



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
NEW YORK, NY 10007

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 18, 2015
CONTACT: pressoffice@cityhall.nyc.gov, (212) 788-2958

MAYOR DE BLASIO ANNOUNCES OVER 68,500 STUDENTS ENROLLED IN PRE-K FOR ALL

Big jump: Nearly 50,000 additional children enrolled in free, full-day, high-quality pre-K under de Blasio Administration

Earlier applications: Application period for 2016-2017 school year opens January 25 – more than a month earlier than last year

Reviews are in: Initial assessment data shows NYC's programs on par with nationally recognized pre-K programs

NEW YORK—Mayor de Blasio today announced that a record 68,547 children are now enrolled in free, full-day, high-quality pre-K, nearly 50,000 more students than were enrolled before he took office. Pre-K for All is one of the Administration's signature efforts to combat inequality, and data released today shows high enrollment across every community, with highest participation among low-income families.

To make the Pre-K for All enrollment process even easier, the Department of Education has moved up the application timeline for next school year. Families with children born in 2012 will be able to apply starting January 25 – more than a month earlier than last year – making the process easier, and giving them more opportunities to find the right program for their child. Applications will be open from January 25 to March 4 and families will receive their offer letters at the beginning of May, also more than a month earlier than last year.

Families will have more information on program quality to help them make decisions this year. To ensure that every student has access to a high-quality program, the City has assessed Pre-K for All programs using two rigorous, research-based, nationally recognized tools: the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) and the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – Revised (ECERS-R). The Department of Education is releasing the newly compiled CLASS and ECERS-R assessments for over 1,200 sites over the past three school years: 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15. New York City's scores were comparable to other nationally recognized model pre-K programs. These tools are observation-based and measure what children experience in their programs that has an impact on their learning and development. These are not an assessment of the students themselves.

"Parents have voted with their feet. Pre-K for All is now part of the lives of tens of thousands of children," said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**. "It will only get bigger and better from here. We're proud Pre-K for All is performing on a level with some of the most highly-regarded programs in the nation, and we are going to use these assessments to strengthen centers even more."

"The historic number of students enrolled in free, full-day, high-quality pre-K means that more than 68,500 students are getting a crucial year of problem solving and vocabulary building that will put them on the path to long term success. Families should know that quality is key to this expansion, and I am committed to ensuring

that every pre-K program throughout the city provides an important foundation for academic achievement,” said **Schools Chancellor Carmen Fariña**.

“Next year, nearly every child who walks into a kindergarten classroom will have spent a year learning in full-day, high-quality pre-K. That will make an extraordinary difference in their lives. We built this program on the principle that quality comes first, and we are proud that initial data is showing strong providers in every corner of the city,” said **Deputy Mayor Richard Buery**.

"I am thrilled that thousands of families from every income level are taking advantage of Pre-K for All which provides our students with excellent full-day instruction free of charge," said **Council Member Daniel Dromm, Chair of the Committee on Education**. "As an educator, I know that many of these students will thrive in elementary school due to the educational benefits of attending a quality Pre-K program. I want to thank Mayor de Blasio for establishing and developing this successful initiative, and for making the application process easier and more navigable for parents. I will continue to work with the administration and my colleagues in the Council to improve early childhood education in NYC."

“These new stats that indicate the rapid growth of the Pre-K program in NYC are very encouraging. An early start on education can teach children at a young age to acquire a love for learning. With a particular rise in the enrollment of children from low-income families, it is clear that the Pre-K program is reaching our City’s most vulnerable youth, and bringing them into a safe, healthy environment that encourages the development of intellect. Here in Brooklyn, the demand is clear – our enrollment grew by 126 percent in only two years. The Mayor’s decision to open Pre-K enrollment early is highly commendable, as it will make it simpler for parents to get a head start in registering and preparing their children for the coming school year. I thank Mayor de Blasio for recognizing the importance of early education for our children, and for making the program accessible and easy to navigate for parents,” said **Council Member Chaim Deutsch, Chair of the Non-Public Schools Subcommittee**.

“Everyone knows that the earlier a child is exposed to school and learning, the more likely the child will succeed in their studies. The enthusiasm of parents who have enrolled their children in our city’s pre-K sites is great. The jump in enrollment, especially in communities of color, is a proud accomplishment for the de Blasio Administration and the parents of pre-K youngsters,” said **Council Member Andy King, Co-Chair of the Black, Latino and Asian Caucus**.

"Having worked for years to keep at-risk youth in school, I know first-hand the value of early childhood education. The pre-kindergarten enrollment numbers and assessments released today spell success, not just for this initiative, but, more importantly, for the city as a whole, which will reap immeasurable benefits for years because of this investment. I commend Mayor de Blasio for his ongoing dedication to universal pre-kindergarten, a powerful tool in the battle against income inequality. I look forward to continuing to spread the word so that all parents in my district know that pre-kindergarten is free and available to all 4-year-olds in the city,” said **Council Member Debi Rose**.

New enrollment figures:

An additional 3,000 children have enrolled in pre-K for all since September. Nearly 90 percent of the increase in enrollments since the first day of school is in zip codes with incomes below the City’s median, driven by continuous outreach in under-enrolled communities.

Enrollment by Income Quartile since the First Day of School:

Income Quartile	Day 1 Registration	Enrollment	Change
-----------------	--------------------	------------	--------

First	25,265	26,865	1,600
Second	20,566	21,664	1,098
Third	11,815	12,380	565
Fourth	7,812	7,587	(225)
NA	46	51	5
Total	65,504	68,547	3,043

**NA: The NAs are zip codes for which the census provides no median income*

Total Borough Breakdown:

Borough	FY14 FD Enrollments	FY15 FD Enrollments	FY16 FD Enrollments	FY 14-16 Enrollment % Change
Bronx	4,154	12,085	14,557	250%
Brooklyn	7,606	17,155	21,745	186%
Manhattan	2,950	7,256	8,382	184%
Queens	3,653	13,521	19,870	444%
Staten Island	800	3,103	3,993	399%
Total	19,163	53,120	68,547	258%

How to apply:

Families will be able to apply online, over the phone, or in person at a Family Welcome Center using a single application to up to 12 full-day pre-K programs – including DOE district schools and Pre-K Centers and NYC Early Education Centers (NYCEECs) – ranking programs of interest in order of preference. The online application is translated into all nine of the DOE’s languages, and families can submit an application over the phone in over 200 languages by calling 718-935-2067.

The earlier application process will give families more time to prepare for the transition to pre-K and allow pre-K programs to register students and make waitlist offers before the end of the school year. A second round of applications will begin the first week of May and will feature any newly awarded pre-K programs.

To guide families through the application process, the DOE will host information sessions in every borough between January 27 and February 3. Families are also encouraged to use the 2016 Pre-K for All Directory, which contains detailed admissions information and program lists. Information session dates and the complete Pre-K Directory in ten languages are available on the pre-K website: nyc.gov/prek. Families interested in a printed copy of the Directory can visit elementary schools, pre-K programs, and Family Welcome Centers around the City. For the first time, printed copies of the Directory have been translated into all nine DOE languages.

Quality Assessments:

The ECERS-R assessment focuses on the quality of pre-K programs’ learning environments and has been used in both NYCEECs and District Schools over the last three years. Of the 1,114 ECERS-R scores released, the overall average of pre-K programs citywide is 3.9 out of 7.0. Overall, 77 percent of programs’ ECERS-R scores released are at or above the 3.4 threshold correlated with positive student outcomes.

The CLASS assessment focuses on the interactions between students and adults in pre-K classrooms, and reports across three sub-scales: Emotional Support, Classroom Organization, and Instructional Support. The NYCDOE first implemented the CLASS assessment in NYCEECs; beginning this school year, 2015-2016, all pre-K programs, including those in DOE district schools, Pre-K Centers, and NYCEECs, will be assessed using both CLASS and ECERS-R. Of the 555 CLASS scores for NYCEECs, programs averaged 6.0 out of 7.0 on Emotional Support, 5.8 out of 7.0 on Classroom Organization, and 3.6 out of 7.0 on Instructional Support. Programs performed at or above the national pre-K averages from 2014 in Classroom Organization (5.8) and Instructional Support (2.9) and have a comparable rating in Emotional Support (6.1).

CLASS scores, ECERS-R scores and other data are used to provide differentiated support to all pre-K programs, such as the type and frequency of coaching that a program receives from the DOE's 100 instructional coaches and 125 social workers. Program leaders use assessment results to target professional development and identify changes that can be made to improve quality in pre-K classrooms. Scores are also used as part of our data-driven approach to hold pre-K programs accountable, and may be a factor in contract renewals or a school's continued ability to offer pre-K in future years.

Citywide CLASS Results: 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15

CLASS Sub-score	DOE Average Score	National Average Score
Emotional Support	6.0	6.1
Classroom Organization	5.8	5.8
Instructional Support	3.6	2.9

Citywide ECERS-R Results: 2012-13, 2013-14 and 2014-15

ECERS-R Score	DOE Average Score	Benchmark
<i>Overall ECERS-R Score</i>	3.9	3.4
Space and Furnishings	3.8	3.4
Personal Care Routines	2.6	3.4
Language - Reasoning	4.6	3.4
Activities	4.3	3.4
Interaction	4.7	3.4
Program Structure	3.5	3.4

“These numbers represent a strong baseline for New York City’s Pre-K for All, and are quite similar to the baseline of New Jersey’s Abbott Districts, which have become some of the best public early childhood education programs anywhere. If New York City continues to focus on improving its program quality and using data to inform its planning, it is on track to a very strong universal pre-K program that truly makes an impact on inequality and improves the lives of millions of young people,” said **Steve Barnett, Director of the National Institute for Early Education Research (NIEER) at Rutgers University.**

“This report gives us great information about New York City's first years of universal implementation and its willingness to be transparent,” said **Sherry Cleary, Executive Director of CUNY's Early Childhood Professional Development Institute.** “The initial CLASS and ECERS-R evaluation results on rigorous measures of quality are strong and provide valuable information to DOE leadership and teachers. Taking the time to collect and analyze this data provides a mechanism for the DOE to develop strong continuous quality improvement strategies – an essential component to all highly effective education efforts. Early childhood education provides young children with the foundation they need to thrive in kindergarten and beyond, and we see that the City’s commitment to four year olds is truly impressive. I look forward to the DOE’s continued success in preparing 4 year-olds for success in school and throughout life.”

“The fact that the team at the Department of Education in charge of Pre-K for All is using these assessments to gauge program quality and to target resources for quality improvement is quite impressive. From our perspective, this is exactly the approach that should be used to ensure that the needs of children in this city are being met and it is a critical component of building a high-quality system,” said **Cybele Raver, Vice Provost of Academic, Faculty and Research Affairs at NYU.**

See citywide summary and site-by-site assessments at
<http://schools.nyc.gov/Academics/EarlyChildhood/support/assessments.htm>.

###