



NEWS RELEASE

Preschool Services

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County earns \$5 million in preschool grant funds



The San Bernardino County Preschool Services Department has been awarded a \$5 million U.S. Department of Education grant to provide more classroom time and classroom space to county preschool students.

The county applied for the grant and worked closely with the Department of Education to ensure its approval. The focus of the grant is to provide full days of instruction to students who are currently receiving only partial days of instruction.

"Seeking out these grant funds was a high priority for the county," said Board of Supervisors Chairman James Ramos. "Ensuring that all children have access to a full array of quality preschool programs will help ensure their success later in life."

The San Bernardino County Preschool Services Department administers the Federal Head Start and Early Head Start programs, California Department of Education State Preschool program, as well as the Child and Adult Care Food Program, serving about 6,000 low-income and otherwise disadvantaged families at 42 preschools and nine family learning centers throughout the county. All programs are fully funded from federal and state sources.

"Head Start's focus on quality education has been reinforced through their decision to transition part-day school programs to full-day," said Preschool Services Director Diana Alexander. "The awarding of this grant marks the beginning steps along our agencies' path to providing the children of our community with increased access to the quality education we have been proud to provide all along."

Preschool Services' priority population includes:

- Children in foster care
- Children under child protective services
- Children with disabilities and/or special needs
- Children and families experiencing homelessness

The county's programs are family-oriented, comprehensive and community-based. They address developmental goals for enrolled children, provide support for parents in fulfilling their parental roles and becoming self-sufficient, and link those in need to other services and resources. Preschool Services offers a full array of child development and family support services which include:

- Health (medical and dental screenings and follow-up)

- Access to prenatal and postpartum care
- Nutrition education
- Mental health services and support groups
- Disability services
- Education and job training
- Literacy programs for children and adults
- Food and nutrition services
- Fatherhood engagement

Research shows that during their school years and beyond, children who attend quality preschool:

- Are less likely to be placed in special education or held back a grade
- Exhibit more positive classroom behaviors and perform better on standardized math and reading tests
- Are more likely to graduate from high school and continue their education
- Earn more money are less likely to go on welfare
- Are less likely to become involved in crime.

County Preschool Services is a model of excellence in child development and family empowerment and a key component in the community's effort to achieve the Countywide Vision, www.sbcounty.gov/vision. The department routinely achieves national recognition and exceeds federal and state standards. In addition, the county provides a foundation for success for children by giving them the highest quality child development and family support services throughout the County of San Bernardino.