

Ready for Kindergarten, Ready for College Campaign



KEY ELEMENTS PRE-K BUDGET LANGUAGE¹ 2014-15 Enacted State Budget

1. **Investment of \$340 million statewide, with \$300 million set aside for New York City and \$40 million available for the rest of the state.** Commitment is for two years of funding for school years 2014-15 and 2015-16, as part of state effort to move to universal service for all four-year-olds.
2. **The state will now have four public Pre-K programs.**
 - **Targeted Pre-K.** Enacted in 1960's, grandfathered in and now operated primarily as part of Universal Pre-K. It is operated by 3 BOCES.
 - **Universal Pre-K (UPK).** Adopted in 1997. Currently funded at \$385 million as a part-day (2.5 hour) program, with about 440 districts participating.
 - **Priority Pre-K.** Adopted last year, primarily full-day (at least 5 hours) but part-day allowed. This is a \$25 million competitive grant program, high-need districts eligible; 26 districts awarded grants.
 - **Innovative Pre-K.** Newly enacted program. Funding is for a full school day only (at least 5 hours). Open to all districts through a competitive grant.
3. **New regional structure.** The new program introduces the concept of a regional structure for reviewing distribution of funds.
 - Regions align with Governor's economic development regions.
 - Funds can be reallocated by DOB within the regions. It is not clear whether the new budget language allows for cross regional shifts in funding.
 - NYC is its own region, and the only region with a defined allocation (\$300 million).
4. **Quality.** Framework is outlined in budget language and includes curriculum, family engagement, staffing patterns, teacher education and experience, learning environment, facility quality, physical well-being, health and nutrition and partnerships.
5. **Reimbursement program.** School districts will have to provide funding upfront for up to a year to implement this new program. Pre-K has previously been a grant program, with a schedule of periodic payments. The details of the new reimbursement strategy are not yet clear, but are forthcoming from the State Education Department (SED), along with the RFP.

¹ The "Key Elements" were compiled by the Center for Children's Initiatives, in consultation with our partners at the Ready for Kindergarten, Ready for College Campaign, and with the Center for Educational Equity and Advocates for Children. Members of the Winning Beginning NY issues group, early care and public education, also contributed to this document.

6. **The new program will have two rates, which are capped and based on teacher certification.**
 - **\$10,000 per pupil** for classrooms headed by certified teachers.
 - **\$7,000 per pupil** for classrooms headed by a BA degree teacher working toward certification
 - **These rates are a notable shift from UPK allocations in the past**, which were based on the state aid funding formula for K-12 and incorporated factors such as need and wealth for both UPK and Priority Pre-K.
 - **For districts converting from part day to full-day**, the existing per pupil allocations counts toward the capped rate.
7. **New rules on supplementing and supplanting.** The new Pre-K budget language defines supplement and supplant to include expenditures of local, state, and federal fund. SED will have to provide clarity on this language in the guidance for the new RFP. In the existing UPK program children are not considered served in Pre-K if they are already enrolled in child care and Head Start.
8. **Charter schools are eligible for Pre-K funding for the first time.** Many charter schools already had an associated nonprofit organization that offered Pre-K; now they can apply directly.
9. **Districts must reach out to community organizations, including charter schools, museums and libraries and other early childhood programs as part of a “consolidated” application.** Community organizations that wish to be included must request to be included in the district’s application. Districts that decide not to include such organizations in their plans must give all applicants notice two weeks prior to submitting their consolidated plan to the state.

Organizations that approach districts, but are not included, are then eligible to submit a (competitive) application to provide Pre-K in that district. It is not clear if a CBO can apply in a District that is not applying to do Pre-K. SED must establish two application periods prior to the school year.
10. **Two Inspections per year for all programs.** Each provider must be inspected twice each school year. SED must create an inspection protocol and quality assurance protocol. Inspections can be done by appropriate state or local entities.
11. **Five year plan** to implement statewide, universal full-day, Pre-K program in accordance with section 3602ee of the education law.

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