



# Halifax Area School District

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**Michele M. Orner, Ed.D. - Superintendent**

February 1, 2017

Dear Halifax Families:

We are pleased to announce, effective with the start of the 2017-2018 school year, the Halifax Area School District (HASD) will use its *PreK Counts* grant funding to operate two classrooms at Enders-Fisherville Elementary, with the mission of supporting the academic, social, and emotional needs of 30 eligible 4-year old children in our school community. In the coming weeks, important details about the program, along with information about an Open House/Registration event scheduled for the Spring, will be communicated through district media.

For over ten years, the Halifax Area School District has partnered with Jelly Bean Junction and the YMCA to offer *PreK Counts*, a pre-kindergarten program, to children ages three and four residing within school district boundaries. The goal of the program, as funded entirely by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, is to make quality pre-kindergarten opportunities available to children and families across the Commonwealth. *PreK Counts* is especially designed for children who meet the income eligibility guidelines of a family income at or below 300% of the *Federal Poverty Guidelines*, are between the age of 3 and younger than the entry age for kindergarten, and are at risk of school failure, either because of language or special needs.

The PreK model HASD currently uses provides an early learning experience to a cohort of 15 students over a two-year period. Children begin their preschool education at Jelly Bean Junction in their 3-year old program and conclude their early learning experience in the district's program for 4-year olds at Enders-Fisherville Elementary School. Achievement data from the program clearly shows that students who participate in the *PreK Counts* program excel academically, socially, and emotionally.

As much as the district appreciates the exclusive partnership it has enjoyed with Jelly Bean Junction, the ever-increasing needs of our youngest customers encourages us to make changes to the program. These changes will not only allow HASD to serve more students, they will also allow the district to partner with all early care providers in the school community, ensuring every student is ready to embrace the opportunities afforded in the kindergarten curriculum.

In closing, we look forward to partnering with *PreK Counts* and the communities' early childhood centers to offer a program that provides our youngest stakeholders with the foundation they need to become prepared, engaged, and responsible citizens.

Sincerely,

Michele M. Orner, Ed.D.  
Superintendent of Schools

Dave R. Hatfield  
Director of Curriculum, Instruction & Assessment

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High School Principal

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**Carla A. Sauer**  
Elementary  
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**Matthew D. Czapliski**  
Special Education  
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