
NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Elliot Krieger, Communications – (401) 222-8471
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Six sites added for 2015-16 free Pre-kindergarten Program

The R.I. Department of Education (RIDE) is adding six sites this fall to the Rhode Island Pre-kindergarten Program, bringing the total number of sites to 18, serving 9 communities. Pre-kindergarten programs will be located in Central Falls, Cranston, East Providence, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, Warwick, West Warwick, and Woonsocket.

Pending approval of Governor Raimondo’s budget proposal, which would provide an additional \$1 million for early-childhood programs, and thanks to the federal Preschool Expansion Grant that RIDE received from the U.S. Department of Education last year, the 2015-16 Pre-Kindergarten Program will be the largest ever. With continued funding from the grant and from the state budget, the long-term goal is to expand the number of prekindergarten classrooms to 60 by the year 2019.

“It’s great news that our free, public pre-kindergarten program will add six sites this fall,” said Governor Gina Raimondo. “Up until now, Rhode Island has provided very few free, public preschools, but we are on the path toward building a robust early learning education plan. To further support this important initiative, my jobs plan commits the necessary matching funds that allow us to more than triple the number of state-sponsored pre-k classrooms in Rhode Island. It’s never too early to put our youngest learners on a path to opportunity.”

“As an educator with a background in early-childhood education, I know it is essential that all children, regardless of the economic status of their family or their community, have opportunities to enroll in high-quality early-learning programs,” said Deborah A. Gist, Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education. “Our goal is to continue increasing high-quality early-learning opportunities through the Pre-kindergarten Program and other important on-going initiatives, including our Quality Improvement Grants for early-learning programs and efforts to expand access to full-day kindergarten.”

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sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, race, religion, national origin, or disability.

The Pre-kindergarten Program sites for the coming school year (2015-16) are:

Central Falls:

Central Falls School District, Capt. Hunt Early Learning Center (12 Kendall Street) – 3 classrooms

Cranston:

Comprehensive Community Action Program (848 Atwood Ave.)

East Providence:

New: East Bay Community Action Program (70 Turner Ave.)

Newport:

New: East Bay Community Action Program at the Pell Annex of the John F. Kennedy School (40 West Main Rd., Middletown – temporary location; program will be for Newport residents only)

East Bay Community Action Program Head Start (8 John Chafee Blvd.) – 2 classrooms

Pawtucket:

Ready to Learn Providence @ Heritage Park YMCA Early Learning Center (333 Roosevelt Ave.) – 2 classrooms

Providence:

Beautiful Beginnings (700 Elmwood Ave.) – 2 classrooms

New: Children’s Friend and Service (350 Point St.)

New: Children’s Friend and Service (99 Berkshire St.)

The Mariposa Center (1 Corliss Park)

New: Meeting Street (1000 Eddy St.) – 2 classrooms

Ready to Learn Providence @ CCRI Liston Campus (1 Hilton St.)

Smith Hill Early Childhood Learning Center (25 Danforth St.) – 3 classrooms

Warwick:

CHILD, Inc. (160 Draper Ave.) – 2 classrooms

Imagine Preschool @ CCRI Knight Campus (400 East Ave.)

West Warwick:

CHILD, Inc. (28 Payan St.) – 3 classrooms

Woonsocket:

New: Connecting for Children and Families (46 Hope St.)

Woonsocket Head Start Child Development Association (204 Warwick St.) – 4 classrooms

The Rhode Island Pre-kindergarten Program, entering its 7th year, provides free, high-quality pre-kindergarten classes to eligible children. RIDE oversees the program. Statewide, spaces will be available for 558 children to participate in the 31 pre-kindergarten classes. To be eligible,

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children must be 4 years old by September 1 and they must be residents of one of the identified communities. Children are selected for participation by lottery.

RIDE will release the 2015-16 Pre-Kindergarten Program child lottery application and open a new online Pre-Kindergarten Program child lottery application system by **Saturday** (April 25). Families will be able to apply online at <https://www3.ride.ri.gov/PKLottery> or family members may pick up an application at any Pre-Kindergarten Program location. Families can also download the application, at www.ride.ri.gov/EC-Programs-PreK. Completed applications should be returned to the program of choice. Families may apply at more than one site if multiple sites exist in the community of residence, but only one application per site will be accepted. Applications will be accepted through **June 1**.

Note to media: RIDE can help make arrangements for media visits to one or more of the sites.

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