



— NEW YORK STATE SENATOR —
Jeremy Cooney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**GREECE CENTRAL SCHOOLS AWARDED FUNDING TO EXPAND PRE-K
EDUCATION TO 4-YEAR OLDS**

(GREECE, NY) - The New York State Education Department (NYSED) has announced a \$360,000 grant to the Greece Central School District (GCSD) for the expansion of their Universal Pre-K (UPK) program.

GCSD will use the grant funding to expand access to UPK services provided at the newly constructed Greece Community Early Learning Center (ELC). The ELC is part of the district's community schools strategy, which promotes partnerships with residents, businesses, and community groups. These partnerships increase learning opportunities and give community members a stake in the success of students. The ELC will also house the district's first Parent Center which will help better serve the needs of families and encourage parental involvement. The Early Learning Center is scheduled to begin classes in the Fall of 2022.

The funding comes as NYSED invests \$13.4 million in UPK expansion for four-year-old children. UPK is one of the most effective programs to prepare young students for Kindergarten and the rest of their educational careers. In addition to this grant program, federal stimulus dollars and budgetary earmarks have allowed New York State to invest \$970 million in Pre-kindergarten programs.

Senator Jeremy Cooney:

“Congratulations to the Greece Central School District for being selected to receive this funding. This new state funding is critical to the development of our children. I am proud to be an advocate for families and public schools, and applaud New York State’s continued investment in early education. This grant will give our young children the necessary foundation for success as they begin their academic journeys. I look forward to seeing Greece’s Early Learning Center in action and watching its impact on local families for years to come.”

Kathleen Graupman, Greece Central School District Superintendent:

“We are so grateful to Senator Cooney for helping to secure this much needed grant. The Greece Central School District believes quality early learning experiences are essential for success. This

money will be used to expand access to all-day pre-kindergarten programs within the Greece Central School District at our new Greece Community Early Learning Center.”

Lauri Strano, MS, Director, Programs and Services at Children's Institute:

“UPK funding is crucial, as early care and education is key to the foundational development of children. The Greece School District is to be commended on their proactive education of their youngest students.”

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