



Dr. Juliette Pennyman, Superintendent of Schools

# NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Hudson City School District to Expand Pre-Kindergarten After Earning \$200,000 New York State Education Department Grant**

*District's Strong Record in Securing Grants – \$2.8 Million This School Year – Eases Burden on Taxpayers and Aids Curriculum and Programming*

**May 17, 2024, HUDSON, NY** - The Hudson City School District is proud to announce that it has been named one of 64 school districts in New York State to receive grant funding from the New York State Education Department to expand Universal Pre-Kindergarten programs. Hudson was awarded \$200,000 following an extensive application process.

The District offers a full-day Universal Pre-Kindergarten program. The expansion grant enables the District to open a third classroom for 4-year-old students, provide staffing and the required materials and supplies, and expand relationships with community-based organizations.

The District applied for the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Expansion Grant for the first time under the guidance of Superintendent Dr. Juliette Pennyman to fortify efforts to build upon its over 15-year legacy of introducing 4-year-old Bluehawks to education.

“This grant is a definitive win for Hudson families and educational achievement because it supports a vital goal: launching children’s educational journeys,” Dr. Pennyman said. “Embracing the District’s mantra of #HudsonTogetherWeCan! includes enhancing collaborative partnerships with local community-based organizations, hiring staff members to facilitate and follow through with learning objectives and partnering with families to cultivate exceptional educational experiences and positive futures for our youth.”

The District invites residents to apply for open Universal Pre-Kindergarten slots for the 2024-25 school year for students who will be age 4 by Dec. 1, 2024. For more information, please visit <https://www.hudsoncsd.org/departments-programs/registration/pre-kindergarten-registration/>. Additionally, applicants can email District Registrar Arelis Soto at [registration@hudsoncsd.org](mailto:registration@hudsoncsd.org) or call 518-828-4360 ext. 2100 for more information.

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In addition to the individual Hudson schools obtaining grant awards from efforts spearheaded by our talented and dedicated staff members, the procurement of the Universal Pre-Kindergarten Expansion Grant adds to a lengthy list of grants, totaling more than \$2.8 million, successfully obtained by the school district from New York State this school year:

- **NYSED “Stronger Connections” Grant:** An initiative from the state’s Bipartisan Safer Communities Act to support the expansion of safe, healthy and supportive learning opportunities and environments. After securing the “Stronger Connections” grant, which extends from November 2023 to September 2026, the District intends to utilize the funding in a variety of ways, including professional development in multiple facets, the creation of sensory rooms in each building and the addition of staff members to the District.
- **NYSED My Brother’s Keeper Fellows and My Brother’s Keeper Family and Community Engagement Program (FCEP) Grants:** Hudson students in grades 11 and 12 participate in a statewide My Brother’s Keeper book study weekly on Thursdays to provide perspectives and feelings from their observations. Hudson students Besham Burgess and Dejuan Bailey were chosen to participate at the My Brother’s Keeper “Stand and Deliver” event in Albany and share how their experiences have shaped them while embracing teachings of the My Brother’s Keeper program. Bailey was also one of four fellows in New York State to speak on camera for a celebration of the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Students collaborate with mentors at the state level, mentors at school and their co-fellows. My Brother’s Keeper FCEP students are in grades 8-12 and embark on a journey in learning to receive experience in public speaking, seeing sites of historical importance and capitalizing on opportunities to shape future decision-making.
- **New York Farm to School Institute Grant:** Through the American Farmland Trust’s project, Farm to Institution New York State, the District will be applying grant funding to year-long professional development opportunities for food service staff, educators, administrators, and community partners to develop and refine their Farm to School programs, and to help bring more New York grown food into Hudson cafeterias and classrooms.
- **Verizon Innovative Learning Program Grant:** Hudson Senior High School and Hudson Junior High School students and faculty will receive free Chromebooks, and the District will benefit from enhanced internet access, funding to hire instructional technology coaches, and innovative science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) learning programs that advance students’ education and opportunities. The partnership covers the next two school years, starting in September 2024 and concluding June 30, 2026.
- **NYSED Teachers of Tomorrow Grant:** A recruitment-incentive program for 20 teachers serving in areas of shortage in all three buildings. The annual funding extends through 2026.
- **NYSED 21st Century Afterschool Program Grant:** Hudson Bluehawk Nation Afterschool Program Director Joanne Allie’s support and oversight of this 20+ year program has been a staple to the Hudson community that exposes students to project-based learning and STEM activities.

- Students receive a learning-level of support and go on field trips to introduce new opportunities. Future trips include the Brooklyn Museum and the New York Science Center.
- **StopIt Solutions Grant through Questar III BOCES (Questar III BJA STOP School Violence Grant):** The District's No. 1 priority has been and always will be the health and safety of students, staff and school community. The district opted into Questar III BOCES' grant offering through STOPit Solutions to prevent potential serious and immediate threats of safety to students and/or staff. With the collected data, the district will then respond accordingly and keep the district community informed of situations while maintaining a safe environment.
  - **NYSED Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA 611 and 619) Grants:** The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) ensures opportunities to succeed and learn for Special Education students. Funding also assists faculty and staff with meeting needs of Special Education students.
  - **NYSED Title Grants (I, II, III, IV, V):** Grant awards covering New York State Titles I-V are applied toward the training, recruitment and professional development of teachers and principals, funding for low-income and rural school districts, improvement of academic achievement and support strategies for students and increasing proficiency in learning English.

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**For further information, please contact:**

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