For Immediate Release
Date: September 5, 2024

Contact: Laura Fredrick
(640) 202-0308

New Jersey Department of Education Receives $50 Million Grant from U.S. Department of Education to Support Literacy

Trenton, NJ – The New Jersey Department of Education (NJDOE) has been awarded $50 million over a five-year period in a new Comprehensive Literacy State Development (CLSD) grant from the U.S. Department of Education. This grant will support New Jersey school communities in advancing literacy skills — including pre-literacy skills, reading, and writing — for children throughout their academic careers, with an emphasis on closing achievement and opportunity gaps.

As one of 23 state educational agencies receiving funding, New Jersey has been awarded the largest Year 1 grant in the largest-ever round of CLSD grant awards. This grant will significantly expand the development and implementation of evidence-based literacy programs to ensure students achieve key milestones, such as reading on grade level by third grade — a critical predictor of future academic success.

The grant will also promote equitable access to high-quality literacy instruction to close opportunity and achievement gaps for historically underserved student groups, establish an NJDOE advisory council devoted to developing and implementing a comprehensive state literacy plan, implement a statewide coaching network, and provide subgrants to high-need local education agencies for professional learning aligned with evidence-based reading instruction.

"New Jersey has always been a leader in education, and this grant from the U.S. Department of Education is a powerful affirmation of our commitment to excellence," **said Governor Phil Murphy**. "The grant will supercharge our critical investment into the future of our students and our state. By enhancing literacy programs and providing equitable access to high-quality education, we are not only helping our children reach key academic milestones but also setting them up for lifelong success."

"We are thrilled to receive this significant funding to enhance literacy initiatives across New Jersey," **said Acting Commissioner of Education Kevin Dehmer.** "On the heels of Governor Murphy's enactment of new literacy initiatives last month, this grant builds on the Administration's deep commitment to literacy education with comprehensive, PK-12 supports ranging from implementing evidence-based literacy programs to high-quality professional development. This grant represents a tremendous opportunity for us to deepen our commitment to literacy as a cornerstone to all student learning, while ensuring every student has access to the resources they need to become strong, confident readers."

"This investment by the U.S. Department of Education in foundational literacy initiatives will help to ensure every child in New Jersey has an effective, quality education from day one that pushes them to achieve their academic and economic potential," **said Senate Majority Leader M. Teresa Ruiz.** "This funding will bolster the efforts of my bills that established the Working Group on Student Literacy to develop evidence-based literacy strategies and screenings and will empower the Office of Learning Equity and Academic Recovery to ensure that every New Jersey school is equipped with the necessary resources for student growth and achievement. The best investment we can make is in our children, and I thank the Biden-Harris Administration for their commitment to enhancing student success."

The CLSD grant is part of the Biden-Harris Administration's efforts to support academic acceleration and improve educational outcomes nationwide. The new funding will enable New Jersey to continue developing innovative and effective literacy programs, partnering with institutions of higher education and other educational partners to provide comprehensive support for students and educators alike.

The U.S. Department of Education's press release on the grant can be viewed here.

Facebook   X   Instagram   LinkedIn   YouTube