

**No Need to Choose
Between Pre-K
Plans: What's Best
for Children in NYS?**



No Need to Choose Between Pre-K Plans: What's Best for Children in NYS?

2014 has become the year of pre-Kindergarten in New York State. Mayor de Blasio, Governor Cuomo, the Governor's Education Reform Commission, early education advocates, and mayors and county executives from multiple communities around the state have all joined the chorus calling for universal full-day pre-K. This report will examine the two major proposals being debated in Albany to identify what approach would serve the most four year olds throughout New York State.

New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio has proposed a small increase in the city income tax for people earning over \$500,000 annually in order to pay for full-day quality pre-K for all New York City four year olds. The de Blasio plan would invest \$340 million in pre-K expansion in the fall of 2014 and would serve 53,000 four year olds full day this year and 74,000 the following year. The de Blasio plan would pay for expanded full day pre-K in New York City without asking for a single dollar in state investments. In order to enact this tax hike, which is supported by the New York City Council, the governor and the state legislature must approve it. The de Blasio team has developed a comprehensive plan to meet this expansion goal for a high quality program in New York City.

Governor Cuomo has responded with his own statewide pre-K proposal. His budget proposes to invest \$100 million statewide this year and if fully implemented after five years it would invest \$500 million annually. He has called it a universal plan, but multiple experts, including New York State's Commissioner of Education,¹ have pegged the actual annual cost of universal full-day pre-K in New York State as ranging between \$1 billion to \$1.7 billion.² The governor's plan would fall far short of universal. In press statements the governor has said he would provide a "blank check" to fund pre-K as quickly as school districts are prepared to implement it, but this promise is not backed up with funding in this year's Executive Budget proposal nor in the multi-year plan outlined in his *Budget Briefing Book*.

Recently the governor has argued that his plan is more equitable for New York State as a whole because most communities do not have high income earners to tax. He set the standard of every child actually having access to high quality pre-K:

¹ <http://www.nysenate.gov/event/2014/jan/28/joint-legislative-public-hearing-2014-2015-executive-budget-proposal-topic-element>

² February 20, 2014, Capital New York,, *If Cuomo Wins Pre-K Battle Will He Deliver?*

<http://www.capitalnewyork.com/article/albany/2014/02/8540423/if-cuomo-wins-pre-k-battle-will-he-deliver>

Citizens Budget Commission (2013). *The Challenge of Making Universal Prekindergarten a Reality in New York State* http://www.cbcny.org/sites/default/files/REPORT_UPK_10222013.pdf

Center For Children's Initiatives & Campaign for Educational Equity (2013). *Making Prekindergarten Truly Universal in New York: A Statewide Roadmap*.

<http://www.centerforchildrensinitiatives.org/images/Cheri/new%20york%20prek%20long%20report.pdf>

Let's do it right, let's offer every child regardless of race, regardless of what part of the state you're in, regardless of whether you're in a rich community, a poor community — you're all going to receive the same great, quality pre-K.³

Pre-K advocates have argued that the best plan would be for the state to authorize both the de Blasio plan and the governor's plan , maximizing the number of children served. This report examines the governor's assertion that his plan is more equitable and looks at which approach is the fairest to the whole state.

The governor's budget proposal offers no details on how funds would be distributed other than that high need districts would be prioritized and that new state funding cannot be used to "supplant" existing investments. There are no details on the allocation per child nor the formula for distribution to individual school districts which would inform school districts how much funding they would receive and how many children they could serve. There are also no quality standards in the governor's proposal although such standards are critical to ensuring the effectiveness of pre-K programs.

*If the Cuomo and de Blasio plans are both passed most school districts would be likely to receive **two and a half times more pre-K funding** than they would if only the Cuomo plan is enacted.*

Findings

³ February 12, 2014, Albany Times Union, <http://blog.timesunion.com/capitol/archives/206033/cuomo-why-cheat-buffalos-kids-out-of-nycs-wealth/>

- If the Cuomo and de Blasio plans are both passed most school districts would likely receive two and one-half times more pre-K funding than they would if only the Cuomo plan is enacted.
- This would translate into two and one-half times as many children served by full-day pre-K outside New York City and ultimately the number of children served in high quality programs is the real measure of equity.

In addition, the de Blasio plan would serve 53,000 New York City children in full day programs this year and 74,000 next year—far more than would be served in New York City under the Cuomo plan, all at no cost to the state.

In addition, the de Blasio plan would serve 53,000 New York City children this year and 74,000 next year—far more than would be served in New York City under the Cuomo plan; all at no cost to the state.

Methodology

This report examines how much of the proposed state funding every school district in the state could expect to receive if Governor Cuomo’s plan is passed without Mayor de Blasio’s plan and how much of the state funding they might receive if both plans were enacted. Since the Governor’s budget proposal offers no details on distribution, we looked at how the state distributes current pre-K funding. This report shows how much of the proposed funding each school district would receive if they get the same proportion of new funding as they currently receive under the existing pre-K formula. Our analysis of the funding if both plans are passed assumes the de Blasio plan covers the New York City costs, and the money proposed by the Governor gets distributed across all other school districts, without New York City. Our analysis of the distribution of the Governor’s plan alone assumes New York City gets the same share of those funds that it gets from current state Pre-K funding.⁴

⁴The calculations of projected funding per county are based upon the proportional allocation of current state pre-K funding. The exact fund amounts will vary based upon several factors. There are some school districts which currently receive no state pre-K funding and they may be eligible for funding under the Governor’s plan (although high need districts are much more likely to currently have pre-K than other districts and they would be prioritized

**Projected New State Pre-K Funding Per County:
Based on Current Pre-K Allocations**

County	Cuomo Plan Year 1 amount	Cuomo Plan plus de Blasio Plan Year 1 amount	Cuomo Plan Year 5 amount	Cuomo Plan plus de Blasio Plan Year 5 amount
ALBANY	\$ 875,852	\$ 2,106,548	\$ 4,379,258	\$ 10,532,741
ALLEGANY	\$ 367,146	\$ 883,038	\$ 1,835,728	\$ 4,415,188
BROOME	\$ 964,350	\$ 2,319,399	\$ 4,821,749	\$ 11,596,995
CATTARAUGUS	\$ 632,369	\$ 1,520,937	\$ 3,161,845	\$ 7,604,687
CAYUGA	\$ 339,621	\$ 816,836	\$ 1,698,104	\$ 4,084,182
CHAUTAUQUA	\$ 805,609	\$ 1,937,604	\$ 4,028,043	\$ 9,688,018
CHEMUNG	\$ 499,283	\$ 1,200,846	\$ 2,496,414	\$ 6,004,231
CHENANGO	\$ 323,179	\$ 777,293	\$ 1,615,897	\$ 3,886,463
CLINTON	\$ 152,819	\$ 367,551	\$ 764,093	\$ 1,837,754
COLUMBIA	\$ 67,145	\$ 161,492	\$ 335,723	\$ 807,462
CORTLAND	\$ 184,332	\$ 443,346	\$ 921,662	\$ 2,216,729
DELAWARE	\$ 127,806	\$ 307,391	\$ 639,028	\$ 1,536,954
DUTCHESS	\$ 348,632	\$ 838,510	\$ 1,743,160	\$ 4,192,548
ERIE	\$ 5,238,409	\$ 12,599,122	\$ 26,192,047	\$ 62,995,611
ESSEX	\$ 97,739	\$ 235,077	\$ 488,696	\$ 1,175,384
FRANKLIN	\$ 286,532	\$ 689,149	\$ 1,432,658	\$ 3,445,746
FULTON	\$ 314,432	\$ 756,255	\$ 1,572,162	\$ 3,781,274
GENESSEE	\$ 279,627	\$ 672,543	\$ 1,398,135	\$ 3,362,714
GREENE	\$ 86,570	\$ 208,212	\$ 432,848	\$ 1,041,061
HAMILTON	\$ 4,909	\$ 11,806	\$ 24,543	\$ 59,030
HERKIMER	\$ 300,272	\$ 722,197	\$ 1,501,359	\$ 3,610,983
JEFFERSON	\$ 605,682	\$ 1,456,752	\$ 3,028,411	\$ 7,283,761
LEWIS	\$ 107,929	\$ 259,585	\$ 539,646	\$ 1,297,926
LIVINGSTON	\$ 143,049	\$ 344,052	\$ 715,243	\$ 1,720,262
MADISON	\$ 176,805	\$ 425,242	\$ 884,027	\$ 2,126,210
MONROE	\$ 3,632,760	\$ 8,737,306	\$ 18,163,799	\$ 43,686,528
MONTGOMERY	\$ 224,671	\$ 540,367	\$ 1,123,357	\$ 2,701,834

under the Governor’s proposal). But regardless of the variation between the existing allocation and any formula adopted in this year’s enacted budget, the finding that far more four year olds outside New York City will be served if both the Cuomo and de Blasio plans are enacted will certainly hold true. Another variation could be that the Governor and the Legislature might impose a cap on what proportion of the statewide pre-K funding New York City could receive. Under last year’s \$25 million pre-K competitive grants program New York City was capped at receiving no more than 40% of that competitive grant funding, as compared to 58% of total current state pre-K funding for the part-day UPK program. If such a cap were included this year, it would mean that Governor Cuomo’s plan would serve even fewer New York City four year olds than these numbers indicate.

County	Cuomo Plan Year 1 amount	Cuomo Plan plus de Blasio Plan Year 1 amount	Cuomo Plan Year 5 amount	Cuomo Plan plus de Blasio Plan Year 5 amount
NASSAU	\$ 2,795,905	\$ 6,724,552	\$ 13,979,527	\$ 33,622,758
NEW YORK CITY	\$ 58,422,425	\$ 0	\$ 292,112,127	\$ 0
NIAGARA	\$ 952,111	\$ 2,289,963	\$ 4,760,556	\$ 11,449,817
ONEIDA	\$ 1,196,850	\$ 2,878,594	\$ 5,984,248	\$ 14,392,971
ONONDAGA	\$ 2,297,607	\$ 5,526,073	\$ 11,488,036	\$ 27,630,367
ONTARIO	\$ 317,020	\$ 762,480	\$ 1,585,102	\$ 3,812,398
ORANGE	\$ 1,753,518	\$ 4,217,462	\$ 8,767,592	\$ 21,087,310
ORLEANS	\$ 262,349	\$ 630,986	\$ 1,311,743	\$ 3,154,928
OSWEGO	\$ 705,896	\$ 1,697,780	\$ 3,529,479	\$ 8,488,901
OTSEGO	\$ 203,729	\$ 489,997	\$ 1,018,644	\$ 2,449,985
PUTNAM	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
RENSSELAER	\$ 537,064	\$ 1,291,716	\$ 2,685,320	\$ 6,458,578
ROCKLAND	\$ 1,750,737	\$ 4,210,773	\$ 8,753,687	\$ 21,053,866
SARATOGA	\$ 307,540	\$ 739,676	\$ 1,537,698	\$ 3,698,382
SCHENECTADY	\$ 479,102	\$ 1,152,309	\$ 2,395,510	\$ 5,761,543
SCHOHARIE	\$ 96,717	\$ 232,618	\$ 483,584	\$ 1,163,088
SCHUYLER	\$ 60,738	\$ 146,083	\$ 303,688	\$ 730,413
SENECA	\$ 126,264	\$ 303,684	\$ 631,322	\$ 1,518,420
ST LAWRENCE	\$ 628,768	\$ 1,512,278	\$ 3,143,842	\$ 7,561,389
STEUBEN	\$ 560,502	\$ 1,348,088	\$ 2,802,512	\$ 6,740,442
SUFFOLK	\$ 4,414,882	\$ 10,618,420	\$ 22,074,408	\$ 53,092,102
SULLIVAN	\$ 280,699	\$ 675,120	\$ 1,403,493	\$ 3,375,601
TIOGA	\$ 255,588	\$ 614,725	\$ 1,277,938	\$ 3,073,623
TOMPKINS	\$ 331,435	\$ 797,148	\$ 1,657,174	\$ 3,985,740
ULSTER	\$ 316,387	\$ 760,955	\$ 1,581,934	\$ 3,804,777
WARREN	\$ 74,659	\$ 179,565	\$ 373,294	\$ 897,824
WASHINGTON	\$ 203,655	\$ 489,820	\$ 1,018,276	\$ 2,449,098
WAYNE	\$ 408,719	\$ 983,029	\$ 2,043,597	\$ 4,915,143
WESTCHESTER	\$ 2,923,905	\$ 7,032,409	\$ 14,619,525	\$ 35,162,044
WYOMING	\$ 42,822	\$ 102,994	\$ 214,112	\$ 514,970
YATES	\$ 104,879	\$ 252,249	\$ 524,394	\$ 1,261,243

Background

The Universal Prekindergarten program was created in 1997 under the leadership of Speaker Silver in the state Assembly with the intention of offering high quality pre-K programs to all four-year-olds in the state. The program was half-day with 2.5 hours of instruction. It included a mixed delivery system to ensure collaboration of public schools with community-based organizations. Since then, the program was expanded in 2007, after the Campaign for Fiscal Equity statewide settlement. Currently, there are 447 school districts that have a pre-K program. Up until the 2013-14 enacted budget, the state only funded the half-day program. The 2013-14 enacted budget included \$25 million in a competitive grant program that was intended to either expand existing half-day programs, convert some of them to full-day or create new full-day slots.