

-PreK Program Budget Highlights-

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 area children. The goal of the program, as established 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 less than 300% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines, are between the age of 3 and younger than the entry age for kindergarten, and are at the risk of school failure, either because of language or special needs issues.

The Halifax Area School District currently receives \$191,250.00 from Pennsylvania PreK Counts to provide early childhood education services to children living within the district's boundaries. The current model 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. Since HASD uses a single partner model, Jelly Bean Junction receives approximately \$64,000.00 a year from the district's grant to fund their activities. The remaining grant monies are used to support HASD staff salaries and other associated costs for the 4-year old classroom.

Through the new superintendent entry plan process, numerous stakeholders (parents, teachers, and community members) identified concerns with the current model HASD uses to provide a pre-kindergarten education to eligible students. These concerns included the limited number of seats available to serve students, alignment with the district's kindergarten program, confusion about oversight, leadership, and ownership of the program, and a lack of partnerships with other early learning centers within school district boundaries. In September of 2015, administration was ready to address these concerns; however, the state's budget stalemate prevented us from making any changes to the operational and instructional models used in the PreK Counts program.

The superintendent recently completed an 8-week graduate level course in early childhood education offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The capstone project was an action plan to improve the district's Pre-K program using the Kauerz Framework for planning, implementing, and evaluating, PreK-3rd grade approaches. This action plan focused on two outcomes:

1. Creating a new organizational structure for the PreK Program: aligned to the district's comprehensive plan and supported by district leadership and a PreK Advisory Committee.
2. Developing a process for HASD to assume leadership of its PreK Counts program using a PreK Advisory Committee. This includes offering two 4-year old classrooms at Enders-Fisherville Elementary School; ensuring teachers and aides are employees

of the district, and aligning curriculum so that 30 students are ready for kindergarten rigor and success.

In December, administration met with the current PreK staff to review the Kauerz Framework and discuss the next steps. More so than ever, staff is ready to implement a new model for PreK in Halifax. The achievement and behavior data from the current kindergarten class reveals a sense of urgency to make an early learning experience available to as many students as possible. HASD needs to align its early intervention and kindergarten readiness program to a shared vision, consistent standards, and defined leadership. That type of alignment is not possible using the current operational and educational model.

The PreK Program budget for 2017-2018 lays the groundwork for the Halifax Area School District to take full ownership of the program and provide early intervention services to 30 of its neediest customers. The total cost of the program for the 2017-2018 school year is **\$295,113.18**. The district is projected to receive **\$191,250.00** in PreK Counts funding. In the past, these funds have been used to support one full-time classroom for 4-year old students at Enders-Fisherville and one part-time classroom for 3-year old students at Jelly Bean Junction. Administration recommends these funds are best used by offsetting the cost of two teachers and two aides for two full time classrooms for 4-year old students at Enders-Fisherville. The budget overage of **\$103,863.18** will be absorbed by using an existing elementary teaching position that would otherwise be furloughed if not used next school year; therefore, the second full time aide is the only new staff expenditure. A savings of approximately **\$10,000.00** may be realized in the budget if the district is able to use the free and reduced lunch program to support the nutrition services for the program.

The district's PreK Counts renewal application is due before the start of the 2018-2019 school year. Included in that application will be a request for additional funding to support the operation of the two full time classrooms. Administration is confident PreK Counts will increase the district's funding during the renewal process since it is committed to serving more students in the program.

A recent meeting with representatives from many of the area's early care providers (now the district's PreK Advisory Committee) confirmed what administration and staff have experienced in the last three years. More and more of the district's youngest customers are coming to school with academic and behavior deficits that interfere with their ability to take full advantage of the opportunities afforded to them in kindergarten. The ever-increasing needs of our youngest students requires the district to alter its view of PreK as a "nice to have program" and begin viewing it as a "must have program" for as long as grant funding is available to offset the expenses. Administration believes supplementing the PreK Counts grant with local dollars may lessen the number of special education referrals for students in the future and begin to fully address the community's kindergarten readiness needs.

PRE K BUDGET FOR 2017-2018

| TWO FULL TIME CLASSROOMS | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|
| | FULL-TIME | |
| | BUDGET AMOUNT | |
| | 30 students | 191,250.00 |
| | Teacher (FULL TIME) | 97,029.94 |
| | Aide (FULL TIME) | 34,845.58 |
| 1 | Salaries | 131,875.52 |
| | Teacher | 88,369.40 |
| | Aide | 64,298.18 |
| 1a | Benefits | 152,667.58 |
| | | |
| 2 | Management Salaries | |
| | | |
| 2a | Management Benefits | |
| | | |
| 4 | Other Sal | |
| | | |
| 4a | Other Ben | |
| | | |
| 5 | Supplies | |
| | | |
| 7 | Nutrition | 10,570.08 |
| | | |
| 7c | Space Related | |
| | | |
| 7d | Building | |
| | | |
| 7e | Utilities | |
| | | |
| 7g | Accounting & Legal | |
| | | |
| 7i | Substitutes | |
| | | |
| 7j | Non Student Travel | |
| | | |
| 9 | Staff development | |
| | | |
| 91 | Student Transportation | |
| | | |
| | TOTAL COST 2 FULL TIME | 295,113.18 |
| | 2 Full Time Programs Short Fall | (103,863.18) |

Current Teacher Position absorb by Pre-K

Note: Assumption: Two full-time programs would
have 2 full-time teachers and 2 Full-time aides