. Funding for the programs is from the Fiscal Year 2025 (FY2025) State budget. A total of \$5.25 million had been allocated for the grant programs; another round of grants for the remaining FY2025 funds will be announced at a later date.

The two grant awards announced today are part of an ongoing campaign to address student literacy in New Jersey. In recent years, the Department has implemented other initiatives such as High Impact Tutoring for students and RAPID [grants](#) for teacher training on effective literacy instruction; [legislation](#) establishing a Working Group on Student Literacy and the Office of Learning Equity and Academic Recovery in the Department; and the investment of \$50 million through a federal Comprehensive Literacy State Development ([CLSD](#)) grant award.

The following are the award amounts for the BRIDGE and FOCUS grants:

BRIDGE Grant Awards:

County	District/Charter School	Award
Atlantic	Atlantic Community Charter School	\$81,864
Camden	Camden City	\$81,489
Camden	Hope Community Charter School	\$81,434
Camden	Lindenwold	\$27,495
Cape May	Wildwood City	\$81,864
Cape May	Woodbine	\$35,309
Cumberland	Bridgeton	\$81,802
Cumberland	Millville	\$81,864
Gloucester	Glassboro	\$81,864
Gloucester	National Park Borough	\$81,864
Gloucester	Westville	\$81,864
Monmouth	Asbury Park	\$80,678
Monmouth	Keansburg Borough	\$81,864
Morris	Dover Town	\$81,864
Passaic	Passaic City	\$47,428
Passaic	Prospect Park	\$81,864
Salem	Penns Grove-Carneys Point Regional	\$81,864
Salem	Quinton Township	\$81,864
Union	Plainfield	\$81,864

FOCUS Grant Awards:

(Charter schools are listed at the end of the table)

County	District/Charter School	Award
Atlantic	Absecon City	\$3,200
Atlantic	Buena Regional	\$3,950
Atlantic	Egg Harbor Township	\$17,980
Atlantic	Folsom	\$1,530
Atlantic	Linwood City	\$3,250
Atlantic	Mullica Township	\$2,100
Atlantic	Port Republic	\$480
Atlantic	Somers Point	\$2,640
Atlantic	Ventnor City	\$1,960
Bergen	Bergenfield	\$9,540
Bergen	Bogota	\$4,000
Bergen	Carlstadt	\$2,200
Bergen	Cliffside Park	\$7,640
Bergen	Closter	\$4,440
Bergen	Cresskill	\$5,020
Bergen	Dumont	\$7,670

County	District/Charter School	Award
Bergen	Edgewater	\$3,530
Bergen	Elmwood Park	\$7,540
Bergen	Emerson	\$3,190
Bergen	Englewood City	\$6,710
Bergen	Fair Lawn	\$15,650
Bergen	Fairview	\$6,600
Bergen	Franklin Lakes	\$5,140
Bergen	Hackensack	\$14,000
Bergen	Hillsdale	\$4,870
Bergen	Leonia	\$3,950
Bergen	Little Ferry	\$3,310
Bergen	Lyndhurst Township	\$7,310
Bergen	Maywood	\$4,420
Bergen	Montvale	\$4,080
Bergen	Northvale	\$2,100
Bergen	Oakland	\$5,310
Bergen	Ridgewood Village	\$15,050
Bergen	River Edge	\$6,630
Bergen	River Vale	\$4,030
Bergen	Rutherford	\$7,440
Bergen	Tenafly	\$8,210
Bergen	Wallington	\$3,480
Bergen	Wyckoff Township	\$9,230
Burlington	Beverly City	\$1,440
Burlington	Bordentown Regional School District	\$5,830
Burlington	Burlington City	\$4,980
Burlington	Chesterfield Township	\$3,450
Burlington	Cinnaminson Township	\$8,680
Burlington	Delran Township	\$7,850
Burlington	Evesham Township	\$17,960
Burlington	Florence Township	\$3,120
Burlington	Lumberton Township	\$4,530
Burlington	Mansfield Township	\$3,030
Burlington	Maple Shade Township	\$7,490
Burlington	Medford Township	\$11,670
Burlington	Mount Holly Township	\$4,470
Burlington	Mount Laurel Township	\$17,190
Burlington	Palmyra Borough	\$2,370
Burlington	Shamong Township	\$2,700
Burlington	Southampton Township	\$2,910
Burlington	Springfield Township	\$1,550
Burlington	Tabernacle Township	\$2,930
Camden	Bellmawr Borough	\$4,710
Camden	Berlin Borough	\$3,420
Camden	Berlin Township	\$2,500
Camden	Camden City	\$17,860
Camden	Cherry Hill Township	\$30,410
Camden	Clementon Borough	\$2,350
Camden	Collingswood Borough	\$5,540
Camden	Gibbsboro	\$1,060
Camden	Gloucester City	\$6,210
Camden	Gloucester Township	\$26,040
Camden	Haddon Heights	\$2,750
Camden	Haddon Township	\$6,340
Camden	Haddonfield Borough	\$7,830
Camden	Oaklyn Borough	\$1,370
Camden	Voorhees Township	\$12,640
Cape May	Dennis Township	\$2,430

County	District/Charter School	Award
Cape May	Lower Township	\$6,780
Cape May	Upper Township	\$5,820
Cape May	Wildwood City	\$2,030
Cumberland	Fairfield Township	\$1,810
Cumberland	Millville	\$11,980
Cumberland	Upper Deerfield Township	\$3,860
Essex	Belleville	\$12,680
Essex	Bloomfield Township	\$18,620
Essex	Cedar Grove Township	\$4,910
Essex	East Orange	\$23,920
Essex	Fairfield Township	\$3,710
Essex	Glen Ridge	\$5,080
Essex	Livingston Township	\$18,000
Essex	Millburn Township	\$13,530
Essex	Newark	\$109,260
Essex	North Caldwell	\$3,630
Essex	Nutley	\$12,730
Essex	Roseland	\$2,240
Essex	South Orange-Maplewood	\$20,590
Essex	Verona	\$6,630
Gloucester	Clayton	\$3,690
Gloucester	Deptford Township	\$11,980
Gloucester	East Greenwich Township	\$6,320
Gloucester	Elk Township	\$1,840
Gloucester	Franklin Township	\$6,970
Gloucester	Glassboro	\$5,620
Gloucester	Gloucester County Special Services	\$1,020
Gloucester	Greenwich Township	\$1,560
Gloucester	Harrison Township	\$7,300
Gloucester	Logan Township	\$3,190
Gloucester	Mantua Township	\$6,430
Gloucester	Monroe Township	\$15,110
Gloucester	National Park Borough	\$1,150
Gloucester	Paulsboro	\$3,290
Gloucester	Pitman	\$2,820
Gloucester	South Harrison Township	\$1,660
Gloucester	Swedesboro-Woolwich	\$8,620
Gloucester	Washington Township	\$20,000
Gloucester	Wenonah	\$820
Gloucester	Westville	\$1,740
Gloucester	Woodbury Heights	\$1,360
Hudson	Bayonne	\$28,810
Hudson	Harrison	\$6,210
Hudson	Jersey City	\$74,530
Hudson	Kearny	\$13,700
Hudson	North Bergen	\$18,730
Hudson	Secaucus	\$6,510
Hunterdon	Alexandria Township	\$1,680
Hunterdon	Clinton Township	\$4,700
Hunterdon	East Amwell Township	\$1,430
Hunterdon	South Hunterdon Regional	\$1,800
Hunterdon	Franklin Township	\$1,150
Hunterdon	Kingwood Township	\$1,280
Hunterdon	Milford Borough	\$340
Mercer	Ewing Township	\$10,280
Mercer	Lawrence Township	\$10,190
Mercer	Princeton	\$8,240
Mercer	Robbinsville	\$7,270

County	District/Charter School	Award
Mercer	West Windsor-Plainsboro Regional	\$21,740
Middlesex	Carteret Borough	\$11,120
Middlesex	Dunellen	\$3,660
Middlesex	East Brunswick Township	\$19,960
Middlesex	Edison Township	\$46,660
Middlesex	Highland Park	\$4,410
Middlesex	Jamesburg	\$2,440
Middlesex	Metuchen	\$6,020
Middlesex	Middlesex Borough	\$5,660
Middlesex	Milltown	\$3,430
Middlesex	Monroe Township	\$15,220
Middlesex	New Brunswick	\$24,540
Middlesex	North Brunswick Township	\$15,890
Middlesex	Old Bridge Township	\$21,780
Middlesex	Sayreville	\$17,340
Middlesex	South Amboy	\$3,120
Middlesex	South Brunswick Township	\$19,110
Middlesex	South River	\$6,630
Middlesex	Woodbridge Township	\$40,080
Monmouth	Avon Borough	\$520
Monmouth	Belmar	\$1,500
Monmouth	Bradley Beach	\$660
Monmouth	Brielle Borough	\$1,930
Monmouth	Colts Neck Township	\$4,150
Monmouth	Eatontown	\$4,010
Monmouth	Fair Haven Borough	\$4,120
Monmouth	Henry Hudson Regional School District	\$2,050
Monmouth	Freehold Township	\$13,620
Monmouth	Hazlet Township	\$7,810
Monmouth	Holmdel Township	\$7,210
Monmouth	Howell Township	\$22,240
Monmouth	Keansburg Borough	\$4,020
Monmouth	Keyport	\$2,210
Monmouth	Little Silver Borough	\$2,880
Monmouth	Long Branch	\$13,970
Monmouth	Manalapan-Englishtown Regional	\$17,660
Monmouth	Marlboro Township	\$17,070
Monmouth	Matawan-Aberdeen Regional	\$10,720
Monmouth	Middletown Township	\$25,580
Monmouth	Millstone Township	\$4,430
Monmouth	Monmouth Beach	\$910
Monmouth	Oceanport Borough	\$2,100
Monmouth	Red Bank	\$4,550
Monmouth	Tinton Falls	\$5,740
Monmouth	Union Beach Borough	\$2,150
Monmouth	Upper Freehold Regional	\$4,070
Monmouth	Wall Township	\$9,150
Morris	Boonton Township	\$1,840
Morris	School District of the Chathams	\$9,220
Morris	Chester Township	\$4,070
Morris	Dover Town	\$8,700
Morris	East Hanover Township	\$4,150
Morris	Florham Park	\$3,950
Morris	Hanover Township	\$5,150
Morris	Harding Township	\$1,340
Morris	Jefferson Township	\$6,910
Morris	Kinnelon Borough	\$4,690
Morris	Mendham Borough	\$2,010

County	District/Charter School	Award
Morris	Mendham Township	\$3,300
Morris	Montville Township	\$9,840
Morris	Morris School District	\$14,430
Morris	Mount Olive Township	\$13,350
Morris	Mountain Lakes	\$3,000
Morris	Netcong	\$1,100
Morris	Long Hill Township	\$3,630
Morris	Pequannock Township	\$5,870
Morris	Roxbury Township	\$8,900
Morris	Washington Township	\$8,250
Ocean	Barnegat Township	\$10,330
Ocean	Bay Head	\$460
Ocean	Brick Township	\$22,500
Ocean	Lacey Township	\$10,540
Ocean	Lavallette Borough	\$700
Ocean	Little Egg Harbor Township	\$8,050
Ocean	Manchester Township	\$7,380
Ocean	Point Pleasant Borough	\$7,560
Ocean	Point Pleasant Beach	\$1,170
Ocean	Toms River Regional	\$39,570
Ocean	Tuckerton Borough	\$1,440
Passaic	Bloomington	\$2,470
Passaic	Clifton	\$30,210
Passaic	Hawthorne	\$6,650
Passaic	North Haledon	\$2,670
Passaic	Paterson City	\$66,770
Passaic	Pompton Lakes	\$4,490
Passaic	Prospect Park	\$3,170
Passaic	Totowa	\$3,520
Passaic	Wanaque	\$3,790
Passaic	West Milford Township	\$8,340
Salem	Lower Alloways Creek Township	\$700
Salem	Penns Grove-Carneys Point Regional	\$6,510
Salem	Pittsgrove Township	\$4,280
Salem	Quinton Township	\$1,000
Salem	Salem City	\$3,260
Somerset	Bernards Township	\$12,100
Somerset	Branchburg Township	\$6,010
Somerset	Bridgewater-Raritan Regional	\$19,970
Somerset	Franklin Township	\$20,040
Somerset	Green Brook Township	\$2,930
Somerset	Manville Borough	\$4,820
Somerset	Montgomery Township	\$10,070
Somerset	Somerville Borough	\$4,390
Sussex	Andover Regional	\$1,790
Sussex	Byram Township	\$3,250
Sussex	Franklin Borough	\$1,850
Sussex	Hardyston Township	\$2,320
Sussex	Montague	\$1,250
Sussex	Stillwater Township	\$1,330
Sussex	Vernon Township	\$8,360
Union	Elizabeth	\$75,470
Union	Hillside Township	\$8,090
Union	Kenilworth	\$3,280
Union	Plainfield	\$28,800
Union	Roselle Borough	\$8,660

County	District/Charter School	Award
Union	Roselle Park	\$5,560
Union	Scotch Plains-Fanwood	\$17,480
Union	Springfield Township	\$6,180
Union	Summit City	\$12,340
Union	Union Township	\$20,930
Union	Westfield	\$15,900
Warren	Allamuchy Township	\$1,720
Warren	Greenwich Township	\$2,400
Warren	Hackettstown	\$4,420
Warren	Phillipsburg	\$8,150
Warren	Washington Township	\$2,140
	Charter schools receiving FOCUS grants:	
Atlantic	Atlantic Community Charter School	\$1,510
Bergen	Bergen Arts and Science Charter School	\$3,990
Camden	Hope Community Charter School	\$710
Camden	Leap Academy University Charter School	\$4,810
Essex	Great Oaks Legacy Charter School	\$6,610
Essex	Marion P. Thomas Charter School	\$2,760
Essex	People's Achieve Charter School	\$2,170
Hudson	Beloved Community Charter School	\$4,750
Hudson	Dr. Lena Edwards Academic Charter Sch.	\$1,710
Hudson	Hudson Arts and Science Charter School	\$3,810
Hudson	Learning Community Charter School	\$2,620
Mercer	Foundation Academy Charter School	\$3,390
Middlesex	Middlesex Charter School	\$3,220
Monmouth	Red Bank Charter School	\$800
Morris	Unity Charter School	\$1,110
Passaic	John P. Holland Charter School	\$3,560
Passaic	Passaic Arts and Science Charter School	\$7,900
Passaic	Paterson Arts and Science Charter School	\$3,930
Passaic	Paterson C.S. for Science & Technology	\$5,630
Somerset	Central Jersey College Prep Charter Sch.	\$2,900



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