

5.1 Operational Plan Overview (5 points)

Provide a general overview of the district's FY 2023 proposed preschool program operational plan. Listed below are questions the district must address in the narrative:

1. Describe your current preschool program, including demographics and community services/resources offered to the preschool children and families. **Note: Five priority points will be given to current ECPA or ELLI districts whose base score is 70 or higher.**

The population of Toms River, New Jersey as of 2020 is 93,638 people with a median age of 42.7. The median household income is \$101,336 and the poverty rate is 7.31%. The overall population of Toms River, New Jersey is 85.76% White Alone; 8.5 Hispanic or Latino; 4% African American; and 3.43 % Asian Alone. In Toms River, 10.6% of residents speak a non-English language, and 3.03% are not U.S. citizens. Toms River Regional Schools is the second largest suburban school district in New Jersey—the sixth largest overall—which, as of Oct. 15, 2021 serves 14,559 students and employs 2,337 staff members. Eighteen percent of students in Toms River are classified as a child with a disability.

As of October 15, 2021, Toms River Regional School District's ASSA report recorded a 30.89% rate of free-and-reduced-meals eligibility. At the elementary level, the F/R rate is 35.75%, with the highest rate in one elementary school being 62.58% and the lowest being 15.36%. These numbers represent an ongoing need for the alternative resources and funding—as provided by this grant opportunity—to serve a large number of socioeconomically disadvantaged students, as well as a markedly high rate of students receiving special education services.

Within Toms River Regional Schools, three locations host preschool students: the Early Learning Center at 1144 Hooper Avenue, which serves as an annex of Cedar Grove Elementary School; Joseph A. Citta Elementary School; and Silver Bay Elementary School. The Early Learning Center (ELC) has 13 full-day classrooms dedicated for preschool children with autism and eight half-day general education classrooms for preschool disabled and general education students. Joseph A. Citta has 10 half-day general education classes for preschool disabled and general education students. Silver Bay Elementary School has two five-hour classes for medically-fragile preschool disabled students and eight half-day general education classes for preschool disabled students.

In total, there are 15 self-contained ABA based/medically fragile based programs for the involved population of learners. The 26 half-day sections are general education programs where all remaining preschool disabled students are educated.

As current members of NJGROW, the district utilizes Creative Curriculum and Teaching Strategies GOLD, Foundations, Amplify, Core Knowledge Language Arts curriculum, and Sanford Harmony social emotional learning curriculum. PIRT was implemented in the 2021-2022 school year. Through this process preschool students were identified and received support and strategies to be successful in the general education setting. The district also

hired a preschool guidance counselor and utilizes a Master Teacher through grant funds to service all preschool aged students. Both positions played an integral part of the daily operations within preschool. Most recently, for the 2022-2023 school year, Toms River Regional Schools' preschool program was awarded an additional grant through the New Jersey Coalition for Inclusive Education for systemic change. This grant will support staff with inclusive initiatives in the early childhood setting. The grant was previously awarded in several locations including elementary and middle school settings, so there is familiarity with successful implementation, and these additional supports will help develop a cohesive plan for all students preschool through secondary.

Additional community connections include collaboration with Early Intervention, surrounding nursery schools, nonpublic schools, and Head Start locations. Through joint efforts, the district works to support preschool students within the community as they transition to preschool or from preschool to elementary.

2. What is the vision of your preschool program? How would additional funding support it?

The vision for Toms River Regional Schools is to provide full-day preschool for special education and general education students who reside in the district. Our goal is to provide students educational opportunities in the general education setting while supporting their individual special needs. Over the past three years, the district has committed to moving from self-contained programs to general education placements. One hundred percent of our half-day preschool disabled students are now placed in general education.

The funding provided through the expansion grant will ensure our students the opportunity to receive educational services with their general education peers in the district in a full-day setting. This will, in turn, provide additional resources and interventions, with the intention of decreasing the need for classification and special education services.

3. Does your district include preschool in your Title I need assessment?

No

5.2 Outreach, Recruitment, Enrollment and Facilities (10 points)

1. Describe the strategies the district has in place for serving eligible preschool students, with a five-year plan to serve 90% of the universe of three- and four-year-olds. What efforts will the district implement to recruit and place preschool children, especially the hardest to reach families (e.g., recent immigrants, low-income, teen parents, etc.) and work towards serving the universe?

As of August 3, 2022, there are 256 preschool disabled students receiving special education services for the 2022-2023 school year. Early Intervention projects an additional 148 students eligible to transition to the preschool programs by June 2023. Out of the 256 preschool disabled students, 165 of those students are already placed in half-day general education settings. The remaining 91 are in ABA-based or medically-fragile full-day programs for children with autism and multiple disabilities. Currently, all self-contained children have access to their general education peers during planned activities throughout the day.

Year 1: Due to the large enrollment of special education preschool students in the district and the limitations of a board-approved budget, the district will begin by moving all five-hour programs to full day, and include two new general education classes that will also be full day. The remaining half-day general education programs will remain so until September 2023. In order to recruit general education families, the district will advertise on its website and social media outlets, through automated calls and emails through its School Messenger system, and with physical flyers distributed throughout the community. To select children in both general education and special education, a lottery will be held to determine placements in the new full-day programs.

Year 2: Toms River Regional Schools has committed to restructuring its operations to provide a dedicated space for all enrolled preschool students, both special education and general education, to a full-day, six-hour program for the 2023-2024 school year. This entails hiring 15 additional preschool teachers in addition to the 28 the district currently employs. Additional staff will enable the district to educate its currently-enrolled half-day students in a full-day setting. An additional 40 general education students in the district will bring totals to 300 general education and 140 special education, and the district will recruit general education families via the means described above, and with the full support of the central office and our communications department. To select children in general education, a lottery will be held to determine placements in the full-day programs.

Year 3: During the 2024-2025 school year, expansion will include transitioning our self-contained students diagnosed with autism into the least restrictive environment. This entails adding an additional five teachers, educating 50 of our students with autism in the least restrictive environment in the general education setting. The district will serve an additional 100 general education students, totalling 400 general education students in a

full-day preschool setting. Recruitment and subsequent selection will be handled as described above.

Years 4 and 5: For the 2025-2026 and 2026-2027 school year, the district plans to grow internally while also partnering with outside providers including local nursery schools and Head Start, to expand the preschool universe within the district. Through collaboration with community entities, the district can increase the number of general education students served within TRRS. In order to continue recruitment efforts and expand preschool program services and locations, the district will work closely with community members and continue to advertise on its website and social media outlets, through automated communication and physical flyers strategically dispersed. To select children in general education a lottery will be held to determine placements in the new full-day programs.

2. Note that districts are highly encouraged to contract with community child care programs and/or Head Start agencies to offer a high-quality preschool program within a mixed delivery system to serve eligible children. **Note: Districts who contract with Head Start and/or private providers will be given ten (10) priority points if the base score is 70 or higher.**

Please address the specific items below:

- a. The program will begin operation no later than October 3, 2022. Please note the projected start date, if earlier.

All self-contained programs will begin as full day on September 6, 2022. The two initial classes through the expansion grant will begin on October 3, 2022.

- b. What methods will the district use to attract hard-to-reach families, and how will the district commit to serving a large proportion of low-income children?

In order to serve a large population of low-income children, the district will dedicate 60% of the openings for all general education placements to low-income families. In order to communicate with hard-to-reach families, Toms River Regional Schools will utilize numerous means, for which it boasts the unique advantage of having a grant writer with keen knowledge of such programs who also serves as our communications lead, and who works with a robust and collaborative network to share important information. Toms River Schools TV (TRSTV) is a school-based broadcast journalism studio with a cable presence at TV-21 and a YouTube channel, and the district will advertise its services there. Those same services will be publicly announced at school board and committee meetings. Information on these services will be shared through School Messenger, the district's preferred system to broadcast automated emails, phone calls, and text messages. All relevant School Messenger communication will be translated to Spanish and sent directly to our Spanish-speaking families. Physical flyers in both English and Spanish will be strategically dispersed at targeted locations. Hard-copy and digital principals newsletters will also include information on these services, so information will

be dispersed at both the district and individual building level. Finally, when applicable, the district will reach families through social media, by posting information to its Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter feeds, which have a combined following of more than 15,300.

- c. When applicable, what collaborative arrangements will the district make with community child care programs and/or Head Start to provide services to eligible children?

The district plans to work directly with community providers in Year 4 and 5 of implementation, and more information about this partnerships is included in the previous section of this application.

- d. Provide evidence that the plan is based on knowledge of community needs.

When discerning whether or not to apply for alternative funding, the district asks itself three core questions:

Is there a need?

Is this in line with district goals?

Is this sustainable?

Despite the dire financial circumstances imposed by State Bill S2, Toms River Regional Schools does not pursue programmatic funding for funding's sake. We have a keen understanding of what's entailed when it comes to implementing, managing, and tracking a funded program, and therefore are careful to only pursue funding and programs in line with our needs and goals.

To that end, yes—there is a need, and this application is based on a clear knowledge of community needs. While we've touted our communication efforts throughout this application, that communication is not one way. Our special services team—through phone calls, at board meetings, via social media comments, and during the numerous in-person meetings that are a critical component of special services—understands our community's need for full-day preschool programming. This feedback includes families expressing a difficult time finding childcare options for their children with special needs, and a desire to be a part of the TRRS system that is complicated by the limitations of a half-day structure (particularly for working families). More broadly, as Toms River's demographics evolve—our free-and-reduced-meals eligibility rate has risen more than 10 percentage points since Superstorm Sandy, and our English as a Second Language (ESL) program has grown exponentially as more immigrant families settle in TR—the demand for increased services has grown.

Certainly, this is in line with district goals. Our published goals for the 2022-2023 school year include student achievement, "focusing on student programming and shared services," "addressing ... integrated learning opportunities for students," and ensuring that our "most at-risk students will be identified and tracked to ensure they are receiving systematic, explicit evidence-based interventions that support both mental health and academic achievement in inclusive learning environments."

Finally, we view this program as sustainable, and feel confident that our transparency in this application—particularly the time and effort it will require, due to our sheer size and number of special education students we serve, to reach a complete full-day status—is evidence of our

understanding of what it will take to implement this program as intended and facilitate its ongoing success.

Preschool Universe

NJAC 6A:13A, Elements of High-Quality Preschool Programs, 'Universe of eligible three- and four-year-old children means all three- and four-year-old general education children eligible for preschool pursuant to the School Funding Reform Act (PL 2007, c. 260)." The preschool universe is calculated as twice the first-grade enrollment in the district's traditional public, charter and renaissance schools. Note: When applicable, districts can use a lottery system for enrollment, **consideration should be given to children whose families are income eligible.**

3. Please provide enrollment projections for the general education students for the next five years in the Enrollment Projections table below.

Enrollment Projections for General Education Students

School Year	Universe	Projected Enrollment	Percentage of Universe Projected	Percentage of Universe Served
2022-2023	1960	280	14%	22%
2023-2024	1960	300	15%	23%
2024-2025	1960	400	20%	29%
2025-2026	1960	450	23%	31%
2026-2027	1960	500	26%	34%

4. Planned recruitment efforts.

Add an X or ✓ in column 2 for all that apply.

Develop promotional materials (e.g. flyers, postcards, bookmarks, magnets, signs)	x
Direct outreach to community locations (e.g. churches, grocery stores, day care centers, etc.)	x
Engage community leaders to help get the message out	x
Engage local service clubs and organizations (e.g., Rotary, Elks) to help promote your program	x
Write a feature news story or media announcement for the local newspaper	x
Convene the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) in planning your outreach	x
Participate in special community events to help promote your program	x
Identify different segments of the community to target your communications	x
Utilize billboards and transit advertising	
Conduct an open house, tour, or another kick-off event	x
Schedule speaking engagements for program leaders	x
Produce and distribute public service announcements to local media	x
Utilize social media (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) in your outreach efforts	x
Devote more staff time to your outreach efforts	x

Respond promptly to telephone, website and social media inquiries	x
Provide additional information and training sessions for staff to help get the message out	x
Seek resources from the community (e.g., marketing consultation)	
Seek businesses or nonprofits in your community willing to help you promote your program	
Locate available resources for advertising your needs and developing an outreach plan	
Other (please specify): Gain assistance from District Coordinator of Communications	x

Facilities

Please complete the facilities chart below for all preschool general education / inclusion classrooms. Do not include preschool self-contained classrooms.

All district and provider classrooms must meet facilities requirements of 950 square feet (inclusive of closets, bathroom, and built-in units) or at a minimum of 750 square feet of instructional space. Districts will be required to provide the total square footage for all projected PEA-funded preschool classrooms in-district and at provider and at contracted provider sites as part of the application.

District must submit floor plans identifying the total square footage for each classroom that will be used for PEA funded preschool classrooms.

Yes	x
No	

Facilities Chart

Site (School, Childcare Private Provider and/or Head Start) (i.e. name of provider or district building)	Class (i.e. Classroom #1)	Class size (i.e. total sq. footage)	Bathroom in classroom (Y/N)	Bathroom In line of sight if not in the classroom Y/N/NA *in line of sight – is the bathroom visible from the classroom?	Floor level
ELC	B1	900 square feet	N	N (waiver applied and accepted by county)	1
ELC	B5	930 square feet	N	Y	1

5.3 Community Collaboration and Family Engagement (10 points)

Refer to the section on Family and Community Involvement in NJAC 6A:13A and in the Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines.

NJAC 6A:13A-4.6 (c) 1. The membership of the council shall consist of stakeholders in the community, as well as parents, contracting private providers, and the local Head Start agency, if applicable, with new representation added as needed; and 2. Elected co-chairs shall preside at quarterly council meetings.

1. Please describe your plan for creating an Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC) in responding to the questions below. If your district has an equivalent entity, provide the mission statement, membership roster, and collaboration with the community. Additional information about the Early Childhood Advisory Council can be found in the Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines (page 22).

Key stakeholders in the ECAC will include administration, community members, board of education members, and parents of preschool-aged children. People will be chosen/elected to participate based on their knowledge of Toms River Regional Schools and the overall community.

2. In the Family Engagement Staff table below, please provide the name, title, and email address for each of the in-district family services professionals, including the Community Parent Involvement Specialist (CPIS), working directly with preschool families:

Family Engagement Staff

Title	Name	Indicate if the individual is serving in multiple roles in the program
Guidance Counselor Community Family Involvement Specialist	Alyssa DeBari adebari@trschoools.com	Guidance/PIRT/ECAC
Social Worker	Kari LeFebvre klefebvre@trschoools.com	CST/PIRT/ECAC
Administrator	Anna Kasper akasper@trschoools.com	Administration/PIRT/ECAC

3. Describe how the needs of preschool families will be assessed throughout the school year.

Families will be assessed through meetings, surveys, open house events, and frequent communication through the school district.

4. List the proposed activities, meetings, and trainings offered to preschool families in the 2022-2023 school year.

The Early Learning Center provides in-house parent workshops regularly throughout the school year. In 2022-2023, parent workshops will include Creative Curriculum and learning in the home, behavioral interventions and support, toilet training, developmental milestones, and social-emotional learning including the Nurtured Heart Approach.

5. How will the district identify families who may need referrals to resources in the community?

Outreach programs through the school district along with communication to the families will be provided to local agencies, schools, and community-based programs. Information will include contact information, open house events, and opportunities to provide resources to families in need.

6. What will be the process for families to request support and/or referral to local and state-wide social service agencies?

On the district website, a section will be dedicated to families in the community. The information provided will also give specific contact information to request social service agencies along with a direct district contact to assist with answering questions.

7. For districts that propose to partner with providers. How will the district collaborate with the family workers in contracted child care and Head Start programs? Please include training and other supports offered to these individuals.

NA

8. What will be the primary responsibilities of the Early Childhood Advisory Council (ECAC)?

The primary responsibility of the ECAC will be to communicate with key stakeholders in the community, develop appropriate training opportunities for families, and make decisions in the best interest of the preschool program as it grows.

9. Will the ECAC collaborate with the local County Council for Young Children and/or any other community stakeholder group? (i.e., Human Services Advisory Council, Central Intake Advisory Council) (add x or ✓ in column)

Yes	x
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No	
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If yes, list community stakeholder groups:

Early Intervention

10. List the proposed ECAC membership roster in the ECAC Membership Roster table. Please include agency/family member/stakeholder titles and identify the leaders of the council. Stakeholders can include community institutions, local businesses, community colleges, houses of worship, and health agencies.

ECAC Membership Roster

Name	Title and Organization	Indicate if district employee or stakeholders
Cara DiMeo	Assistant Superintendent, TRRS	District employee/community member
Joy Forrest	Director of Special Services/ TRRS	District employee
Anna Kasper	Supervisor	District employee
Jennifer Nelson	Master Teacher	District employee
Alyssa DeBari	Guidance	District employee/community member
Kari LeFebvre	Social Worker	District employee/community member
Joanna Novaky	LTDC	District employee/community member
Anthony Dispoto	Guidance/community member	District employee/community member
TBD	Board of Education Member	Community Member
TBD	Early Intervention	Community Stakeholder

11. What are the plans for the recruitment of ECAC members? Please describe planned activities:

Recruitment plans include advertisement of the council, invitations along with guidelines and expectations. Activities planned will include monthly meetings with all stakeholders, agenda items on current and future goals, and overall expansion plans and meeting the needs of the community.

12. Describe how the ECAC will ensure parents are informed and engaged in the work of the council.

Once the committee meets, information about the meeting and decisions made will be posted on the district website under the designated area for preschool related information.

13. What method of assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of the ECAC will be used?

Assessment and evaluation effectiveness will be determined by district surveys, information sessions, and meetings.

5.4 Transitions (5 points)

Refer to the section on Transition in New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:13A, and in the Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines. NOTE: All school districts should have a transition team.

1. Who will make up the district transition team, and what are their positions/roles?

Stakeholders for transition include preschool administration, guidance counselor, Master Teacher, school nurse and school social worker.

2. How will the district ensure collaboration among preschool administrators and other areas (i.e., special education, bilingual, K–third grade teachers, nurses, family workers, social workers, Head Start, and contracted providers)?

Preschool administration oversees both general education and special education students. Administration collaborates with elementary administration including principals and supervisors. Frequent meetings will occur to ensure all stakeholders hold the same expectations for students, staff, and families.

3. What strategies will be in place for preschool and kindergarten alignment of curriculum, standards, assessment, and professional development?

Toms River Regional Schools preschool programs implement Creative Curriculum and GOLD. In addition, preschool also utilizes Foundations and CKLA which are utilized in K-5 district-wide. All professional development and assessments incorporated within the programs align to elementary school which will assist with transition of students.

4. How will the district use Title 1 funds for transition activities from preschool to kindergarten and kindergarten first grade?

Once families are identified, funds will be utilized to provide services to preschool children moving to kindergarten and kindergarten to first grade. Activities would include family engagement and resources to assist with transitioning students into school.

5. List projected transition activities for each category. Please be as specific as possible.

The Projected Transition Activities

Category	Children	Families	Teaching Staff
From early intervention to preschool	Visit school setting	Open House	Open house
From self-contained to a preschool inclusion class	Transition opportunities throughout school day	Information session and presentation of programs	Professional development, PLC, collaboration between staff
From home to preschool	Open house	Information provided with open house for all families	Meetings with social worker on background knowledge
From a nursery school/day-care program to your program	Visit public school program	Invitations to include public program's family workshops and activities.	Staff visit childcare programs to assist with transition
From preschool (district-operated, child care, and Head Start) to kindergarten	Visit programs	Open house and family nights	Staff visit and provide assistance to community programs

5.5 Preschool Administration and Health and Safety (10 points)

Refer to the section on Administrative Oversight in New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:13A, and in the Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines.

Note: The appointed supervisor/administrator responsible for the preschool program must hold the appropriate New Jersey Supervisor's Certificate or New Jersey Principal's Certificate and have experience in preschool education. Refer to 6A:13A-4.1(a) for administrative ratio requirements.

1. Fill in the "Administrative Oversight" table below for each administrator, including the appointed supervisor(s) as described above, who will be involved in overseeing the preschool program. Please note the primary program supervisor and any additional site supervisors.

Administrative Oversight

Title	Name	Email Contact Information	Certification	Number of years of preschool experience	Other district responsibilities unrelated to preschool
Supervisor	Anna Kasper	akasper@trschools.com	Supervisor Principal Chief School Administrator P-3 K-5 K-12 Music Students with Disabilities LDTC	Teaching: 10 Administration: 6	K-12 Autism

2. Describe preschool administrators' background and experience in preschool.

Anna Kasper is Toms River Regional Schools' supervisor of special education. Prior to becoming an administrator, Ms. Kasper was a preschool autism teacher for 10 years in the Lacey Township School District. Currently, she is the sole administrator of the Early Learning Center, which has 18 preschool classrooms in both general education and special education settings. In addition, she manages the additional 10 preschool programs located at Silver Bay Elementary School and Joseph A. Citta Elementary School, and generally oversees autism within the school district K-12. Ms. Kasper holds teaching certifications in P-3, Students with Disabilities, K-5 elementary, and K-12 Music Education, with additional certifications including LDTC, Supervisor, Principal, and Chief School Administrator. The 2022-2023 school year marks Ms. Kasper's sixth year in administration, and her vast experience predominantly involves working with children in preschool.

3. Describe the training that administrators will receive in the selected curriculum.

Anna Kasper has already participated in professional development and coaching sessions for Creative Curriculum, GOLD, Foundations, and CKLA. Continued professional development and coaching sessions will be available to expand on the knowledge of all curriculums utilized in preschool.

Teachers and other staff are qualified as required: preschool classroom teachers hold a bachelor's degree and, at a minimum, a certificate of eligibility or certificate of eligibility with advanced standing for preschool through grade three or other equivalent preschool certification as set forth in NJAC 6A:9B.

4. Please describe changes to staffing or plans for new hires:

All preschool staff hired that currently teach general education classrooms hold their P-3 and Students with Disabilities. When hiring new staff, they will be hired with the correct certifications.

Health and Safety

Refer to the section on Health and Nutrition in New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:13A, and in the Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines.

Note: As per code (NJAC 6A:13A), the following services should be provided to preschool children and their families:

- Health screenings (vision, hearing, dental, height, and weight screenings)
- The Division of Early Childhood Services recommends that screenings occur within the first 30 days of school. Families should be notified of the screenings at the beginning of school.

5. List the 2022-2023 proposed schedule of health screenings for preschool children of the Health Screening table below:

2022-2023 Proposed Schedule of Health Screenings

Health Screening	Projected completion Date
Vision	April 2023
Hearing	April 2023
Dental	May 2023
Height/Weight	November 2022

5. How will the district ensure that nurses are employed at a ratio of 1:300 children for preschool children enrolled in provider, Head Start, and district classrooms?

The district would monitor student numbers and hire additional nurses as needed. Currently, most schools have two or three nurses. TRRS employs a nursing coordinator, Cathy Shea, RN, who assists with oversight of all nurses in the district under the direction of Assistant Superintendent James Ricotta. Ms. Shea conducts professional development for the nursing staff throughout the school year. Two physicians work with the district to provide services and training, and who reside on our District Crisis Team.

6. Please list the proposed health-related family education programs (e.g., nutrition, lead screening, and asthma) and the proposed schedule for 2022-2023?

Health-related programs include vision and hearing screening through the Lions Club, which takes place in early fall. Shoprite provides spring nutrition assemblies about healthy and unhealthy foods. Ocean Dental provides classroom visits for dental awareness and nutrition, also in the spring.

7. Please list the professional development the nurses will provide to classroom teachers and children within the 2022-2023 school year.

Nurses provide professional development on Epi pen use, allergies, district and building protocols, and safety procedures for all families.

8. Does your district participate in the National School Breakfast Program and the National School Lunch Program? (add an X or ✓ to indicate your choice.)

Yes	x
No	

If no, please explain.

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5.6 Coaching Supports: Master Teachers/Coaches, PIRS/PIRT (10 points)

Refer to the sections on Master Teachers/Coaches in New Jersey Administrative Code 6A:13A (c) (d) and in the Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines.

Note: Master Teachers should dedicate most of their time to classroom visits, coaching and supporting teachers through the reflective cycle, and follow-up discussions with teachers regarding children's learning and instructional practices.

Master Teachers should not have any teacher, supervisory or evaluator responsibilities.

The Master Teacher must have the following qualifications and experience:

- A master teacher appointed on or after September 1, 2007, shall, at a minimum, hold a preschool through grade three or equivalent preschool certification, as set forth in NJAC 6A:9B.
- Three to five years' experience teaching in preschool programs;
- Experience in implementing developmentally appropriate preschool curricula;
- Experience with a range of appropriate early childhood assessments, including performance-based assessment instruments and classroom quality assessment instruments; and
- Experience providing professional development to classroom teachers.

1. Fill in the "District Master Teachers" table below based on the total number of preschool classrooms in your program. Note that the position(s) should be filled at one full-time Master Teacher ratio per 20 preschool classrooms. **Note: If necessary, indicate any positions for 2022-2023 that are unfilled at the time by entering "To be hired" in the name column.**

District Master Teachers (Coach)

Name	Number of Assigned Classrooms	Indicate date of completion of Master Teacher Fellow Seminar, if applicable.	Indicate if the Master Teacher is serving in multiple roles in the program (i.e., CPIS, PIRT).	Please note the percentage of time that the individual will serve in the Master Teacher role for the district.	Please indicate if the individual is a district employee, shared service with another district or outside contracted consultant.
Jennifer Nelson	28	NA	CPIS, PIRT	100%	District employee

2. Please describe how the Master Teacher(s) role will be filled, including how they will provide expertise to support teaching and learning specific in the chosen curriculum.

Toms River Regional Schools already has a Master Teacher—Jennifer Nelson—whose role is made possible through grant funding for preschool initiatives. The hiring process included multiple interviews and presentations. The Master Teacher attends relevant professional development and provides coaching sessions with individual curriculums and with administration. This will be Ms. Nelson's second year in the role.

3. If the district plans to contract with Head Start, what efforts will be in place to coordinate with the Head Start coach?

The district plans to contract with Head Start in the fourth year of implementation. The district would collaborate and hold stakeholder meetings with the district and Head Start.

Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialist/ Pyramid Model Coach (PIRS) and Preschool Intervention and Referral Team (PIRT)

Every district must provide the services of a PIRS and a PIRT.

Fully state-funded preschool programs are required to hire a PIRS/**coach** to support teachers in social/emotional and behavioral practices. The recommended ratio is no more than 20 preschool classrooms for each full-time PIRS/Coach. The PIRS can be a combined position. The **PIRS** is the coach, a single individual with preschool experience, providing support to teachers to implement the Pyramid Model of behavioral support. As needed, the PIRS

"consults" with a team of experts (PIRT) to provide support and suggest interventions to teachers so that all children can succeed within the general education classroom.

The **PIRT** can include preschool teachers, special education teachers, behavior specialists, psychologists, learning disabilities teacher-consultants, school social workers, speech and language pathologists, or other specialists supervised by the school district preschool administrator.

Roles/Responsibilities of the PIRS:

- **Coaching** preschool teachers on the implementation of the Pyramid Model for Supporting Social Emotional Competence in Infants and Young Children, aka, The Pyramid Model. ([National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations](#))
- A substantial amount of time, but less than that devoted to classroom visits, will be dedicated to planning for and providing professional development for classroom teachers.
- Provide ongoing professional development based upon PBS pyramid for district staff
- Conduct classroom observations using the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool (TPOT) at least once per classroom per year

Please note: New PIRS will be required to go through the Pyramid Model e-module training and PIRS Seminar to turnkey the Pyramid Model training to district staff in 2022-2023.

4. Please provide the name, Title (specialty, if any), and email address for each PIRS, also indicating if they have received Pyramid Training, TPOT training and if TPOT reliable. **Note:** If necessary, indicate any positions for 2022-2023 that are unfilled at the time by entering "To be hired" in the name column.

Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialist(s) (PIRS)

Name	Number of Assigned Classrooms	Indicate date of completion of Preschool Intervention and Referral Specialist (PIRS) Seminar, if applicable.	Indicate if the PIRS is serving in multiple roles in the program (i.e., Master Teacher, CPIS).	Please note the percentage of time that the individual will serve in the PIRS role for the district.	Please indicate if the individual is a district employee, shared service with another district or outside contracted consultant.
Alyssa DeBari	28	NA	CPIS	25%	District Employee
Anna Kasper	28	NA	CPIS	10%	District Employee

The primary role and goal of the PIRS and PIRT are to provide support and suggested interventions to teachers so that all children can succeed within the general education classroom.

5. Please describe how the role of the PIRS will be filled, including how they will provide expertise to support social emotional learning and development.

Toms River Regional Schools already employs a preschool guidance counselor, Alyssa DeBari. Her role includes PIRT and social emotional lessons for all preschool classrooms and counseling sessions as needed. Ms. DeBari is also a certified trainer for the Nurtured Heart Approach, which is implemented in all preschool classrooms.

6. If the district plans to contract with Head Start, what efforts will be in place to coordinate with the Head Start coach?

The district plans to incorporate Head Start in the fourth year of implementation. Additional services may need to be implemented to meet the needs of students in different locations. Meeting with stakeholders will be held to determine the needs of children at Head Start.

The district board of education shall conduct a **developmentally-based** early childhood screening assessment for **each child** as recommended by the developer:

- Identify children with broad indicators of potential problems which may require further assessment; and
- Determine if a child needs a comprehensive diagnostic assessment.

7. What developmental screening tool will your district administer (i.e., Early Screening Inventory-R, Early Screening Inventory-3, Ages and Stages Questionnaire-ASQ)?

The development screening tool utilized by the district is Early Inventory-R.

8. Who will administer the screening tool?

The guidance counselor and Master Teacher will assist with the screening tool.

9. When will the screening be conducted?

The screening tool will be conducted within the first few weeks of a child in the district.

5.7 Curriculum Implementation, Child Assessment, and Supporting ELL (15 points)

In the space below, please identify your district's preschool curriculum. If your district is not yet implementing an evidence-based, comprehensive curriculum that meets all of the Preschool Teaching and Learning Standards, please refer to the NJDOE's Early Childhood Curriculum and Assessment webpage. Aligned curricula starting in the 2022-2023 school year will include Connect for Learning, High Scope, Tools of the Mind, and Creative Curriculum.

Districts are encouraged to use the performance-based child assessment instrument that is tied to the comprehensive preschool curriculum, such as High/Scope's Child Observation Record and the Creative Curriculum's Teaching Strategies GOLD. Except for developmental screenings and diagnostic testing or random assessment as part of a Department-approved research design, no standardized testing should be administered on preschool children.

1. What curriculum are you planning to implement in your preschool program? (Select one by adding an X or ✓)

Creative Curriculum	x
Connect 4 Learning	
High Scope	
Tools of the Mind	

2. If already in implementation, please note the curriculum choice (including edition), the number of hours of professional development in curriculum completed, and years of implementation?

The district utilizes Creative Curriculum 6th edition, for which professional development includes 30 hours completed. Creative Curriculum has been utilized at TRRS for four years.

3. Describe the proposed plan to use performance-based child assessment, such as Teaching Strategies GOLD or High Scope, COR Advantage, or Work Sampling.

Teaching Strategies GOLD is the performance-based child assessment utilized within the district.

4. How will classroom teachers use the performance-based child assessment data to plan for instruction?

This is conducted three times a year with ongoing evidence to support learning goals aligned to standards.

5. How will the individual child assessment data be shared with families?

Information is shared three times a year both hardcopy and electronically. This is reviewed with parents in the fall during parent teacher conferences.

Supporting English Language Learners (ELL)

Refer to the section on Supporting English Language Learners in the Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines.

Note: The optimal classroom model for enhancing the learning and development of English Language Learners is through the support of both the child's home language and English.

The purpose of the Home Language Survey is to identify needed supports. Language proficiency screening tools are not appropriate for making placement decisions about three- and four-year-olds.

6. Will all preschool families be given the [Home Language Survey](#) at registration?

(add an X or ✓ to indicate your choice.)

Yes	x
No	

If no, please explain.

7. If applicable to your demographics, what percentage of bilingual preschool teaching staff will be employed in 2022-2023?

Currently the district does not employ any bilingual teaching staff in the preschool with the expectation of a speech pathologist. Additional employees include bilingual paraprofessionals and secretaries. Additional ELL support will be built into the grant in Year 3.

8. List the three primary strategies the district will use to ensure that English Language Learners receive needed support in preschool classrooms.

The district employs bilingual paraprofessionals to assist with ELL students along with translated materials and activities. Additional strategies include exploring new hires to support

students. Professional development is also available for all staff members to learn strategies in the classroom.

9. How will families of English Language Learner (ELL) preschool children be supported?

All communication, family activities, and presentations will be provided in English and Spanish. Additional faculty will be available to assist with communication on a daily basis. The district utilizes Language Line for translation and employs an ESL Coach/Coordinator who works with teachers, child study team members, and families. Opportunities for professional development in Sheltered English instruction are available in the district for all teachers. The coordinator also provides Family Nights/activities to all ELL families. Most documents are available in both English and Spanish and videos have been developed to explain district programs and procedures.

5.8 Inclusion of Children with Individualized Education Programs (15 points)

The district board of education shall ensure the inclusion of preschool children with disabilities in general education settings to the maximum extent possible **as set forth in NJAC**

6A:14-4.2(a)1. Districts should be working towards a rate of a minimum of 50% of preschoolers with disabilities in the general education setting.

Ensure that preschoolers with disabilities are included in general education classrooms with ratios guided by naturally occurring proportions. Naturally occurring proportions are defined as including the same percentage of children with disabilities in general education classrooms as the percentage of their presence in the general population of the preschool program (Policy Statement on Inclusion, 2015). **It is recommended that students with disabilities be dispersed 2-3 children per class throughout all general education classrooms.**

1. Outline the district's plan to ensure the inclusion of preschool children with disabilities in general education settings to the maximum extent possible. The program should be designed to provide appropriate support for preschool children with disabilities during the regular routine, such as adaptive activities and materials, adjusted schedules, and integrated therapies.

As of August 3, 2022, there are 256 preschool disabled students receiving special education services for the 2022-2023 school year. Early Intervention projects an additional 148 students eligible to transition to the preschool programs by June 2023. Out of the 256 preschool disabled students, 165 are already placed in half-day general education settings. The remaining 91 are in ABA-based or medically-fragile full-day programs for children with autism and multiple disabilities. Currently, all self-contained children have access to their general education peers during planned activities throughout the day.

When awarded the grant, students will continue to be educated in the general education setting in a smaller class size than currently offered. Our current ratio is 8 special education students to 10 general education students. With the grant in place our ratio will continue to improve as the support in the program will lead to fewer classifications of our general education students. Additional supports to help children with special needs be successful in the general education setting include a BCBA, related service providers, and child study team members who provide interventions and strategies for success in the classroom. Additional materials, manipulatives, visuals, supports, and professional development opportunities will be made available to all staff.

2. Outline the district's plan for special education staff, master teachers, and PIRS/PIRT and/or I&RS (Intervention and Referral Services) to consult with and support teachers to address goals. (It is not necessary to have special education teachers in each classroom.)

Team meetings are held on a regular basis including special education staff, master teacher, administration and the PIRT team to help drive and develop additional support needed within

the program. Members of the PIRT team will consult during regular PLC meetings in addition to consultation directly in the classroom.

3. Describe the district's plan for providing integrated therapies to children. Pull-out services are not recommended and should be used on a minimal basis, if at all.

Currently, Toms River Regional Schools provides push-in services including speech and occupational therapy. At times, physical therapy is pulled out into a centrally-located space with specialized equipment. Moving forward, the same implementation process would occur by integrating therapies into the general education setting.

4. Describe how classroom teachers will participate in all meetings throughout the IEP process and provide input through the utilization of the Review of the Preschool Day.

Currently, the district employs permanent substitutes on a daily basis. With this support in place, staff can attend regularly-scheduled meetings before or after school, or during the regular school day if necessary. Teachers will participate and be active members of the IEP process, contributing to present levels, goals, and behavior intervention strategies. In addition, changes to the IEP can be made with additional support based on how the child progresses within the child's educational day.

5. In the Two-Year Projection table below, complete a two-year projection on the inclusion of preschoolers with disabilities.

Two-Year Projection: Inclusion of Preschoolers with Disabilities

School Year	Projected # of students on IEPs	Projected # of students on IEPs included in general education settings	Projected inclusion rate	Actual # of students on IEPs	Actual # of students on IEPs included in general education settings.	Actual Inclusion rate
2022-2023	300	10 in full day 165 in half day	3% full day 55% in half day	256	10 in full day 165 in half day	3%
2023-2024	300	200 half day students in general education	67%	256	165	64%

5.9 Program Evaluation and Professional Development (10 points)

Program Evaluation

1. Describe measurable methods of program evaluation and the effects on children. Include information about the district's planned program evaluation methods. Include evidence of the use of structured observation tools (i.e., Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale – Third edition, curriculum fidelity checklists, Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool, etc.). [See the Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines as a reference.]

All children will be screened utilizing the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale. This will be conducted by the Master Teacher and Guidance Counselor. The results from this rating scale will be utilized to drive additional professional development. Additional resources include the Teaching Pyramid Observation Tool. The Master Teacher and administration will also conduct formal observations and fidelity checklists to ensure the curriculum and instruction is being taught effectively within the classroom.

2. Outline how data will be used to inform program planning and improvement. The program evaluation plan will result in valid Information that will be useful in program development and planning for individual children.

Data drives instruction and needs within the program. Through data walk and detailed information collected through observation and surveys, additional program development and planning for children in the program will take place.

3. Outline the district's plan to participate in Grow NJ Kids. In-district programs and all contracted provider sites will be expected to enroll in Grow NJ Kids complete the program self-assessment, develop and utilize a quality improvement plan and then proceed through the rating process after one year of program implementation. Information on how to enroll can be found at njccis.com/njccis/help

The district is currently enrolled in Grow NJ Kids.

Professional Development

4. Will the district use your Title 1 needs assessment to identify preschoolers' professional development (PD) topics?

(add an X or ✓ to indicate your choice.)

Yes	
No	x

5. Describe in detail the PD plan for the current school year. Include evidence that the professional development (PD) plan is systematic and comprehensive; the plan must address all preschool-funded staff, including support for ELL, inclusion, integrated therapies, appropriate assessment, as well as positions such as security guards, bus drivers, etc. [See the Preschool Program Implementation Guidelines as a reference.]

Professional development for preschool includes Creative Curriculum, GOLD, Foundations, CKLA, Aris, Behavioral Strategies and Nurtured Heart Approach. Available workshops are provided for ELL with additional support from the district ELL coach and facilitator. All areas of professional development targeted throughout the school year are in line with curriculum, social-emotional learning, and the needs of preschool students.

6. What data sources will the district use to inform the PD plan (e.g., child assessment data, teacher and/or family survey data, ECERS-3, etc.)?

Data sources include ECERS-3, family surveys disseminated throughout the district, and recommendations by key stakeholders on the preschool committee.

7. What training will be provided to all staff to be aware of the various language, culture, and ethnic backgrounds of the families served?

Training includes professional development opportunities provided through our ELL facilitator and coach. Information will include background, culture, and instructional strategies for preschool students.

8. Indicate PD topics differentiated for different preschool staff (e.g., Pyramid, TPOT, ECERS-3, Early Screening Inventory —revised or 3rd edition (ESI-R or ESI-3), health and safety-related to COVID19, virtual learning enhancement, child development, etc.)

Specifically address PD offered to:

- Nurses: Nurtured Heart Approach

- Coaches: Nurtured Heart Approach
- CPIS and social workers: Nurtured Heart Approach, screening tool
- Administrators, including school district, child care, and Head Start directors (if applicable)
- Families: Nurtured Heart Approach, Behavioral Strategies for all children, introduction of curriculum and in the importance of learning, transition planning for kindergarten
- Bus drivers/cafeteria workers, etc. (related to specialty and including an overview of the preschool program and developmentally appropriate practices): Nurtured Heart Approach, Autism and communication strategies

Anna Kasper, ELC Administrator, and Alyssa DeBari, preschool guidance counselor, attended a week-long certification process where the creator of the program, Howard Glasser, instructed a group of individuals. The Nurtured Heart Approach was initially implemented in spring 2022 and will continue to be implemented within all preschool programs for the 22-23 school year. The Nurtured Heart Approach is a philosophy for creating healthy relationships with the people in your life. Through the professional development process, staff, families, and support staff will be introduced to the Nurtured Heart Approach which consists of a set of strategies that assists children in further developing their self-regulation and has been found effective with children of all ages. It focuses on transforming the way children perceive themselves, their caregivers and the world around them. Children learn to understand that they will receive endless amounts of praise, energy, recognition and reward through the positive behavior they display and this supports children to build a positive portfolio of themselves.

Behavioral Strategies and Interventions will be another professional development workshop offered to families, staff, administration, and support professionals. When children transition into a school environment, at times they need additional support to be successful. Behavior Strategies and Interventions Workshop would be conducted by our preschool BCBA. An overview of expectations, strategies, visuals, and tools will be provided to everyone. If needed, additional training opportunities can be made available based on individual student needs.

When students transition from home to preschool or even preschool to kindergarten, the process can involve a lot of individuals, and every child's needs are different. Through this workshop, families will have the opportunity to learn about the transition process, ask questions, work directly with staff and administration, and have an introduction for children transitioning to a new school placement.

These differentiated topics are available to and often impact a wide range of district staff, not just preschool teachers and paraprofessionals. Nurses, coaches, administrators (who support these topics and drive their implementation on designated PD days), bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and facilities personnel—anyone who interacts with children and families, which is

essentially everyone—are invited and encouraged (and often required) to participate in these learning sessions.

9. How will the district provide professional development on using structured observation tools (e.g., ECERS-3, TPOT, curriculum fidelity tools) for coaches to facilitate preschool inclusion? *Summer and guided professional development will be built in during the school year to ensure planned opportunities for all stakeholders. Each year, Toms River Regional Schools provides two full days of professional development at the beginning of each school year, in addition to professional days scheduled into the district calendar. Professional development is based on a needs assessment in preschool programs, ensuring the needs of students and staff are being met through ongoing workshops. In order to provide meaningful and guided professional development, the preschool staff utilizing the ECERS-3, Creative Curriculum, GOLD, Foundations, and CKLA, will participate in professional development held by the district. The first courses are scheduled for September 1, 2022 and September 2, 2022.*

5.10 Monitoring and Budget Narrative (10 points)

1. In the Fiscal Oversight table below, indicate the Business Administrator and/or Fiscal Specialist(s) who will monitor and track all preschool expenditures, including district, provider budgets, contract compliance, and state fiscal reviews. **Not applicable is not an appropriate response.**

Fiscal Oversight

Title	Name	Email Contact
Business Administrator	William Doering	wdoering@trschoools.com
Director of Special Services	Joy Forrest	jforrest@trschoools.com

2. Provide a list of supports (budget development, expenditure guidance, etc.) that will be offered to private providers and Head Start to ensure contract compliance. (Districts that do not contract should skip this question)

This will not be completed until Year 4, at which stage we will actively partner with Head Start and/or a private preschool.

3. Describe one-time costs such as renovation, playground enhancements, and start-up costs for classrooms.

Initial renovation costs would take place in Year 2 when the district restructures. Costs would include supplies, equipment, and labor for bathroom and playground upgrades and improvements; additional furniture for the new classrooms; and outside-of-contracted-time salaries toward curriculum writing and resources for the new classrooms.

4. Include a narrative of funded district positions and planned expenditures.

Year	District Funded Position	Planned Expenditures
2022-2023	27 preschool teachers 45 para professionals for self-contained preschool Professional development	2 preschool teachers 2 paraprofessionals Master Teacher Furniture for one classroom Curriculum (1 kit)
2023-2024	15 self contained teachers 40 paraprofessionals for self-contained programs Administration BCBA Guidance Counselor	30 preschool teachers 30 paraprofessionals 2 Master Teachers Furniture for 15 classrooms 15 curriculum kits Maintenance costs: playground and toileting Professional development
2024-2025	10 self contained teachers 30 paraprofessionals for self contained programs ELL supports Professional Development	35 preschool teachers 25 paraprofessionals 2 Master Teachers 10 curriculum kits Administrative cost Preschool BCBA Guidance Counselor Professional Development
2025-2026	10 self contained teachers 30 paraprofessionals for self contained programs Additional related services Additional Child Study Team Professional Development	38 preschool teachers 38 paraprofessionals 2 Master Teachers 2 additional curriculum kits Administrative Cost Preschool BCBA Guidance Counselor ELL supports Construction/renovations to community schools associated with grant Professional Development
2026-2027	10 self contained teachers 30 paraprofessionals for self contained programs Additional related services	40 preschool teachers 40 paraprofessionals 2 Master Teachers Administrative Costs 2 additional curriculum kits

	Additional BCBA Professional Development Adaptive equipment, materials, and resources	Preschool BCBA 2 guidance counselors ELL supports Construction/renovations to community schools with grant Professional Development
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The special education budget has already been completed and approved for the 2022-2023 school year. Due to the high number of special education students within the district, and the size of our district, we are proposing the following rollout for the five-year plan.

By October 3, 2022, we will add two general education full-day programs under the grant. We will continue with our 24 general education half-day programs along with 15 self-contained full-day, ABA-based and medically-fragile preschool disabled programs for our neediest population. Within a calendar year in September 2023, all half-day programs will transition to full, allowing for more than 300 students to be educated in a full-day preschool program.

In Year 1 of implementation, the district will fund all special education and half-day general education programs, paraprofessionals, professional development, administrative costs, and all resources needed to successfully implement the preschool programs.

In Year 2, which begins September 2023, all half-day programs will move to full day. The district will educate all special education students and 300 general education students. District costs include special education teachers, special education paraprofessionals, administrative costs, BCBA, and school guidance counselor. The grant funds can support 30 preschool teachers, 30 paraprofessionals, two master teachers, furniture for additional classrooms, curriculum for additional classrooms, playground and toileting renovations, and ongoing professional development for staff.

Year 3 of implementation involves adding an additional five classes, converting five of our ABA-based programs into placements for our special education and general education students. District funding includes special education teachers, paraprofessionals, and associated materials and related services needed to support the special education population. The grant will help cover 40 preschool teachers, paraprofessionals, curriculum, resources, support staff including guidance, Master Teachers, BCBA, and ELL staff.

Years 4 and 5 include collaboration with community stakeholders and surrounding daycare such as Head Start. The district will continue to provide support to our special education students in various settings which will increase the cost to the special education budget. The grant will assist and support offset the cost including teachers, paraprofessionals, curriculum, resources, administration, support staff, guidance, Master Teachers, BCBA, ELL staff, and renovations costs and professional development as needed.

5. Describe intentions to contract with Private Providers or Head Start, including associated costs. Please Note: Letters of intent to contract with private providers and Head Start must be included with your application.

With the high population of special education students in Toms River Regional Schools, the initial implementation plan involves moving our special education students to full day beginning October 2023, which would be within the calendar year of the first year of the grant program. In year 4 of the implementation, the district plans to work with Head Start or other community childcare providers when expanding to reach the preschool universe.

6. Include costs for professional development, curricular materials, and family engagement expenses.

Year	Resources/Cost
2022-2023	Professional Development: 5,000 Curriculum: \$4000 (one kit) Family Engagement: 10,000
2023-2024	Professional Development: 15,000 Curriculum: 60,000 (15 kits) GOLD: 5,000 Family Engagement: 10,000
2024-2025	Professional Development: 15,000 Curriculum: 40,000 (10 kits) GOLD: 8,000 Family Engagement: 10,000
2025-2026	Professional Development: 15,000 Curriculum: 12,000 GOLD: 10,000 Family Engagement: 10,000
2026-2027	Professional Development: 15,000 Curriculum: 8,00 (2 kits) Family Engagement: 10,000