



NORTH ROCKLAND CENTRAL SCHOOL DISTRICT

GRANT NEWS

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NORTHROCKLAND.ORG

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 15, 2024

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State Education Department Awards \$2.4 Million To Expand Universal Prekindergarten (UPK)

(GARNERVILLE, NY) -- The North Rockland Central School District this week was awarded \$2,454,359 in state funding to expand opportunities for local families to access free Universal Prekindergarten (UPK) programs. The competitive grant award - among the largest of 64 New York State Education Department (NYSED) awards across New York - will enable the district to establish new full-day prekindergarten placements (seats) or to convert existing placements from half- to full-day.

"We know that many children in our school community need additional support before starting kindergarten and we're confident that this additional funding will help meet some of those needs," said North Rockland Central School District Superintendent Kris Felicello, Ed. D. "This investment by NYSED will move North Rockland forward in the critical work of improving outcomes for our children and families."

The \$2.4 million in state dollars will allow North Rockland to convert 200 half-day UPK seats into full-day seats. The grant award will also add 150 full-day Universal Prekindergarten placements to be accessed by local families.

The new funding will add to the \$440,528 the district received last year from NYSED which converted 60 half-day seats to full-day seats and added ten full-day placements.

In the 2024-25 academic year, the North Rockland Central School District will offer 480 full-day placements and 23 half-day placements.

All public-school districts in New York State were eligible to apply for this competitive grant opportunity. Grants were awarded based upon a district's plan to serve a community's highest need schools and students; the level of existing prekindergarten services; the extent to which a district planned to maximize the total number of eligible four-year-old children served in its programs; and other factors. Awarded school districts will be able to operate a 180-day program during the 2024-25 school year.

In New York State, UPK is a state and federally funded prekindergarten program offered to families free of charge. The only eligibility requirement for UPK in New York State is a child's residency and age. In districts where UPK is available, entry is based on a lottery system and not all families who register are guaranteed a spot. For more information on UPK in North Rockland, visit northrockland.org or call (845) 942-3493.