

# EDUCATION

## Scope of the Problem and Indicators of Need

Educational attainment is paramount to a child's future success. Unfortunately, many low-income neighborhoods struggle to fund the kind of learning environment that encourages educational pursuits. Due largely to education finance litigation initiated in the 1970's, New Jersey is recognized as a national leader in bridging the funding gap between high- and low-poverty school districts. Indeed, a recent report found New Jersey ranked third among states providing additional targeted funding to high-poverty school districts. There is still cause for concern, however, as New Jersey ranked 40th on the share of education dollars coming directly from state sources.<sup>1</sup> To provide a more thorough assessment of whether New Jersey's budget meets the educational needs of its poorest citizens, the following information looks at the degree of need. It begins with an overview of school enrollment and an assessment of educational disparity. It then discusses a number of programs that particularly benefit disadvantaged youngsters as well as an analysis of dropouts in the state. Lastly, it discusses the importance of further education to prospects for the future.

In 2005, a total of 2.2 million students were enrolled in New Jersey's schools. The majority of these students, over 1.46 million, were in either elementary or high school, while nearly 14 percent, a total of 302,654 students, were enrolled in preschool or kindergarten. The remaining 23 percent were enrolled in college, graduate or professional school.<sup>2</sup> Studies report that low-income children consistently fall behind their peers in test scores, graduation rates, college enrollment and other measures of academic success.<sup>3</sup> A report from the Institute for Research on Poverty (IRP) found that a \$1,000 increase in income raised math test scores by 2.1% and reading test scores by 3.6%.<sup>4</sup> This disparity is evident in New Jersey, where children in the poor districts consistently score lower on achievement tests.<sup>5</sup> Many children in New Jersey live in poverty. Indeed, one-quarter of New Jersey's children were living in families with an annual income less than 200% of the FPL in 2004—below \$38,700 for a family of four.<sup>6,7</sup>

A number of programs and services exist nationwide that are intended to target the particular education needs of low-income children. Early education programs have proven to have increased benefit. Children who participate in effective early learning

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<sup>1</sup> Carey, Kevin, *The Funding Gap 2004: Many States Still Shortchange Low Income and Minority Students*, <http://www2.edtrust.org/NR/rdonlyres/30B3C1B3-3DA6-4809-AFB9-2DAACF11CF88/0/funding2004.pdf>. Report analyzed 2002 Census and educational data.

<sup>2</sup> 2005 American Community Survey, New Jersey, Table B14001. School Enrollment by Level of School for the Population 3 Years and Over

<sup>3</sup> [www.cbpp.org/11-7-02sfp3.htm](http://www.cbpp.org/11-7-02sfp3.htm): Education Funding and Low Income Children: A Review of Current Research by Kevin Carey.

<sup>4</sup> Institute for Research on Poverty, Discussion Paper no. 1305-05 – “The Impact of Family Income on Child Achievement”, August 2005

<sup>5</sup> Report by Association for Children in New Jersey (ACNJ) -- “New Jersey Kids Count 2006”. Retrieved from the web at <http://www.acnj.org/admin.asp?uri=2081&action=15&di=648&ext=pdf&view=yes>

<sup>6</sup> Report by Association for Children in New Jersey (ACNJ) -- “New Jersey Kids Count 2006”. Retrieved from the web at <http://www.acnj.org/admin.asp?uri=2081&action=15&di=648&ext=pdf&view=yes>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/threshld/thresh04.html>

programs are more likely to finish school, go to college and attain adequate employment. They are less likely to need special education or to be held back in school. These programs not only provide opportunities for low-income children but they also ease the burden on public schools that struggle to fund children needing additional help.<sup>8</sup> New Jersey has a number of early education programs for disadvantaged poor children, including the Abbott Preschool program, which provides preschool education to children in the state's 31 highest poverty districts. The state also sponsors Non-Abbott Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA), which provides preschool to four year-olds in an additional 102 districts where 20-40 percent of the children qualify for free or reduced price lunch. Data from the ACNJ found, however, that only two-thirds of children eligible for preschool in ECPA districts were actually enrolled in the 2002-2003 school year. They also found that only 16 percent of districts used comprehensive, nationally recognized curricula, while the remainder use a curriculum developed, at least in part, by district staff. This could be a potential problem, as 82 percent of staff members lack certification in early childhood.<sup>9</sup>

For children, learning and school readiness can be affected by poverty circumstances such as insufficient food or unstable housing situations. In New Jersey, while a number of low-income children receive a healthy breakfast, the state is still ranked 43rd in the U.S. when comparing the ratio of children in the lunch program who also received a healthy breakfast<sup>10</sup>. A widely cited study of a Head Start program in Michigan found that children who participated in the program had higher educational levels, fewer mental health problems, higher language and literacy skills and other positive outcomes, years after their early education.<sup>11</sup>

Special education services are critical to families at all income levels but can be particularly important to families in poverty who lack additional resources to devote to educational supplements. Nationally, in 2004, among families with children ages 3 to 17, 11.3 percent of families with incomes below the federal poverty level had a child with a learning disability, compared to 7.9 percent with higher incomes.<sup>12</sup> According to the Learning Disabilities Association of America, 65 percent of households with a family member with learning disabilities had an annual income of less than \$25,000, compared to 39 percent for households at all income levels.<sup>13</sup> While learning disabilities are not directly linked to income, according to the National Center for Learning Disabilities, a higher risk for exposure to disability-linked toxic substances exists in low-income communities.<sup>14</sup> In New Jersey, 13 percent of current and former clients of the

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<sup>8</sup> Report by Association for Children in New Jersey (ACNJ) -- "New Jersey Kids Count 2006". Retrieved from the web at <http://www.acnj.org/admin.asp?uri=2081&action=15&di=648&ext=pdf&view=yes>

<sup>9</sup> ACNJ--Building Blocks for New Jersey's Youngest Citizens -- Beyond Abbott: Preschools Post Progress in Other Low-Income Districts but Challenges Remain, Spring 2004.

<sup>10</sup> Report by Association for Children in New Jersey (ACNJ) -- "New Jersey Kids Count 2006". Retrieved from the web at <http://www.acnj.org/admin.asp?uri=2081&action=15&di=648&ext=pdf&view=yes>

<sup>11</sup> *Long-Term Study of Adults Who Received High Quality Early Childhood Care and Education Shows Economic and Social Gains, Less Crime*, Press Release, High/Scope Educational Research Foundation, <http://www.highscope.org/NewsandInformation/PressReleases/Perry/P-Age40.htm>.

<sup>12</sup> *Table 1: Percentage of Children Ages 3 to 17 Reported to Have Ever Been Diagnosed by a School or Health Professional as Having a Learning Disability, 1997-2004*, Child Trends Data Bank, [http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/tables/65\\_Table\\_1.htm](http://www.childtrendsdatbank.org/tables/65_Table_1.htm).

<sup>13</sup> *Learning Disabilities and Low Income Populations*, Learning Disabilities Association of America, 2005, [http://www.ldanatl.org/aboutld/adults/special\\_pop/low\\_income.asp](http://www.ldanatl.org/aboutld/adults/special_pop/low_income.asp).

<sup>14</sup> *LD at a Glance*, National Center for Learning Disabilities, [http://www.nclld.org/LDInfoZone/InfoZone\\_FactSheet\\_LD.cfm](http://www.nclld.org/LDInfoZone/InfoZone_FactSheet_LD.cfm).

Temporary Assistance to Needy Families welfare program had a child with a learning disability and the same share had speech problems in 2001. Nearly one-quarter (24%) of current and former clients of the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families welfare program had a child enrolled in special education. It is important, however, to assess the education needs of children on an individual basis, as 9 percent of the children of former welfare clients had a child enrolled in a gifted program.<sup>15</sup> In the end, a stable and quality education provides children with the tools they need to provide for themselves and their families as adults. As a result, these early investments can produce substantial long-term benefits, particularly for low-income students.<sup>16</sup>

For older children with a loose attachment to school, there is a risk they will choose to drop out. Nationally, Black and Hispanic/Latino high school students are more likely to drop out of school than non-Hispanic White students. Males are also more likely to drop out of high school than females. In 2004, 12 percent of males ages 16 to 24 were high school dropouts, compared with 9 percent of females.<sup>17</sup> In New Jersey, counties like Passaic, Essex, Hudson and Camden had the highest percentage of dropouts.<sup>18</sup> These counties also have the highest concentration of low-income populations in New Jersey.

The nexus between educational attainment and poverty highlights the importance of educational attainment to future earnings. Among adults (over 25) in New Jersey, 13.7 percent did not obtain a high school diploma in 2005.<sup>19</sup> Thirty-five percent of those who did not have high school diplomas had incomes below the federal poverty level, compared to 3.5 percent of those with a graduate or professional degree and 8.5 percent with a Bachelors degree.<sup>20</sup> College participation levels also differ between high- and low-income students. College enrollment of high- income students has increased from 48 to 53 percent in the last decade, while the enrollment of low-income students declined from 27 to 17 percent during the same period.<sup>21</sup> There are also racial disparities in college attendance. Among the population of 18-24 year-olds who attend college in New Jersey, 47 percent are white and 27 percent are people of color. Furthermore, within the same age group, only one-fifth of people from poor families attend college, compared to over half from high-income families.<sup>22</sup>

New Jersey's budget allocations must be closely scrutinized to ensure they adequately meet the needs of the state's low-income children. Educational disparity is

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<sup>15</sup> Rangarajan, Anu and Amy Johnson, *Current and Former WFNJ Clients: How Are They and Their Children Faring 40 Months Later?* Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. January 17, 2002, pp. 95-96, xxii.

<sup>16</sup> [www.cbpp.org/11-7-02sfp3.htm](http://www.cbpp.org/11-7-02sfp3.htm): Education Funding and Low Income Children: A Review of Current Research by Kevin Carey

<sup>17</sup> *High School Dropout Rates*, Child Trends DataBank, <http://www.childtrendsdatabank.org/indicators/1HighSchoolDropout.cfm>.

<sup>18</sup> NJ Department of Education Statistics – <http://state.nj.us/njded/data/vitaled/0405-s3.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> American Community Survey, 2005: Table B15002. *Sex by Educational Attainment for the Population 25 Years and Over - Universe: Population 25 Years and Over*

<sup>20</sup> American Community Survey, 2005: Table B15004. *Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months by Sex by Educational Attainment for the Population 25 and Over*, Universe: Population 25 Years and Over for Whom Poverty Status is Determined.

<sup>21</sup> [www.highereducation.org/news/news\\_091504.shtml](http://www.highereducation.org/news/news_091504.shtml), -- "Higher Education Progress Stalled despite High School Improvements -- Students, Families Lose Ground on College Affordability", September, 2004. Findings from "Measuring Up 2004", a report issued by National Center for Public Policy and Higher Education. It examines 10 year performance trends in the country as well as the states in providing education and training beyond high school.

<sup>22</sup> "Measuring up 2006" The National Report Card on Higher Education -- The National Center for Public Policy & Higher Education. Available at [http://measuringup.highereducation.org/\\_docs/2006/NationalReport\\_2006.pdf](http://measuringup.highereducation.org/_docs/2006/NationalReport_2006.pdf)

evident when comparing the test scores of New Jersey's low-income and upper-income students. In order to bridge the gap and aid learning, a number of programs – ranging from early childhood education to special education – operate throughout the state. Yet, many students do not graduate and face difficulties fully participating in the labor market as adults.

## Education Programs

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*Note: Some services related to Education are also related to other need areas and are addressed under other sections of this report, specifically Vocational Education and Job Training in the Employment chapter.*

## Detailed Program Information

### **School Aid**<sup>23</sup>

#### ***Program Purpose and Description:***<sup>24</sup>

The New Jersey State FY07 overall Department of Education state funding, identified as School Aid, was just over \$10.4 billion total, an increase of about 11% over the previous fiscal year. This funding includes funding of administrative costs, school construction, funding to local districts, Abbott funding and other related educational services and aid. The distribution of funding is determined in a variety of ways for these different purposes.

The Comprehensive Education Improvement and Financing Act (CEIFA) was established as a formula for determining the minimum funding amount needed to provide students with a thorough and efficient (T&E) education. The Act specifies the amount of money per pupil – the T&E amount – appropriate for delivering the Core Curriculum Content Standards under certain delivery and efficiency assumptions. In recognition of legitimate local cost differences, a flexible amount of 5% is added to and subtracted from the T&E amount to determine the range in spending on regular education that will be supported by the state. T&E amounts represent the cost of educating a student in elementary school (grades 1-5). The cost of educating a kindergarten student is 50% of the T&E amount and includes a half-day kindergarten program. Middle school costs (grades 6-8) are 4% higher and high school (grades 9-12) are 11% higher.<sup>25</sup>

The OLS DOE budget analysis report explains, “The last time the CEIFA formula was used to calculate the amount of aid the State would provide to each district was for the 2001-02 school year. In FY07, as in FY03 through FY06, budget language is used to determine the amount of aid the State will provide for each local school district. Although no new line item was added for increases due to enrollment, funding for Abbott-Bordered Districts and grants-in-aid funding for a new Autism Initiative have been added to the education budget.” Last year’s new line item for “Social Promotion Initiative,” which received \$1.5 million, was not re-funded in FY07.<sup>26</sup> Under the FY 2007 budget, state aid to individual districts with declining enrollment will decrease, such that 180 districts will experience net losses in state aid—the first since the FY 2002 budget. Some districts, however, will experience net increases in state aid under one or more of the following aid categories: Education Opportunity Aid; School Choice; Abbott-ordered District Aid; Above Average Enrollment Growth; and High Expectations for Learning Proficiency aid. FY 2007 also marked the first time that allocations for Above Average Enrollment

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<sup>23</sup> School Aid as defined by the State Budget materials includes all funding for the Department of Education, not just direct aid to schools.

<sup>24</sup> FY07 State Budget Book, p. D-85.

<sup>25</sup> FY07 State Budget Book, p. D-90.

<sup>26</sup> FY07 Budget Book D-108.

Growth aid and High Expectations for Learning Proficiency aid was provided to school districts without prior public vote.<sup>27</sup>

***Budget and Performance Trends:***

Overall evaluation data for the clients served through the Department of Education (DOE) was not made available through the state budget materials or the Office of Legislative Services for FY07.

<b>DOE Summary by Funds Appropriations Data</b>						
	<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
Direct State Services	(\$60,436,000)	(\$78,313,000)	(\$69,313,000)	(\$62,368,000)	(\$62,042,000)	(\$57,542,000)
Grants-in-Aid	(\$25,544,000)	(\$25,940,000)	(\$25,277,000)	(\$18,129,000)	(\$41,813,000)	(\$39,713,000)
State Aid	(\$2,385,849,000)	(\$2,297,507,000)	(\$2,291,403,000)	(\$983,919,000)	(\$1,282,814,000)	(\$10,307,552,000)
Capital Construction	---	(\$946,000)	(\$166,000)	---	(\$2,450,000)	(\$2,450,000)
Total General Fund	(\$2,471,829,000)	(\$2,402,706,000)	(\$2,386,159,000)	(\$1,065,466,000)	(\$1,389,119,000)	(\$1,383,570,000)
Total Property Tax Relief	(\$6,496,386,000)	(\$6,577,515,000)	(\$6,566,335,000)	(\$8,401,023,000)	(\$9,142,006,000)	(\$9,023,687,000)
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>\$8,968,215,000</b>	<b>\$8,980,221,000</b>	<b>\$8,952,494,000</b>	<b>\$9,466,489,000</b>	<b>\$10,531,125,000</b>	<b>\$10,407,257,000</b>
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-86 – D-87) &amp; State FY07 Appropriations Handbook (p.B-59)</b>						

***Additional Analysis:***

Education is by far the largest single source of spending in the State Budget, and in most years comprises approximately one-third of the total State Budget.

The information in the chart above describes the overall appropriation for the Department of Education distributed by fund. The FY07 “state aid” appropriation appears to be \$9 billion more than the FY06 requested amount. This discrepancy is due to the fact that this amount includes both the General Fund and Property Tax Relief Fund (PTRF), whereas the amount requested and recommended for FY07, as well as the figures in

<sup>27</sup> State FY07 Appropriations Handbook, p. B-49. Districts are defined as experiencing continued declines in enrollment if resident and special education enrollment has declined. Funding reductions are based on category level of the district and the percentage difference in enrollment. *Department of Education: Analysis of the New Jersey Budget Fiscal Year 2006-2007*, Office of Legislative Services, New Jersey Legislature, May 2006, pp. 3-4 and in FY2007 Budget Book D-97.

previous years, only includes “state aid” funding from General Fund. The FY07 adjusted appropriations for “state aid” included in next year’s budget will reflect the funding received from only the General Fund.<sup>28</sup>

The FY07 recommended budget reported the first decrease in State aid to individual districts since the recommended budget of FY02. Its budget allocations suggested that 180 districts would experience net losses in State Aid totaling around \$33 million. This includes districts with declining or no enrollment growth over the past four to five years as well as others that received aid in FY06 for which they no longer qualify. The recommended budget also suggested that 140 districts will experience a net increase in state aid totaling around \$18 million. These are districts with aid in the following categories: Education Opportunity Aid; School Choice; Abbott-Bordered District Aid; Above Average Enrollment Growth; and High Expectations for Learning Proficiency.<sup>29</sup> It should be noted that, while the appropriations bill does not clarify whether these recommendations were realized or not, the final budget appropriation did provide funding at the recommended level.

As the current political climate is marked by a heavy emphasis and focus on property tax reform, the future manner and form of public school funding is an unknown. Although the end result is not yet clear, there are strong indications that New Jersey’s public school funding system will face an overhaul in the coming months and years. The Joint Legislative Committee on Public School Funding is charged with the duty of reviewing and making proposals regarding the maintenance and support of public school systems. Among the Committee’s considerations are state funding based on student needs as opposed to geographic location, the elimination of disincentives to regionalization of school districts, control and reduction of administrative spending and costs, and improving the efficacy of current school funding laws.<sup>30</sup> On November 15, 2006, the Committee issued its report on Public School Funding Reform. Included in the findings and recommendations made by the Committee were the following:

- Development of a predictable and transparent public school funding formula;
- State aid based on characteristics of student population and district’s ability to pay with minimum amounts of State aid for all school districts;
- Funding formula with a revenue cap that is annually adjusted by the CPI and enrollment changes;
- Increased efficient and effective general education pre-identification services for students to reduce need for special education classification;
- Continued funding of Extraordinary Special Education Aid;

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<sup>28</sup> Information confirmed through conversations with OLS Education section staff on November 17, 2006.

<sup>29</sup> Office of Legislative Services. Fiscal Year 2006-2007. “Department of Education: Analysis of the New Jersey Budget”.

<sup>30</sup> <http://njleg.state.nj.us/PropertyTaxSession/jcsf.asp>

- State support for high-quality preschool for all children in district factor group (DFG) school districts A and B and for children who qualify for free and reduced meals in all other districts; and
- State support for full-day kindergarten programs in Non-Abbott districts.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> [http://njleg.state.nj.us/PropertyTaxSession/JCSF\\_Report111506.pdf](http://njleg.state.nj.us/PropertyTaxSession/JCSF_Report111506.pdf)

## **Abbott District Funding**

### ***Program Purpose and Description:***

Abbott Districts are the product of approximately 30 years of extensive and controversial dialogue and litigation, which has resulted in thirteen evolving decisions of the New Jersey Supreme Court. These decisions are designed to provide adequate educational opportunity to children in economically disadvantaged school districts. There are currently 616 local school districts in New Jersey, thirty-one of which have been designated as Abbott Districts. The most recent regulations in the Abbott system<sup>32</sup> emphasize the dual goals of ensuring that students read at grade level by the end of third grade and that they master the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) at every grade. DOE, through Abbott implementation, is responsible for working cooperatively with designated districts to increase their capacity to improve instruction and student achievement by “maximizing spending on instruction that works.” Three themes in the complex record of Abbott decisions provide the basis for the designation, classification, and declassification of Abbott Districts: designation as an Abbott district consistently spotlights poorer urban districts, using a two-part test of educational adequacy and concentrated poverty, and the premise that designation is a remedy, not a reward.

The program’s focus is on bringing student achievement up to statewide standards through the application of resources and support that a community, because of economic conditions, is unable to provide. Abbott designation and the state aid involved carry with them the obligation to implement specific court-ordered remedies as required by the Abbott decisions. This designation and on-going development of criteria are the responsibility of the Commissioner of Education, in consultation with the appropriate bodies.

While these criteria are complicated and evolving, they do involve several themes. Focus on poorer urban districts has reflected the Abbott decisions’ concern with those districts in which both poverty and educational inadequacy are so substantial that they cannot possibly satisfy the standard that “poorer disadvantaged students must be given a chance to compete with relatively advantaged students.”<sup>33</sup> Although non-urban districts are not explicitly excluded from designation as Abbott districts, the Abbott criteria are more likely to be found in urban centers.

<b>New Jersey’s 31 Abbott Districts</b>				
Asbury Park	Gloucester	Millville	Pemberton	Union City
Bridgeton	Harrison City	Neptune Township	Perth Amboy	Vineland
Burlington City	Hoboken	New Brunswick	Phillipsburg	West New York
Camden	Irvington	Newark	Plainfield,	
East Orange	Jersey City	Orange	Pleasantville	
Elizabeth	Keansburg	Passaic	Salem City	

<sup>32</sup> N.J.A.C.6A:10A.

<sup>33</sup> Robinson v. Cahill I, p. 515.

Garfield	Long Branch	Paterson	Trenton	

In determining Abbott District designation, DOE ranks every district in the state by seven factors: 1) Percent of population with no high school diploma; 2) Percent with some college; 3) Occupations available; 4) Population density; 5) Income; 6) Unemployment, and 7) Poverty. These rankings divide districts into three groupings, called District Factor Groupings (DFGs), and DOE then uses these rankings, with additional economic indicators, to determine designation of Abbott districts.

Educational adequacy must also be determined within the context of the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS), meaning that districts must provide educational opportunities for students to master the required content standards. In determining educational adequacy, DOE considers statutory monitoring results, variety of course offerings, teacher qualifications and experience, teacher/pupil ratios, drop-out rates, ability of Grade 3 students to read at grade level, student attendance, statewide test scores and other local achievement indicators approved by the Department of Education. Concentration of poverty is also considered, and is largely determined through DFGs.

One of the most commonly referred to aspects of Abbott districts and Abbott education is Abbott Preschool. In 1999-2000, the Abbott preschool program was initiated after the New Jersey Supreme Court ordered in the fifth *Abbott v. Burke* decision that all three- and four-year-old children residing in Abbott districts must receive a high quality preschool education. The thirty-one Abbott districts receive both Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA) and preschool expansion aid to fund Abbott preschool programs. Preschool expansion aid provides the additional amount needed above ECPA to provide all three- and four-year-old children in the Abbott districts the high quality preschool program required under *Abbott V*. Through a partnership with the Department of Human Services (DHS), the Department of Education provides a full-day (10 hours) full-year (245 days) preschool program to all three- and four-year-olds who reside in Abbott Districts.<sup>34</sup>

In its initial year, 19,000 children were enrolled in the Abbott preschool program. By the 2005-2006 school year, enrollment increased to over 40,500 children. It is estimated that around 74 percent of eligible preschoolers were served in 2005-06, an increase of 2.5 percent from the 2004-05 school year<sup>35</sup>.

<sup>34</sup> Pursuant to N.J.A.C. 6A:24-3.3(a), districts were required to implement a plan to provide a full-day, full-year early childhood education program by the 2001-2002 school year.

<sup>35</sup> *End of the Year Report: 2005-2006*, New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood Education.

Abbott preschool programs must meet certain requirements, including: maximum class size of fifteen children, with a certified teacher and one aide; programs that meet the DOE’s Early Childhood Education Program Expectations (linked to the Core Curriculum Content Standards); one master teacher per twenty classrooms to coordinate and facilitate early childhood education programs and assist in provision of professional development; adequate facilities; transportation and health and other related services.

Based on the economic, urban and educational indicators set forth above for Abbott K – 12 and Abbott Pre-schools, districts that meet the Abbott criteria, but have not been designated as such, will be phased in as Abbott Districts over time. For Abbott Districts, the first year will be a planning year in which the district will receive the funds necessary to undertake a comprehensive needs assessment and develop a 3-year operational plan for each school and for the central office. The first three-year operational plans should focus on two specific programs, high quality preschool and intensive early literacy. Future three-year operational plans will include other initiatives to address issues in the district that are preventing students from achieving the CCCS. Increased state funds will be provided, as needed, to support the activities identified in the approved three-year plans. Abbott Districts will be regularly reviewed both for economic need and educational offerings, and other districts in need will have appropriate remedies available.<sup>36</sup>

***Budget and Performance Trends:***

<b>Abbott Evaluation Data</b>				
	<b>Actual FY04</b>	<b>Actual FY05</b>	<b>Revised FY06</b>	<b>Budget Estimate FY07</b>
Students eligible for free lunch/free milk in Abbott Districts	171,741	164,970	168,258	161,853
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-92)</b>				

Note: This is only evaluation information for Abbott District students receiving free school lunch/free milk, not the total number of students in Abbott Districts.

<b>Abbott Implementation Evaluation Data</b>				
	<b>Actual FY04</b>	<b>Actual FY05</b>	<b>Revised FY06</b>	<b>Budget Estimate FY07</b>
Personnel Data – Positions filled	66	68	65	69
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-107)</b>				

<sup>36</sup> <http://www.state.nj.us/njded/abbotts/regs/criteria2.htm>.

<b>Abbott Appropriations Data</b>						
	<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
Education Opportunity Aid (PTRF)	\$1,298,414,000	\$1,379,321,000	\$1,372,273,000	\$1,449,495,000	\$1,545,540,000	\$1,564,940,000
Abbott Preschool Expansion Aid (PTRF)	\$182,400,000	\$182,400,000	\$179,753,000	\$192,411,800 *	\$243,200,000	\$243,200,000
Abbott Implementation (other funds)	---	---	---	\$11,734,000	\$10,617,000	---
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-94 - D-109) &amp; State FY07 Appropriations Bill S2007 (p. 51)</b>						

\* \$11,800 was added as a supplement to this appropriation.

Note: Funds for Abbott Implementation and Abbot v. Burke Parity Remedy no longer appear in the budget because these funds have all been consolidated into the Education and Opportunity Aid (EOA) line item.

<b>Abbott-Bordered Districts Appropriations Data</b>						
	<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
Abbot-Bordered District Aid (PTRF)	---	---	---	\$20,000,000	\$21,903,000	\$21,903,000
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-94) &amp; State FY07 Appropriations Handbook (p. B-46)</b>						

Note: Funding for Abbott-Bordered Districts was added as a line item in FY07; in last year's budget, this funding was appropriated through budget language. This change might be significant because a line item is a more permanent part of the budget and if funding were to stop it would need to be actively removed.

***Additional Analysis:***

The FY07 State Budget recommended \$243.2 million for the expansion of preschool programs in the Abbott districts, an increase of \$39 million from FY06 (FY07 State Budget Book, p. D-85). This increase was passed in the final appropriations bill, as reflected in the chart above.

Also important to note, the Abbott v. Burke Parity Remedy line item and the Abbott implementation line items no longer appear in the budget because these funds have all

been consolidated into the Education and Opportunity Aid (EOA) line item. The EOA has been adjusted to reflect these accounting consolidations as of FY04. Language in the FY07 budget bill (S2007, p.55) specifies that an amount not to exceed \$13,731,000 is to be transferred from the Education Opportunity Aid to the Department of Education's operating budget and used for managing and supervising implementation costs associated with Abbott remedies and reforms.

Along with the Abbott funding discussed in this chapter, an additional line item was added for "Abbott-Bordered Districts" or "Rim Districts." Rim districts are school districts that are surrounded by at least 3 Abbott districts but are not designated as an Abbott district. These districts are considered in need by the state. In FY06, they were given a \$20 million appropriation and this year were designated an additional line-item appropriation of \$21.9 million.<sup>37</sup> Although the budget bill does not specify which districts are Rim Districts, the Office of Legislative Services provides budget analysis, which specified that Bayonne, Kearny, Clifton, Hillside, North Bergen and Weehawken are designated Rim Districts<sup>38</sup>.

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<sup>37</sup> FY07 Appropriations Bill S2007, p. 51.

<sup>38</sup> Office of Legislative Services. May 2006. "Analysis of the New Jersey Budget: Department of Education, Fiscal Year 2006-2007."

**Early Childhood Education**

***Program Purpose and Description:***

Under the Comprehensive Educational Improvement and Financing Act of 1996 (CEIFA), all districts awarded Early Childhood Program Aid were required to provide full-day kindergarten and half-day preschool programs for four-year-olds by the 2001-2002 school year. For Abbott Districts, the preschool requirement is a full-day, full year program for three- and four-year-olds.<sup>39</sup>

Early Childhood Program Aid (ECPA) is provided to districts where there is a 20% or greater concentration of low-income students, with a larger amount provided to districts with a 40% or greater concentration of low-income students, for the purpose of providing preschool, full-day kindergarten, and other early childhood programs and services. In addition to the 31 Abbott districts, 101 non-Abbott school districts qualify for ECPA funding<sup>40</sup>.

***Budget and Performance Trends:***

This program, ECPA, is a component of the “General Formula Aid” section of DOE. ECPA serves preschool and kindergarten students, specifically.

<b>General Formula Aid Evaluation Data</b>				
<b>Enrollment as of October 15 (pre-budget year)</b>	<b>Actual FY04</b>	<b>Actual FY05</b>	<b>Revised FY06</b>	<b>Budget Estimate FY07</b>
Total number of all students (all grades)	1,424,773	1,441,748	1,446,815	1,448,232
Number of only Kindergarten and preschool students	134,731	137,722	138,331	140,531
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D – 92)</b>				

<b>Early Childhood Aid (PTRF – Property Tax Relief Fund) Appropriations Data</b>					
<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
\$330,630,000	\$330,630,000	\$330,630,000	\$330,630,000	\$330,630,000	\$330,630,000

<sup>39</sup> See Abbott section for additional information.

<sup>40</sup> *End of the Year Report: 2005-2006*, New Jersey Department of Education, Office of Early Childhood Education.

**Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-94) & State FY07 Appropriations Bill S2007 (p. 50)**

***Additional Analysis:***

Early Childhood Education is one of the identified programs contained under CEIFA. As noted last year and still remaining true, the funding level has been flat for this program since FY04 (see table above), with an increase in enrollment of approximately 4% since FY03. As previously stated in this chapter, the funding formula under CEIFA has not been used since the 2001-2002 school year. Despite an increase in enrollment over the last four years and an increasing need for early education programs affordable to low-income families, the funding remains flat. A flat funding level does not account for increases in inflation levels, enrollment levels, or any other cost increases.

**Governor’s Literacy Program**

***Program Purpose and Description:***

The Governor’s Literacy program began in 2002 and was implemented by the Early Literacy Task Force. A major component of the original campaign was to improve early literacy in students through a Reading Coaches Program. By putting trained reading coaches in schools, the program aims to increase literacy and ensure that students are able to read at or above the appropriate grade level by the third grade.<sup>41</sup> The FY07 budget language, however, expanded the focus of the grants to include language arts literacy and mathematics in addition to reading.<sup>42</sup>

The Office of Early Literacy is charged with implementing the Governor’s Early Literacy Initiative and works with non-Abbott, non-Reading First schools identified as eligible for a grant. This office is considered a state-funded program and is within the Division of Educational Programs and Assessment.

***Budget and Performance Trends:***

Funding for the Governor’s Literacy Initiative has shifted in FY07 with a greater share of the program’s funding coming from grants-in-aid than in previous years and less funding appropriated as direct state services funds.

The Governor’s Literacy Initiative funds are distributed in the following ways: \$900,000—nearly one-third of the initiative’s funding—is earmarked for the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired for increased Braille lessons for blind children; \$300,000 is set aside for a grant to the Learning Through Listening program at the Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic in New Jersey; and the unexpended balance is to be transferred to the Governor’s Literacy (grants-in-aid) account.<sup>43</sup> In all, the program was appropriated over \$1 million less than in FY06.

<b>Governor’s Literacy Initiative Appropriations Data</b>						
	<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
Direct State Services	\$6,650,000	\$5,942,000	\$4,957,000	\$6,200,000	\$3,826,000	\$3,826,000
Grants-in-Aid	\$750,000	\$1,158,000	\$1,158,000	\$750,000	\$2,025,000	\$2,025,000
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-107 – D-108) &amp; State FY07 Appropriations Bill S2007 (p. 61)</b>						

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.state.nj.us/governor/newsletters/030102.html>.

<sup>42</sup> State FY07 Budget Book p. D-110.

<sup>43</sup> State FY07 Appropriations Handbook p. B-56.



**Title One (Programs for Disadvantaged Youth - No Child Left Behind)**

***Program Purpose and Description:***

The goal of the Office of Title I Program Planning and Accountability is to ensure that all students obtain a high quality education and achieve at a minimum proficiency on the Core Curriculum Content Standards (CCCS) as measured by state assessments. To this end, the office is committed to providing technical assistance and guidance to 500 school districts that serve economically disadvantaged students. These services are designed to boost the performance of all students to meet the goal of 100% proficiency by the year 2014. Title I is part of the [No Child Left Behind](#) ACT (NCLB), formerly the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).<sup>44</sup> As the charts below illustrate, the number of migrant children and students eligible for free lunch/free milk in all districts is estimated to increase between FY06 and FY07 while funding has remained flat.

***Budget and Performance Trends:***

<b>Programs for Disadvantaged Youth (Federal Title I) Evaluation Data</b>				
<b>Federal Title I</b>	<b>Actual FY04</b>	<b>Actual FY05</b>	<b>Revised FY06</b>	<b>Budget Estimate FY07</b>
Migrant children served	3,488	3,488	3,488	4,234
Disadvantaged children served	300,000	300,000	300,000	300,000
Students eligible for free lunch/free milk All districts	280,281	276,951	285,445	287,400
Students eligible for free lunch/free milk Abbott Districts	171,741	164,970	168,258	161,853
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D- 92)</b>				

<sup>44</sup> <http://www.nj.gov/njded/title1/program/>

<b>Programs for Disadvantaged Youth State Aid – Property Tax Relief Fund Appropriations Data</b>					
<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
\$199,512,000	\$199,512,000	\$199,512,000	\$199,512,000	\$199,512,000	\$199,512,000
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-93) &amp; State FY07 Appropriations Bill S2007 (p. 50)</b>					

<b>Programs for Disadvantaged Youth (Title I – Federal Funding) Schedule 2 (denotes federal revenue) Appropriations Data</b>				
<b>Title I</b>	<b>Actual FY05</b>	<b>Estimated FY06</b>	<b>Estimated FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
Comprehensive School Reform	\$4,655,000	\$4,360,000	---	---
LEA Disadvantaged	\$266,076,000	\$271,610,000	\$263,753,000	\$263,753,000
Part D, Neglected and Delinquent	\$2,278,000	\$2,548,000	\$2,713,000	\$2,713,000
Reading First State Grant	\$18,687,000	\$18,065,000	\$18,065,000	\$17,866,000
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (C - 25) &amp; State FY07 Appropriations Handbook (p. A-9)</b>				

***Additional Analysis:***

Federal funding for Title I has significantly decreased this year for each of the line items, except for “Part D, Neglected and Delinquent”; see the actual appropriations FY07 column in the Schedule 2 - Federal Revenue table above. Despite recent cost increases, associated with state testing requirements under NCLB, federal funding continues to decrease.

Last year’s reporting included a small sum appropriated in FY04 for “Accountability Grants.” These funds were awarded to New Jersey by the federal government in FY01 and FY02 and were only distributed for two years. The appropriations received in FY04 were carryover from FY02 funds and were not new funds. This funding source is no longer an available source of funds for the state.<sup>45</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Based on a conversation with staff at the Department of Education Budget and Accounting Office on December 12, 2006.



## **Special Education**

### ***Program Purpose and Description:***

Instituted as a requirement of the Comprehensive Educational Improvement and Financing Act of 1996, New Jersey administers a system that provides categorical aid for special education students. Categorical aid is separate from weighted regular education aid provided for each student, and is intended to cover much of the excess costs associated with the students' special needs. Aid is based on students' eligibility criteria as provided for in their Individualized Education Program, and also on the type of related or intensive services that students receive. Different levels of aid are provided for students grouped into each of five tiers, depending upon their eligibility criteria. A description of the eligibility criteria for each of the tiers and for extraordinary aid is listed below:<sup>46</sup>

- Tier I – The number of resident students classified as eligible for special education services (not eligible for speech-language services) receiving related services (counseling, OT, PT, other; maximum of four services per student). \$317/student.
- Tier II – The number of resident students not receiving Tier IV services and meeting the criteria for specific learning disabled (PI), traumatic brain injury (NI), cognitively impaired – mild (EMR), preschool disabled, all classified students in shared time vocational schools; and non-classified students in state training schools or secure care facilities. \$3,389/student.
- Tier III – The number of resident students not receiving Tier IV services and meeting the criteria for cognitively impaired – moderate (TMR), emotionally disturbed (ED), multiply disabled (MH), auditory impaired (AH), orthopedically impaired (OH), communication impaired (CH), other health impaired (CI), and visually impaired (VH); and non-classified students in juvenile community programs. \$6,101/student.
- Tier IV – The number of students classified as eligible for special education resident in the district who meet the criteria for autistic, cognitively impaired-severe or are receiving intensive services. For the 2001-2002 school year, intensive services included one or more of the following nine services that must be specified in the student's Individualized Education Program: individual instruction; student:teacher aid ratio of 3:1 or less; high level of assistive technology; extended school year (at least 30 days in addition to regular school year); intensive related services; interpreter services; personal aid; residential placement for educational purposes; individual nursing services. \$13,312/student.
- Extraordinary Costs – Additional State aid is given to districts with students who have special education costs of more than \$40,000. Districts must file an application detailing expenses incurred on behalf of student. Panel review of applications.

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<sup>46</sup> Note that dollar amounts listed are as reported in the *Biennial Report on the Cost of Providing a Thorough and Efficient Education 2002*, which describes costs for 2003-2004 school year.

- Tiers II through IV are also eligible for Tier I Aid.

**Budget and Performance Trends:**

The following budget information includes special education evaluation data and special education appropriations data similar to the FY06 budget. It also includes a new line item called “Direct Educational Services and Assistance.”

This new line item is added as part of the Governor’s Initiative on Autism. \$15 million of the funding is dedicated to grants to districts to expand and enhance programs or services for students with Autism. An additional \$4.5 million is set aside for grants to schools with other special education needs.<sup>47</sup>

<b>Special Education Evaluation Data</b>				
<b>Enrollments</b>	<b>Actual FY04</b>	<b>Actual FY05</b>	<b>Revised FY06</b>	<b>Budget Estimate FY07</b>
Local districts	181,238	188,217	192,140	194,741
Regional day schools	1,076	1,051	1,038	960
County vocational special education	5,675	5,752	5,627	5,559

**Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D- 92 )**

<b>Special Education Appropriations Data</b>						
	<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
State Aid*	\$948,420,000	\$948,420,000	\$948,418,000	\$948,420,000	\$948,420,000	\$948,420,000
<i>Direct State Services</i>	\$52,000	\$52,000	\$51,998	\$52,000	\$52,000	\$52,000
<i>Special Education Aid – State Aid (PTRF)</i>	\$896,420,000	\$896,420,000	\$896,420,000	\$896,420,000	\$896,420,000	\$896,420,000
Federal	\$330,173,000	\$369,805,000	\$332,025,000	\$344,807,000	\$343,370,000	---

**Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-93 – D-96) & State FY07 Appropriations Handbook (p. B-47)**

<sup>47</sup> Based on DOE press release “Governor’s Initiative on Autism offers \$15 Million in Grants to Schools.” October 24, 2006 and conversation with DOE Office of Special Education Programs, November 8, 2006.

\*Note: State Aid includes the “Special Education Aid – State Aid and Extraordinary Special Education Costs Aid.” It also includes money from the general fund and property tax relief fund.

<b>Special Education-Direct Educational Services and Assistance Appropriations Data</b>						
	<b>Orig. &amp; -- Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
Grants- In-Aid (General Fund)	---	---	---	---	\$19,500,000	\$19,558,000*
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-88) &amp; State FY07 Appropriations Handbook (p. B-45)</b>						

Note: The Appropriations Handbook divides the funding into \$15 million for ‘Autism In-District Program Grants’ and \$4.5 million for ‘Special Education In-District Grants’ but the total appropriation includes an additional \$58,000 that is not specified.

**Additional Analysis:**

It should be noted that, while there is increased funding under the Governor’s Initiative on Autism and the additional \$4.5 million grant set-aside, enrollment increases and cost increases have not been accounted for in general special education funding. Between FY06 and FY07, overall enrollment in special education has increased by 2,455 (see chart above), while funding for special education in the form of state aid has remained flat since FY05. Not only does flat funding neglect to account for the cost of additional students, it also does not take into consideration the impact of inflation. In the end, flat funding actually represents a real drop in funding because of inflationary-based cost increases and increased enrollment from FY06 to FY07.

**Adult Continuing Education (Including High School Equivalency and other Adult Programs)**

***Program Purpose and Description:***

General Educational Development (GED) tests were first administered in 1942 to World War II military personnel who had not graduated from high school. In 1963, the GED program was expanded to serve more civilians and non-veteran adults. In New Jersey, the GED tests are jointly supervised by the GED Testing Service (GEDTS) of the American Council on Education and the New Jersey State Department of Education. Tests are available in many formats. New Jersey state-endorsed diplomas are official documents and, like high school diplomas, are nearly always accepted as valid credentials of high school completion by employers, training programs and educational institutions. GED tests are widely used as a basis for issuing high school credentials in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, U.S. territories, Canada and several foreign countries.

Adult and continuing education programs are available to persons over age 16 no longer enrolled in school. They include programs for high school equivalency, adult literacy, English as a Second Language and citizenship classes. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, GED Testing Centers must ensure that testing services are provided to candidates with disabilities, in order to continue to qualify as an official GED Testing Center.<sup>48</sup> In previous years, adult and continuing education was included in the Department of Education budget but this is no longer the case. Because of the consolidation of adult literacy education into the Department of Labor, along with a number of other programs, FY07’s budget book no longer includes a specific ‘Adult and Continuing Education’ section. Instead, the current budget includes High School equivalency services under the umbrella of “Educational Programs and Assessment”—a category that also includes the Governor’s Literacy Program; Reading First program; Charter Schools; Teacher preparation initiatives; as well as statewide assessment, which includes testing in language arts literacy and mathematics in grades three through eight and at the high school level.<sup>49</sup> The result is that budget appropriations going specifically toward high school equivalency and adult education services are difficult to assess.

***Budget and Performance Trends:***

<b>DOE-Educational Programs and Assessment Evaluation Data</b>				
	<b>Actual FY04</b>	<b>Actual FY05</b>	<b>Revised FY06</b>	<b>Budget Estimate FY07</b>
High School (HS) Equivalency Adults	15,500	15,500	15,800	16,000
HS Adults earning state	8,500	8,500	8,800	8,800

<sup>48</sup> <http://www.nj.gov/njded/students/ged/ged1.htm>.

<sup>49</sup> FY07 Budget Book, p. D-104.

diplomas				
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D- 106)</b>				

<b>DOE-Educational Programs and Assessment Appropriations Data</b>						
	<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
Federal Funds	\$94,710,000	\$106,743,000	\$92,146,000	\$92,726,000	\$89,168,000	---
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-107-109) &amp; State FY07 Appropriations Handbook (B-54)</b>						

Note: There is no specific line item designated for G.E.D. testing and administration. A portion of this funding covers G.E.D. testing but also includes funding for educational proficiency assessment and charter schools.

<b>DLWD-Adult Literacy Appropriations Data</b>						
	<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
State Aid	\$1,024,000	\$1,024,000	\$1,024,000	\$922,000	\$922,000	\$922,000
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-264) and FY07 Appropriations Handbook (B-122)</b>						

***Additional Analysis:***

Adult and Continuing Education programs are covered through funding within the Department of Education (DOE) and the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DLWD). Because of efforts to consolidate programs within the DLWD, some funding for adult and continuing education has been shifted out of DOE. For instance, specific funding for ESL programs and citizenship classes no longer appears in the education budget. While some adult education funds have shifted into DLWD, they do not clearly appear in appropriations data and are not included in the DLWD appropriation highlighted in the above section. This funding should be included elsewhere in the budget but because there is no specificity it lacks the transparency necessary to understand and track.

**Vocational Education (Perkins Act)**

***Program Purpose and Description:***

The Carl D. Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act was passed in 1998 to fund vocational and technical education programs in high schools and community colleges. The programs funded under this act are intended to assist participants in gaining both the education and skills that are needed to succeed in the developing workforce. A primary goal for these programs is to join education with skill acquisition in order to develop academic, occupational and technical abilities in participants, since all are needed in the evolving workforce environment.

The majority of vocational education programs in New Jersey are administered under the Department of Education (DOE), and the department funds both local school districts and county vocational programs. DOE provides consultation, technical assistance, and regulatory services to public and private educational agencies. School districts may receive funding for new and innovative programs or for the improvement of existing vocational programs that provide full participation to special populations. Aid is paid to county vocational schools on a per pupil basis for all pupils enrolled in the district. In order to qualify for the federal funds, the state must provide a dollar for dollar match, and demonstrate maintenance of effort equal to the prior year.<sup>50</sup> As part of the consolidation of workforce education and training services under the Department of Labor and Workforce Development (DLWD) in FY05, the vocational education apprenticeship program was transferred to DLWD. This information regarding Vocational Education programs is also discussed in the Employment chapter of this report.

***Budget and Performance Trends:***

<b>General Vocational Education Evaluation Data</b>				
	<b>Actual FY04</b>	<b>Actual FY05</b>	<b>Revised FY06</b>	<b>Budget Est. FY07</b>
Secondary Vocational Ed.				
Enrollments	104,873	121,200	140,069	161,875
Graduates or completions	28,438	32,680	37,555	43,156
Grade 11-12 occupational program enrollments	53,617	61,026	69,459	79,058
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-102)</b>				

Note: Vocational Education is also presented in the Employment chapter of this report.

<sup>50</sup> State FY07 Budget Book, p. D-102.

<b>General Vocational Education Appropriations Data</b>						
	<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
Total state appropriations	\$44,085,000	\$44,043,000	\$44,043,000	\$44,074,000	\$44,074,000	\$44,074,000
<i>State Aid Vocational Ed.)</i>	\$4,860,000	\$4,860,000	\$4,846,000	\$4,860,000	\$4,860,000	\$4,860,000
<i>State Aid - County Voc. Program Aid (property tax relief fund)</i>	\$38,948,000	\$38,948,000	\$38,948,000	\$38,948,000	\$38,948,000	\$38,948,000
Federal funds	\$26,363,000	\$29,129,000	\$25,511,000	\$26,620,000	\$25,767,000	\$26,650,000
Other funds	---	\$555,000	\$397,000	---	---	---
<b>Grand Total All Funds</b>	<b>\$70,448,000</b>	<b>\$73,727,000</b>	<b>\$69,951,000</b>	<b>\$70,694,000</b>	<b>\$69,841,000</b>	<b>\$70,724,000</b>
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p.D-103) &amp; FY07 Appropriation Bill S2007 (p. 60, 240)</b>						

Note: This appropriation data is also included under Vocational Education in the Employment chapter of this report.

<b>Vocational Education – Apprenticeship State Aid Appropriations Data</b>					
<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000	\$600,000
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-264) &amp; FY07 Appropriation Bill S2007 (p. 140 )</b>					

Note: This appropriation data is also included under the discussion of Vocational Education in the Employment chapter of this report.

**DCF Office of Education**

***Program Purpose and Description:***<sup>51</sup>

The Department of Children and Families (DCF) Office of Education (OOE) provides intensive twelve-month educational services and supports to children and young adults (ages 3 through 21) whose needs cannot be met through the public school system. These children have severe or unique needs requiring temporary removal from the public school setting. OOE educational programs are designed to meet those needs. A successful return to and participation in community life are goals for the OOE students. These programs serve residents of DCF facilities, DCF clients, and teenagers and young adults who have been referred under arrangements with local school districts, county governments, other state agencies, or the federal government. Services include 18 regional schools, state-operated or leased sites in public school buildings, and educational services operated in state facilities and residential centers.

Some of the programs administered through OOE include the [New Jersey TAP](#) program for children ages 3 through 21 who have difficulty with hearing and vision; and the [Technology for Life and Learning Center \(TLLC\)](#), an assistive technology center whose mission is to improve the skills, abilities, lifestyles, and independence of people with disabilities. Project TEACH, an individualized education program, is operated in Atlantic, Burlington, Mercer, Warren, and Cape May counties for pregnant and parenting teens. OOE administers educational programs through [the Alternative Transitional Schools](#), serving youth between 13 and 21 who are referred because of their involvement with the juvenile justice system and who need specialized instruction and support to prepare them for work or to return to school.

***Budget and Performance Trends:***

<b>Education Services*</b>				
<b>Evaluation Data</b>				
	<b>Actual FY 2004</b>	<b>Actual FY05</b>	<b>Revised FY06</b>	<b>Budget Estimate FY07</b>
Average enrollment	1,325	1,356	1,568	1,568
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-35)</b>				

\*Note: “Includes State Facilities Education Act (SFEA) Residential, Regional, State Responsible, and District Placed students.”

<sup>51</sup><http://www.state.nj.us/dcf/divisions/education/>

**Education Services  
Appropriations Data**

	<b>Orig. and ---Suppl. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
Direct State Services	\$9,618,000	\$31,744,000	\$30,556,000	\$33,291,000	\$35,216,000	\$35,216,000

**Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-37) & State FY07 Appropriations Bill S2007 (p.29)**

***Additional Analysis:***

The programs administered through the DCF Office of Education are referred to in FY07 state budget materials as a line item under the title “Education Services” and refer to education services under the OOE.

Please note that other educational programs for individuals with disabilities and those involved in the juvenile justice system can be found in the Disabilities chapter and the Juvenile Justice chapter of this report, respectively.

## **Educational Services for Children (Blind and Visually Impaired)**

### ***Program Purpose and Description:***

The New Jersey Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CBVI) provides educational services for eligible children from birth through age 21. Children can be referred or apply directly to CBVI to receive these services, which are provided in the children's homes or at their schools. The services provided involve three levels of service, depending on the child's age and needs. Early Childhood Services provided by CBVI staff to children from birth to age 3 include assessment of the child's vision and, if needed, offer specialized instruction tailored to his or her needs in the home. CBVI staff also work closely with family members and school staff to help the child make a smooth transition to preschool at age three.

CBVI works with local school districts to provide comprehensive services to children ages 3-21 in the schools, through School Age Services. These services include assessment and evaluation of a child's visual abilities, instruction in Braille and related skills, and provision of information and assistance to family members, child study teams, teachers and other school personnel. CBVI also lends local school districts appropriate adaptive equipment and makes aides and special educational materials available.

Deaf-Blind Services for children from birth through age 21 are available to meet the special needs of children who have difficulty with both vision and hearing. These services include assessment of the level of the child's impairment, consultation with family members and teaching staff and loans of special adaptive equipment and materials to districts. When appropriate, additional services are available, including instruction on traveling independently, social casework services, eye health nursing, and vocational rehabilitation services.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/cbvi/dhseds.html>.

***Budget and Performance Trends:***

<b>Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired Educational Services (Instruction) Evaluation Data</b>				
	<b>Actual FY04</b>	<b>Actual FY05</b>	<b>Revised FY06</b>	<b>Budget Estimate FY07</b>
Total clients receiving Educational Services	2,716	2,836	2,950	2,950
Pre-school children receiving itinerant services	344	350	375	375
Total number of school-aged children receiving itinerant services	2,372	2,486	2,575	2,570
Percent multi-handicapped	95	95	95	95
Average direct service caseload size	45	46	44	43
<b>Source: State FY06 Budget Book (p. D-233)</b>				

**Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired  
(Instruction)  
Appropriations Data**

	<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
Total Direct State Services	\$8,335,000	\$8,955,000	\$8,863,000	\$9,152,000*	\$9,152,000	\$9,152,000
Grants-in-Aid	\$4,178,000	\$4,226,000	\$4,223,000	\$4,235,000	\$4,242,000	\$4,242,000
Total Federal Funds	\$9,546,000	\$11,373,000	\$9,600,000	\$9,875,000	\$9,909,000	---

**Source: State FY06 Budget Book (p. D-234) & FY07 Appropriations Bill S2007 (p.-124,125)**

Note: Only a portion of the above appropriations go to educational services. This information is also listed under vocational rehabilitation and independent living; see the Disabilities chapter of this report. "The fiscal year 2006 appropriation has been adjusted for the allocation of salary program." (FY06 Budget Book p.D-235).

***Additional Analysis:***

Language in the State Budget Book includes an appropriation of \$900,000 for the Commission for the Blind and Visually Impaired to be spent on increasing Braille lessons for blind children. As was discussed earlier in this chapter, the additional funds come out of the Governor's Literacy Initiative (see the FY07 Appropriations bill S2007, p.61). This increase is a direct result of constituent advocacy during last year's budget hearings. A visually impaired child petitioned the Senate and Assembly budget committees for more funding, to ensure his Braille lesson would not be cut. This increase was in direct response to his testimony.

## **Katzenbach School for the Deaf**

### ***Program Purpose and Description:***

The Department of Education operates the Marie H. Katzenbach School for the Deaf, which provides both educational and vocational services to deaf and multiply disabled deaf children. Services are provided from birth through twelfth grade, including residential services (5 days a week) to 42% of the students. The school also offers a number of special programs to a broader population, including preschool age deaf, adult deaf, emotionally disturbed and deaf-blind students.<sup>53</sup> The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation in the Department of Labor and Workforce Development also provides vocational rehabilitation services for the deaf, designed to assist them in preparing for and acquiring employment.<sup>54</sup>

### ***Budget and Performance Trends:***

The majority of costs for the Katzenbach School are funded through tuition payments made by local school boards for students who would otherwise be educated in those districts, as reflected in the evaluation data for the program and in the line item for “all other funds.” The state also appropriates a smaller portion of the funding from the general fund, and there is also a small federal appropriation.

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<sup>53</sup> State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-99).

<sup>54</sup> See information regarding Vocational Rehabilitation Programs discussed earlier in this section and in the Employment and Jobs Creation chapter of this report.

**Marie H. Katzenbach School for the Deaf  
Evaluation Data**

	<b>Actual FY04</b>	<b>Actual FY05</b>	<b>Revised FY06</b>	<b>Estimated FY07</b>
Annual enrollment	214	226	211	224
Day pupils	121	126	123	131
Residential pupils	93	100	80	93
Gross annual cost per student	\$51,238	\$56,858	\$58,919	\$59,393
Annual Payments from local school boards				
For regular day pupils	\$29,329	\$30,209	\$31,115	\$32,049
For residential pupils	\$36,031	\$37,112	\$38,225	\$39,372
Direct annual state support per student	\$13,299	\$13,146	\$14,924	\$14,571
Annual graduates	21	24	27	16
Annual graduates enrolled in college	9	8	5	6
Annual graduates employed	12	16	22	10

**Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-100)**

**Marie H. Katzenbach School for the Deaf  
Appropriation Data**

	<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
Direct state services – general fund	\$2,899,000	\$2,973,000	\$2,971,000	\$3,149,000	\$3,264,000	\$3,264,000
Direct state services – all other funds	---	\$10,095,000	\$9,879,000	\$9,283,000	\$10,040,000	\$10,040,000
Direct state services – total	\$2,889,000	\$13,068,000	\$12,850,000	\$12,432,000	\$13,304,000	\$13,304,000
Capital Construction	---	\$558,000	\$48,000	\$1,950,000	\$1,950,000	\$1,950,000
Federal Funds	\$554,000	\$890,000	\$572,000	\$826,000	\$793,000	\$778,000
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>\$3,453,000</b>	<b>\$15,289,000</b>	<b>\$14,166,000</b>	<b>\$13,944,000</b>	<b>\$16,834,000</b>	<b>\$16,819,000</b>

**Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-100, D-101) & FY07 Appropriation Bill S2007 (p.59,60,240)**

Note: Total funds amount is higher than the sum of direct state services, capital construction, and federal funds appropriations because it includes administrative and maintenance funding.

## **Head Start**

### ***Program Purpose and Description:***

Head Start and Early Head Start are federal programs administered in New Jersey to approved comprehensive child development programs. Head Start serves low-income and otherwise disadvantaged children from birth to age 5, pregnant women, and their families. They are child-focused programs and have the overall goal of increasing the school readiness of young children in low-income families. The Head Start program is administered by the Head Start Bureau, the Administration on Children, Youth and Families ([ACYF](#)), Administration for Children and Families ([ACF](#)), Department of Health and Human Services ([DHHS](#)). Grants are awarded by the ACF Regional Offices and the Head Start Bureau's American Indian-Alaska Native and Migrant and Seasonal Program Branches directly to local public agencies, private organizations, and Indian Tribes and school systems for the purpose of operating Head Start programs at the community level.<sup>55</sup>

All Head Start programs must adhere to Program Performance Standards. The [Head Start Program Performance Standards](#) define the services that Head Start Programs are to provide to the children and families they serve. They constitute the expectations and requirements that Head Start grantees must meet. They are designed to ensure that the Head Start goals and objectives are implemented successfully and that all grantees maintain quality services.<sup>56</sup>

In order to assist in the implementation of the federal Head Start Program in local areas, New Jersey has “The New Jersey Head Start - State Collaboration Project.” This project is an early childhood initiative, funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services since 1990. Its purpose is to create multi-agency and public/private partnerships with Head Start programs at the state level. These partnerships are intended to help build early childhood systems, enhance access to comprehensive services for low-income families, encourage collaboration among Head Start and other appropriate programs and services, and facilitate the involvement of Head Start in state policies, plans, processes, and decisions affecting the Head Start target population.<sup>57</sup>

### ***Budget and Performance Trends:***

The New Jersey State Budget does not report funding or evaluation data on this program. The United States Administration of Children and Families, however, provides budget and enrollment data. Sources indicate that New Jersey was awarded an ACF grant in the amount of \$128,669,007 and operated Head Start programs serving 14,717 children in 2005.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> <http://www2.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb/about/generalinformation/index.htm>.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> <http://www.state.nj.us/humanservices/PB/dhsc.html>.

<sup>58</sup> Head Start Bureau, USDHSS Administration for Children and Families website, October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2006, <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/hsb/research/2006.htm>.



## **New Jersey After 3**

### ***Program Purpose and Description:***

Opening day for NJ After 3 in October 2004 marked the first phase of the program which Governor McGreevey had proposed during his State of the State address in January 2004. NJ After 3 has been incorporated and created as a non-profit partnership between the corporate community, the public sector, the private sector, and the non-profit community, to bring together and strengthen existing quality after-school programs and expand access to quality programs for New Jersey's children. The Corporation is responsible for raising and re-granting public and private funds for program operators, quality assurance, fiscal monitoring, and training program providers.<sup>59</sup>

Programs eligible for grants must meet the following criteria: applicants must have a pre-existing relationship with a public school; programs must be open 5 days a week; preferred student-adult ratio will be 10:1; programs must be school-based but, if programs are held away from the school, there must be free transportation to and from the program; no child can be denied due to lack of family resources; programs must be focused on enrichment, but have a homework help component; and a snack must be offered. In this first phase of the program, 21 partners were selected for grants, to serve 4,200 across the state. The partners are: Plainfield YMCA, Plainfield; Focus Hispanic Center for Community Development, Newark; Children's Home Society of New Jersey, Trenton; Boys & Girls Club of Hudson County, Jersey City; New Jersey Community Development Corporation, Paterson; Glassboro Child Development Centers, Glassboro; Boys & Girls Club of Trenton, Trenton; Urban League of Essex County, Newark; Paterson YMCA, Paterson; The Work Family Connection Florence Avenue School, Oldwick; Kimball Medical Center, Lakewood; Jewish Family Services, Teaneck; Lester A. Drenk Health Center, Hainesport; El Club Del Barrio, Newark; Young Scholars Institute, Trenton; Communities in Schools of Newark, Newark; Boys & Girls Club of Burlington County, Willingboro; Communities in Schools of New Jersey, Newark; Boys & Girls Club of Clifton, Clifton; The Work Family Connection Chancellor Ave School, Oldwick; Educational Information Resource Center, Sewell.<sup>60</sup>

### ***Budget and Performance Trends:***

This program is an educational initiative started in October of FY04, with an initial investment of \$15 million in state funds and \$13.5 million in federal funds provided through 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center grants. The program has been augmented by corporate donations and local contributions. New Jersey After 3 is designed as a public-private partnership to provide structured after-school care between the hours of 3:00 pm and 6:00 pm on regular school days at elementary and middle schools across New Jersey. The program's first year goal was to enroll 20,000 students.

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<sup>59</sup> [http://www.state.nj.us/cgi-bin/governor/njnewslines/view\\_article.pl?id=2192](http://www.state.nj.us/cgi-bin/governor/njnewslines/view_article.pl?id=2192).

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

Although evaluation data on the program is not available in FY07 State Budget materials, a line item and budget language addressing the program do appear as cited below.

<b>NJ After 3 Appropriations Data</b>					
<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
\$15,000,000	\$15,000,000	\$15,000,000	\$7,500,000	\$15,000,000	\$15,000,000
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-108) &amp; State FY07 Appropriations Bill S2007 (p.61 )</b>					

## **Early Launch to Learning Initiative (ELLI)**

### ***Program Purpose and Description:***<sup>61</sup>

In the FY05 budget, a new vision for preschool in New Jersey was initiated. The Early Launch to Learning Initiative (ELLI) will increase access to preschool for four-year-olds statewide. In March 2004, the Department of Education called for applicants for the ELLI award to expand access to high-quality preschool for low-income children in New Jersey. As of August 2004, 24 districts were awarded funding.

The long-term aim of ELLI is to provide access to high-quality preschool for all four-year-olds in New Jersey by 2010. High-quality preschool results in savings to society over time and improves the quality of life, not only for the participants and their families, but for the communities as a whole. Currently, too many children are in low-quality care, and parents have great difficulty finding and paying for good educational experiences for their young children.

The Office of Early Childhood Education reopened this funding opportunity on March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2006. All districts that serve elementary-aged children were encouraged to apply. Districts could form partnerships or consortia to operate preschool programs. Level of funding was based on the number of low-income children to be served. Districts already providing preschool through other funding sources were eligible to apply for funding to cover all income-eligible children if they planned to expand their programs. Districts receiving Early Childhood Program Aid, with the exclusion of Abbott Districts, were eligible for funding to increase from half-day to full-day programs. Classes were to be in operation by the first day of school in September 2006.

### ***Budget and Performance Trends:***

The first appropriation for this new program was \$15,000,000 in FY05, and it was intended to fund approximately 4,000 low-income children's participation, through a competitive award process. Another 16,000 children were to be paid for through braided funding, using a combination of existing district funds (general fund or other funds), collaboration with Head Start and child care, and parent tuition. The classes were to be composed of children with disabilities, children from low-income families and children supported through other means. Awards ranged from \$12,000 to serve four low-income students in a half-day program, to \$264,000 to serve 88 low-income children in a half-day program.<sup>62</sup>

The appropriation of \$3,000,000 for FY07 will fund only approximately 1,000 low-income children's participation, through a competitive award process. Other children will be paid for through the braided funding mechanisms used last year. The composition of the classes is expected to remain the same.

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<sup>61</sup> <http://www.state.nj.us/njded/ece/elli/memo.doc>.

<sup>62</sup> <http://www.state.nj.us/njded/ece/archives/elli/0405/memo.doc>.

Although evaluation data on the program is not available in the FY07 State Budget materials, a line item and budget language addressing the program do appear as cited below. Please note that the state funding for this program comes out of the State Property Tax Relief Fund (PTRF).

<b>ELLI State Aid (PTRF) Appropriations Data</b>					
<b>Orig. &amp; --Supple. FY05</b>	<b>Total FY05 Available</b>	<b>Expended FY05</b>	<b>FY06 Adjusted Appropriation</b>	<b>Request/ Recommend FY07</b>	<b>Actual Approp. FY07</b>
\$15,000,000	\$2,037,000	\$1,565,000	\$4,000,000	\$3,000,000	\$3,000,000
<b>Source: State FY07 Budget Book (p. D-94) &amp; State FY07 Appropriations Bill S2007 (p.57 )</b>					

**Additional Analysis:**

The Early Launch to Learning Initiative was appropriated \$1,000,000 less in FY07 than FY06. Nevertheless, according to the Office of Early Education, it is still anticipated to fund the participation of 1,000 low-income children—the same level as FY06.<sup>63</sup> This loss of \$1,000,000 calls into question whether the initiative is capable of serving 1,000 low-income children successfully. Not only does this decrease in funding present a difficulty in meeting the initiative’s articulated participation goal, it fails to account for inflationary pressures.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>63</sup> Hall-Coston, Tonya and David Joye. March 30, 2006. Memo to Chief School Administrators on Early Launch to Learning Funding Opportunity, 2006-2007.

<sup>64</sup> Frede, Ellen. March 18, 2005. Memo to Chief School Administrators on Early Launch to Learning Funding Opportunity, 2006-2007.

## **Recommendations**

### **Educational Funding**

- New Jersey must fully fund the educational needs of New Jersey's children so that they are all provided a thorough and efficient public education.

Despite increasing costs attributable to various factors, including the mandates of No Child Left Behind, New Jersey has failed to provide adequate educational funding. Instead of continuing to pass budgets that fail to address the increased costs of public education, New Jersey must firmly commit to fully fund the Comprehensive Educational Improvement and Financing Act.

- New Jersey must maximize alternate sources of funding that are available through federal and other sources.

### **Abbott Districts**

- New Jersey must provide adequate funding to ensure that the mandates of Abbott are fully implemented.
- Ensure adequate funding is provided so that Abbott District preschool programs are full-day/full-year programs for 100 % of all three- and four-year-old children, as required by Abbott regulations.
- Ensure statewide policies are in place to guarantee that all appropriately aged children are enrolled in full-day and full-year kindergarten programs in each Abbott District.

### **Non-Abbott Districts That Have High Low-Income Concentrations**

- Commit additional funding and develop educational policy reform for non-Abbott school districts that have high concentrations of low-income families, without reducing Abbott funding and requirements.
- Additional comprehensive reform must be undertaken in order to achieve full statewide educational parity, rather than providing nominal additional funding in an effort to quick-fix problems in a temporary manner without long-term policy and fiscal planning.

### **Early Childhood Education Programs**

- Additional funds must be specifically devoted to all school districts designated to implement a full-day kindergarten program. Immediate focus should be placed on more disadvantaged school districts first, with a long-term financial commitment in place to continue until all school districts in New Jersey have full-day kindergarten programs.

- Provide appropriate funds to all school districts to ensure that all four-year-old children in New Jersey have an equal opportunity to attend a full-day, publicly funded preschool program.

This program can be modeled after the State of Georgia – the first state to have a full-day preschool program in the nation.<sup>65</sup>

- Ensure that adequate funds are provided to address the needs of English language literacy in all school districts.

Appropriate levels of funding need to be provided in order to continue and enhance such programs as the Early Launch to Learning Initiative (ELLI). While it is appropriate to begin with more disadvantaged districts, it is necessary to be inclusive, because studies show that literacy rates relate to educational attainment and future ability to earn income.

### **Adult Literacy and ESL Programs**

- Adult Literacy and English proficiency programs need to be expanded, with particular attention paid to districts that contain linguistic minorities and in districts with large populations of low-income families.

### **Special Education Programs**

- Special education funding should be dedicated and full allocation and monitoring be implemented so that, to the greatest extent possible, the funds are expended directly for the child or program that is identified in the particular child's individualized education program (IEP).
- Special education funding cannot continue to remain stagnant and must be increased to reflect the increase in needs of children with disabilities.

The individualized needs of students – rather than the costs – must be the driving force of the educational program developed in the IEPs for each classified special education student.

Given the costs involved with educating students with specialized needs and the increase in the number of students needing special education, the state funding level must be increased to FY02 levels with, at minimum, a COLA adjustment.

- The Extraordinary Special Education Costs Aid must be adequately funded in order to ensure that districts can comply with the mandates of the Individuals with Disabilities Educational Improvement Act (IDEIA) and provide all children with disabilities

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<sup>65</sup> <http://www.stateline.org/stateline/?pa=story&sa=showStoryInfo&id=351547>.

receiving special education and related services a free and appropriate public education.

### **Impact of No Child Left Behind**

- New Jersey must adequately plan for the increased costs associated with the testing mandates of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Additional funding must be committed in order to ensure that funding for other educational programs is not diminished.

- Comprehensive and adequate statewide policies and monitoring must be in place to meet the mandates of No Child Left Behind in order to ensure no loss of federal funding. Such policies should include but not be limited to direct monitoring of the adequacy of services and school choice options offered by schools designated as needing improvement.
- Policies, initiatives and incentives must be created to encourage school districts to work with one another to offer inter-district school choice programs for schools that are designated as needing improvement and are required to offer school choice.