



THE CITY OF NEW YORK
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PRE-K FOR ALL: 22,000 FAMILIES APPLY FOR PRE-K IN FIRST DAY

With seats for every child, 70,000 expected to apply for free, full-day, high-quality pre-K

Application process open through April 24 at nyc.gov/prek, by calling 311, or at a Family Welcome Center

Text 'PREK' to 877877 to find nearby pre-k programs

NEW YORK—Mayor Bill de Blasio today announced the second phase in the expansion of Pre-K for All is off to a strong start, with 21,938 families applying for free, full-day, high-quality seats in the first day—up from 6,500 in the first day of applications last year. This year, for the first time, every four-year-old in New York City will have access to this life-changing educational opportunity, with roughly 70,000 children expected to enroll.

Last fall, New York City enrolled more than 53,000 children in full-day pre-K at district schools, charter schools, and NYC Early Childhood Centers. This year's expansion means more programs, seats and opportunities in every borough and neighborhood, ensuring enough capacity to accommodate every child, regardless of zip code or means. Because of free Pre-K for All programs, the average family saves more than \$10,000 each year in childcare costs.

“We’ve made Pre-K for All the centerpiece of our vision for a more fair and equal city. Today is the culmination of a commitment we made to every family that we would open this door of opportunity to every child. Come September, more children than ever will walk through the doors of our district schools and Early Education Centers on a path that will help them succeed in their education and beyond. And their families will have peace of mind that there is a free, safe and enriching place for their children to grow and thrive,” said **Mayor Bill de Blasio**.

“College readiness starts in pre-K, and with the expansion of this critical program, we are putting more students on the path to higher education and a meaningful career,” said **Schools Chancellor Carmen Farina**. “Four-year-olds are learning new vocabulary, experimenting with science and making friends. Every child deserves this opportunity, and we are delivering for all families across the city.”

“This year, more children than ever will walk into a full-day pre-K classroom and start on a path that will change their lives for the better. We know a child who has access to full-day pre-K gets the tools they need to do well in school. To every parent, grandparent, aunt, uncle or guardian: this is one of the most important decisions you will ever make for a child. Don’t wait—start your child on the right path today,” said **Deputy Mayor Richard Buery**.

“We are proud to participate in the expansion of this unprecedented City initiative that ensures young children across New York City reap the benefits of early learning, and prepares them for a lifetime of success,” said

Administration for Children’s Services Commissioner Gladys Carrión. “Not only are we educating our youngest residents, but we are providing critical services to families that will support the well-being of all our children, enabling them to realize their full potential in school and beyond.”

The City applied rigorous standards to every program in order to build a single, high-quality system—including educational assessments, interviews with faculty and inspections of the proposed physical space. Only 55 percent of programs that applied to host Pre-K for All were accepted because of these exacting criteria.

Finding a program and enrolling are easier than ever this year. Families use a single application to apply for and rank up to a dozen choices among both district schools and New York City Early Education Centers. The application will be translated into nine languages, and additional translation services are available over the phone in more than 200 languages. Families will be notified as additional seats become available and are encouraged to check for updates. Families that apply by the deadline will receive offers in early June.

Over the next six weeks, pre-K outreach teams are engaging families across the five boroughs, urging parents to apply and helping pre-K programs market themselves to parents. Enrollment specialists are prepared to counsel families through the application process and find the right program for them. The outreach campaign will also include a launch of advertisements on buses, bus shelters, digital media and the radio which will help direct families to the new streamlined application process. So far this winter, Pre-K for All outreach staff have made nearly 26,000 calls to parents and have held more than 700 information and promotion events.

Borough	Applicants
Manhattan	2,202
Bronx	3,785
Brooklyn	6,251
Queens	7,700
Staten Island	1,965

"Early childhood education has been proven to close the achievement gap," said **Speaker Mark-Viverito.** "The streamlined application process with applications available in nine different languages is an innovative way for parents to enroll their children in pre-K and take charge of their child's education. I want to thank Mayor Bill de Blasio and my colleagues for their continued commitment to making early education accessible to all New Yorkers."

"Education is the most powerful tool with which we can equip our children. There’s no better time to start opening the door to a brighter future than with Pre-kindergarten and this year our City has made it even easier for parents to access and apply. I applaud the Mayor, Chancellor, and his Administration for keeping their promise of a better education for all New Yorkers and look forward to seeing even more desks filled with bright young minds this coming school year," said **Public Advocate Letitia James.**

“Universal pre-kindergarten is one of those major steps forward that will shape our city for years to come,” said **Manhattan Borough President Gale A. Brewer.** “As Year Two approaches we must improve on what we’ve achieved so far. I applaud Mayor de Blasio for implementing a single, integrated online application to help parents find and apply for seats at district schools, Early Education Centers, and charter schools simultaneously.

I will continue to work with Mayor de Blasio to add seats where we need them, and to help our city's families get the most out of this transformative program.”

“Education is the key that unlocks a child's potential. Unlocking that potential at an earlier age is not a luxury, it is a necessity to closing the opportunity gap and ensuring the kind of holistic development that social scientists have proven is a difference-maker in our young people's futures. Mayor de Blasio has committed this entire city to the challenge of providing universal pre-kindergarten for every one of our four-year-olds, and we are on the cusp of that transformational reality. I am proud to partner with him on this expansion of this initiative in Brooklyn,” said **Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams**.

“Education starts at an early age and I applaud Mayor Bill de Blasio for expanding Pre-K programs throughout The Bronx and New York City,” said **Bronx Borough President Ruben Diaz Jr.** “Free universal pre-K programs not only save parents money but it gives children a much-needed jumpstart in creating the necessary educational foundation that will propel them to a brighter future. I look forward to working with the Department of Education to help implement this program in The Bronx, giving our youth the necessary scholastic tools needed to succeed in life.”

“Every child deserves a pre-K seat, and this year's expansion has ensured universal access for every four-year-old in New York City,” said **Queens Borough President Melinda Katz**. “Early childhood education is invaluable in shaping our children's future, and we urge every family to take advantage of this opportunity.”

“I urge every family with a pre-kindergarten-aged child to sign up for pre-kindergarten now,” said **Council Member Daniel Dromm, Chair of the City Council Education Committee**. “Last year 53,000 young New Yorkers were enrolled in all-day pre-K. This year we are expecting up to 70,000 enrollees. All day pre-kindergarten gives children an incredible educational foundation that benefits them throughout their school years. I applaud Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña for this hugely successful new program.”

“I applaud our Mayor's ongoing dedication to make education accessible and available to all, including our youngest ones. Preschool is very crucial in a child's development and key to building a strong foundation. Pre-K for All is not only an essential investment in the future of our children but also of our great City. We are strongest when everyone has an equal shot at achieving success,” said **Congressman Charles B. Rangel**.

“One of the most important investments we can make in our children's future is to provide them with a quality early education program so they get off to the right start,” said **Congressman Joe Crowley**. “I'm pleased to see the City expand the enrollment for Universal Pre-K to ensure more working families can take advantage of this incredible opportunity that puts our children on a path to success.”

“As a former school teacher, I know how important it is for children to begin their education early in life,” **Congressman Eliot Engel** said. “The push for truly universal pre-k has been a cornerstone of Mayor de Blasio's tenure, and his commitment to growing the program has the potential to transform our education system. I am pleased to hear that this year there will be enough open seats in the fall pre-K program for every four-year-old in New York City, and I strongly encourage every parent of an eligible child to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity during the open enrollment period starting on April 24th.”

“Every child deserves the opportunity to receive a quality early childhood education. I am pleased that Mayor de Blasio has expanded pre-K in New York City. Giving every family this opportunity ensures that more kids in New York City will have the foundation necessary for academic success,” said **Congressman Steve Israel**.

“Full day pre-K for every child of New York City has long been a goal, and now it's a reality,” said **Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney**. “This important initiative will reduce the financial burden on working families and enrich the lives of every child it touches. When we invest in our youngest children, we see the

rewards for decades to come. I applaud Mayor de Blasio for making universal pre-K a priority and following through on his promise.”

“Providing universal preschool education to children free of charge will improve the future of thousands of children, giving them an educational and social foundation upon which they can grow and thrive. It will also save parents on average more than \$10,000 a year and allow them to go to work knowing their child is learning in a safe environment. Expanding access to high-quality early education assures a better future for our children and our nation as a whole. I encourage parents in New York City to take advantage of this tremendous opportunity. I applaud Mayor de Blasio and others committed to improving early childhood education programs in New York City,” said **Congressman Gregory Meeks**.

"I'm proud to be a long-time supporter of universal pre-K, and I congratulate Mayor de Blasio and Chancellor Fariña on the program's inaugural year, where 53,000 children participated in full day free pre-K. Next school year it's estimated that 70,000 children will enroll, and I encourage all parents to apply now during the open enrollment season to take advantage of this wonderful opportunity for children throughout our City," said **Congressman Jerrold Nadler**.

“Today marks a great victory for the New York City Department of Education. The expansion of free, high-quality pre-K for every child in the city next year means more children will get the opportunity to access a good early education. This is especially important for underserved communities, which oftentimes lack early education programs or have limited capacity in them. All of our children should be able to receive the educational foundation and tools they need to lead a fulfilling and successful life. I applaud Mayor de Blasio’s efforts to see this initiative through; NYC is showing the rest of the nation that universal pre-K enrollment can be achieved,” said **Congressman José E. Serrano**.

“Statistics have shown that pre-K programs help prepare children for academic success and greater opportunity later in life. I’m pleased to see the expansion of this educational opportunity and encourage all working families to utilize these services,” said **Congresswoman Nydia M. Velázquez**.

Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie said “As longstanding supporters of early childhood education and quality, universal pre-kindergarten, the Assembly Majority is proud that four-year-olds across the City of New York will now have access to full day pre-K programs. This expansion is a great investment in the future of our families and communities and I commend the Mayor de Blasio for his leadership and commitment to putting our youngest New Yorkers on the Road to Success.”

“Universal Pre-K puts children on a path to educational excellence. The expansion and continuation of this successful program provides every child in our city the opportunity they deserve. I'm proud that I championed \$300 million a year for UPK last year and continued funding this year,” said **State Senate Coalition Co-Leader Jeff Klein**.

“Every child seeks out new and exciting things. From their first steps, to graduation and life in the workforce, they are all driven by a need to know, explore and learn. Our educational system will only be as good as the opportunities they have to seek out and learn new things. To instill a lifelong love of learning, those opportunities must be made available as early and as often as possible. This is the intent of pre-K. It’s a guarantee that every child, regardless of status or income, is given the opportunity to do what is in their nature,” said **State Senator Martin Malavé Dilan**.

"The expansion of access to pre-K is great news for New York City's children and families. The importance of early childhood education to future achievement is well established. By ensuring today's children have access to pre-K, the de Blasio administration is taking a pro-active approach to expanding opportunity for all New Yorkers," said **State Senator Liz Krueger**.

State Senator Jose Peralta said, “Our children are the present and the future, and they deserve all the support we can provide them with. That’s why we must make sure every child in our city has access to free and universal pre-K. I strongly support Mayor Bill de Blasio’s expansion of full-day pre-K in New York City and I want to thank him for his administration’s efforts so no child is left behind. Our children’s education is the best bet we can play to make sure we reach a society where everyone has access to the same opportunities. Investing in pre-K is investing in a brighter future for all of us, especially for our kids.”

“I commend Mayor de Blasio for his unyielding and visionary commitment to full-day Universal Pre-Kindergarten (UPK) for every single child in New York City. Educational equality is one of the fundamental cornerstones that will allow us to transform all other levels of inequality that persist in our society. I am very proud that less than one year after authorizing and funding UPK in the State Budget—our City is aggressively expanding programs and services to ensure that every single child is well served and every single family is empowered,” said **State Senator Bill Perkins**.

“The expansion of Universal Pre-K is a welcome next step in the life of the initiative. It guarantees more and more children and families will have access to quality education at an early age and reduce the burden on parents during the day. The City will see dividends from this program for years to come. I stood by the Mayor before on this program and am proud to support his continued commitment to all our families in our City,” said **Assemblywoman Rodney Bichotte**.

“It’s never too early to begin your child’s education and this great opportunity – made available by Mayor Bill de Blasio and the New York City Department of Education – will help families throughout the Bronx and New York City achieve this goal,” said **Assemblywoman Latoya Joyner**. “Starting today, if your child was born in 2011, you can enroll them into the free, first-rate pre-K program for the 2015-2016 school year and essentially jump-start their educational development during a key time in their formative years.”

Assemblyman Brian Kavanagh said, "I was proud to work with Mayor de Blasio and my colleagues in Albany last year to fund the very successful launch of Universal Pre-K, a huge step toward ensuring educational opportunity and economic equity for all of New York City's families. It's great that the Mayor and the Department of Education are expanding the program this year to help even more of our children thrive."

“Universal Pre-K is such a remarkable opportunity not only for our children but for us as parents. Universal Pre-K affords our children such a phenomenal education at an early age while parents are secure in the knowledge that their children are also in a safe environment which will cultivate their future” said **Assemblyman Walter T. Mosley**.

“New York City continues to lead the way in providing outstanding pre-K service, and I’m proud to support Mayor de Blasio and his administration as they take another strong step in expanding this transformational program,” said **Council Member Margaret Chin**. “Residents of my Lower Manhattan district will be very excited to see additional pre-K seats coming to our community in the upcoming school year, and I look forward to continuing to work with the Mayor’s Office to support and expand pre-K in our city.”

“The expansion of UPK will give more children access to the vital early childhood services they need in order to develop skills to grow and succeed. Pre-K for All, which can save families more than \$10,000 a year in childcare costs, means that many parents will not have to take on a second job, or forego necessities in order to send their child to pre-kindergarten. I am grateful to Mayor de Blasio for making our children and their education a priority, and I look forward to continuing to work together to expand and enhance UPK for all schoolchildren,” said **Council Member Chaim Deutsch**.

“For the first time, every four-year-old child in New York City is on a path to success with the implementation of free Pre-K for All. These programs are equipping our children with the foundation to a life changing educational opportunity,” said **Council Member Inez E. Dickens**. “It is extremely important that every child is

accommodated, regardless of zip codes or means, with high-quality, free pre-k because our children are our future.”

“I am so pleased that every parent in New York City will now have the chance to register their children in pre-K classes this fall. It is a well-known fact that children who attend pre-K move forward in life achieving at a higher academic level and experiencing greater success in the workforce than those who were never enrolled. As the Chair of the Youth Services Committee and someone who has a lifelong commitment to improving educational opportunities for all of our young people, I commend Mayor de Blasio for his commitment to making pre-K education a reality for every child in our city,” said **Council Member Mathieu Eugene**.

"Pre-K is an important step in providing our kids with an early quality education, and I hope that all interested parents learn about and take advantage of this opportunity," said **Council Member Daniel Garodnick**.

"The lasting impact of early childhood education simply cannot be overstated. This year's expansion represents Mayor de Blasio's unprecedented commitment to providing every eligible four-year-old in New York City with access to free, full-day, high-quality pre-K. The expansion will ensure that all families, regardless of income, will have access to high-quality early education opportunities so their children can enter kindergarten prepared for success. I applaud Mayor de Blasio for making this critical investment in the future of our great city," said **Council Member Vincent Gentile**.

“Pre-kindergarten provides children with a strong and solid foundation that will lead them to academic and personal success,” said **Council Member Vanessa L. Gibson**. “I want to applaud the leadership and commitment of Mayor de Blasio, Chancellor Fariña, and the New York City Council for their investment in education as NYC can now proudly provide this life changing resource to children, making our students more productive to lead successful lives. I urge parents of eligible-age children to take advantage of this tremendous opportunity to empower their children and enroll them in pre-K classes.”

“All children deserve a fair start, and now, 70,000 children will get one,” said **City Council Member Ben Kallos**. “Our city has become a national leader in family-friendly policy. I watched my single mother work hard, and at times, struggle. Because of Universal Pre-K, thousands of working families will have it easier. I look forward to assisting in expanding the program in yet more neighborhoods.”

“Monday was a great day in our city's quest to raise achievement and reduce inequality across all communities as Universal Pre-K enrollment for the fall rolled out throughout the city. This critical year of instruction has been a godsend to the families of the more than 50,000 young people enrolled this year, and I applaud the expansion of seats during this new application season as we move toward true equity in educational opportunity in New York City,” said **Council Member Andy King**.

"Universal Pre-K has been a resounding success for my district and the city as a whole," said **Councilman Rory I. Lancman**, "This year's expansion will lead to even more opportunity for our children."

“New York City is on its way to a historic moment for its youngest residents – the realization of Mayor de Blasio's universal pre-K program,” said **Council Member Brad Lander**. “Last year we saw the high demand and strong start of the universal pre-K program, and this year, with more programs, more seats, and more opportunities, even more four-year-olds will start their education right. Thanks to Mayor De Blasio's impressive leadership and focus on this issue, our city has ensured that students of all backgrounds can afford the strong start they need to begin their educational paths.”

“Every child in New York City from every community deserves full day pre-kindergarten. Universal pre-kindergarten is a game changer for families throughout our City and I want to thank Mayor de Blasio for making it a priority in his Administration,” said **Council Member Stephen Levin**.

"The expansion of full-day pre-K to all New York children means more than simply registering more kids to open seats – it means expanding opportunities for children and their parents. I commend Mayor de Blasio and his administration for their attention to universal early education. I am committed to working in partnership with the Administration to ensure that families in District 38 will not have to choose between full-time work and child care; they can and should have both," said **Council Member Carlos Menchaca**.

"Part of ensuring that our children have the tools to become successful adults is by providing access to quality Pre-K programming for all children in New York City. I am thrilled that Pre-K is being further expanded, as it helps instill the fundamental skill sets that will enable children to be successful students throughout their educational careers. I commend Mayor de Blasio, and his administration, for ensuring that every four-year-old child has access to a quality Pre-K program," said **Council Member Annabel Palma**.

"Early access to an education is an important factor for academic success later in life," said **Council Member Donovan Richards**. "As the child of young parents, local programs were instrumental in building a strong educational foundation in my own life. Fulfilling the promise to provide universal pre-kindergarten for tens of thousands of young children will give them a critical head start. I look forward to continued work with mayoral administration to support hardworking families and most importantly the future generations of New York City."

"Early education is step one to getting our students on a pipeline to college rather than corrections. I commend Mayor De Blasio on today's announcement and look forward to the program's expansion in Northern Manhattan. In my district alone, we have increased the number of pre-K seats from less than 550 in the 2013-2014 school year to just under 2,000 seats and 2015 promises even more. Now more students than ever before will be more likely to graduate from high school, own their own homes, have their own savings accounts and go on to lead more productive lives," said **Councilman Ydanis Rodriguez**.

"Having worked for years to keep at-risk youth in school, I know first-hand the value of early childhood education, and as a mother and longtime education advocate, I've seen how key academic, cognitive and social skills are learned in the first years of life. I commend Mayor de Blasio for his dedication to this important issue, and for expanding access to include all four-year-olds in New York City this fall. For our city, the long-term effects of this program on both individuals and society will be immeasurable," said **Council Member Debi Rose**.

"Universal Pre-K is a terrific addition to the Department of Education's work to bring the joy of learning to children as young as 4 years old. I look forward to expanding UPK to even more children in my district this year," said **Council Member Helen Rosenthal**.

"Every child deserves a strong start. I'm thrilled that this year in New York City, every four-year-old will have access to pre-k," said **Council Member Ritchie Torres**. "For the 70,000 children expected to enroll, this means an increased chance of success in school and in life. And for many families, universal pre-k means much-needed savings on childcare costs."

"We salute Mayor de Blasio on this wonderful, and entirely under-reported, accomplishment. The implementation of NYC Universal pre-K demonstrates that government can truly make a positive difference in the lives of the people of our city, helping to ensure that every child gets to the starting line of life with a more equal chance of success. And to the right-wing naysayers who for 30 years have been claiming that government can't get anything right –well, this proves them flat-out wrong," said **Chris Shelton, Vice President of CWA District One**.

"Universal pre-K means quality education for every four-year-old, regardless of what neighborhood they live in or who their parents are. For families, it means addressing the burdensome costs of education and daytime care for children before they reach kindergarten age. It isn't just a groundbreaking education policy, it is a

groundbreaking policy to support working families too,” said **George Miranda, President of Teamsters Joint Council 16**.

“The second year of the mayor's pre-K program is an important milestone for our city. This program is the cornerstone that restores New Yorkers' confidence in their government and assures us that we can improve the lives of our children and all New Yorkers if we have the political courage to do it,” said **Communications Workers of America Local 1180 President Arthur Cheliotis**.

"It is a pleasure to see free universal pre-K come to fruition, especially when you have a four-year-old child like me. Thank you Mayor de Blasio, your vision empowers not only the children but helps the parents as well with an entire year of savings for their child's education," said **Reverend Phil Craig, Senior Pastor of Springfield Community Church**.

“Early education is of the utmost importance. There is a vast need to educate young minds before being indoctrinated with a lot of negative things. As President of the Baptist Minister's Conference of Greater New York & Vicinity, we applaud the efforts of the Mayor in pushing for universal pre-K. You have our support,” said **Reverend James D. Morrison**.

“Pre-K for All is breaking new ground in preparing tens of thousands of children for success in school. We encourage all parents of eligible children to take advantage of this important opportunity to start their education on the right foot,” said **Kim Sweet, Executive Director of Advocates for Children of New York**.

"Quality, full-day pre-K can make a life-long difference in a child's life," said **Zakiyah Ansari, Advocacy Director of the Alliance of Quality Education**. "We are thrilled that more children will have the opportunity to benefit from free pre-K this fall. I applaud Mayor de Blasio's effort to secure pre-K for New York City's children. Now we need to see this same program spread throughout the state where it is still desperately needed. Every child should have the chance to gain from an excellent pre-K experience."

"Mayor de Blasio's pre-K program will help thousands of new immigrants children to access additional educational opportunities as well as to allow their parents to have more employment choices knowing that their children are in school," said **Christopher Kui, Executive Director of Asian Americans for Equality**.

"Universal pre-K has been a dream for a long time for everyone who values a level playing field for our children and the rights of parents to be able to work knowing their young children are safe and learning. A Better Balance applauds Mayor de Blasio for making what has often seemed like an impossible dream a reality" said **Sherry Leiwant, Co-President of A Better Balance**.

“This September, thousands of children who once lacked access to a high-quality early education will enter the classroom and begin on the path to success. We are proud to work with the City and the dedicated community-based providers who are working to expand these critical educational opportunities to the children and families who need them. Today, we are one step closer to providing all children with access to the safe, high-quality, and affordable early childhood education and after-school programs they deserve,” said the **Campaign for Children**, a coalition of 150 early childhood education and after-school advocacy and provider organizations.

“The fact that we can offer high-quality, full-day pre-kindergarten to every four-year-old in a city of this size – and a city where one in three children lives in poverty – is an incredible accomplishment. When we invest in programs and services that are proven to help children and families thrive, all New Yorkers benefit,” said **Jennifer March, Executive Director of Citizens' Committee for Children**.

“Kindergarten and first grade have the highest number of English language learners of all grades in our K-12 education system. High-quality, full-day pre-K programs are essential to securing the future of young New York City children, particularly the young immigrant children who are learning more than one language at

home. We applaud Mayor de Blasio's vision to ensure every child has access to meaningful programs including immigrant children and dual-language learners," said **Steven Choi, Executive Director of the New York Immigration Coalition**.

"CHCF has been a longtime champion of increasing equitable access to high quality early education. We stand with Mayor de Blasio in his efforts to make Pre-K for All accessible to some of the most underserved communities in our city. We consider him a partner in truly prioritizing the needs of ALL four-year-olds and their families. We look forward to working with this administration in its shared commitment to responding to the changing needs of our diverse communities." **Grace C. Bonilla, President/CEO of The Committee for Hispanic Children & Families, Inc.**

"Asian Pacific American communities in New York City are enrolling their children in UPK, because they know what a difference an enriching educational experience means to their families. The Coalition for Asian American Children and Families is excited to continue to work with the de Blasio administration to achieve income equality for all New Yorkers and to level the playing field for all families. We applaud the expansion of UPK seats, and know that even more APA families will enroll their children in UPK," said **Sheelah A. Feinberg, Executive Director of Coalition for Asian American Children and Families**.

"We applaud Mayor de Blasio for fulfilling his commitment to giving every four year-old access to full-day pre-K. This fall over 70,000 NYC children will be on the path to success and school readiness. This expansion further helps level the playing field for low-income children regardless of the neighborhood they live in," said **Melanie Hartzog, Executive Director of the Children's Defense Fund New York**.

"The mayor's initiative is a giant step towards fulfilling his promise to create one New York City. Universal Pre-K will ensure that that every child, in every community, has an early start and equal opportunity to fulfill his or her highest potential." **Frances Lucerna, Executive Director of El Puente**.

"Mayor de Blasio campaigned on the promise to bring free full-day Universal Pre-K to all four-year-olds in this city! I'm so proud to say that he kept to his word and as of today, parents of all four year old children across this great city of ours can complete an application for full-day Universal Pre-K. My daughter-in-law and I just completed the application for my grandson Nigel! I'm so excited, and can't wait for him to begin his journey into public education! Thank you Mayor de Blasio." said **Ocynthia Williams, parent leader and organizer with Highbridge School Coalition**.

"By investing in free, universal pre-kindergarten, we have taken an enormous step toward correcting the alarming early educational disparities that have existed within the Latino community," stated **José Calderón, President of the Hispanic Federation**. "We were ecstatic to see the brightly lit faces of our children walking through the public school doors last September for a seat in their new pre-K classrooms. This grand initiative will undoubtedly pay major dividends for our children, families and neighborhoods for generations to come."

"Nonprofit human service providers have played a crucial role in pre-K expansion, and the sector applauds the Mayor for continuing to expand enrollment and offer pre-K to all of New York's children. This is a huge step in providing bridges to opportunity for children and families, and community-based organizations are proud to partner with the Mayor in his vision to provide quality programs for children of all incomes across the city," said **Michelle Jackson, Associate Director, Human Services Council of New York**.

"As an alliance of schools and organizations working with Hunts Point students from birth to college, we strongly support expansion of the city's UPK programs to give every childhood in our neighborhood and the city an opportunity to start off on a strong educational path," said **Krystal Reyes, Executive Director of Hunts Point Alliance for Children**.

“The research is clear,” said **Vaughan Toney, President of The Friends of Crown Heights Educational Centers**. “Quality UPK programs not only help children develop their early cognitive abilities but also yield enormous societal payoffs in later life, including higher college graduation and lower incarceration rates. Thanks to Mayor de Blasio, tens of thousands of our children of all backgrounds will now have unprecedented access to this critical ladder of opportunity.”

“New York City’s settlement houses and community centers are proud to be part of the necessary work of ensuring that every child in New York City has access to high-quality, safe and affordable early childhood education.” said **Nancy Wackstein, Executive Director of United Neighborhood Houses**. “Expanding the pre-K system to 70,000 slots in just two years is a remarkable and historic achievement. We look forward to continuing to work with the de Blasio administration and communities in every neighborhood to provide care and education to the youngest New Yorkers.”

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