



Bucks County Intermediate Unit
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For Immediate Release:

Bucks IU Opens New Early Learning Center Expanding FREE Preschool Opportunities in Bucks County

September 26, 2023 - Doylestown PA: The Bucks County Intermediate Unit (Bucks IU) opened a new Early Learning Center (ELC) on the campus of the Lower Bucks Hospital in Bristol, PA on August 28, 2023. The ELC proudly serves children and families in the Bucks IU's Federally-funded Head Start program and in the Bucks IU's State-funded Preschool Early Intervention program. Both programs are available at no-cost to students and families who qualify.

Head Start promotes school readiness by enhancing a child's cognitive, social, and emotional development in a positive learning environment. Bucks IU Head Start services include a focus on early learning, health and nutrition, and family well-being (family inclusion and participation is critical to the development



of children since families are a child's first teacher). The new center has five large classrooms – all freshly painted, with new ceiling tiles, and fully outfitted to accommodate up to 90 Head



Start students. The center also features a new, state-of-the-art playground with handicap-accessible equipment promoting inclusiveness.

A sixth classroom in the new Bucks IU ELC is designated for preschool-aged children with disabilities or developmental delays receiving Preschool Early Intervention (PEI) services.

Services include socialization and language enrichment programs in addition to occupational, physical, and speech therapies. The earlier these services are provided, the greater the opportunity a child has for maximum growth and developmental gains prior to beginning elementary school.

Preschool Knowledge and Experience

For over 50 years, the Bucks IU has proudly served students, families, schools, and school districts throughout Bucks County. For more than 40 of those years, the Bucks IU has provided Preschool Early Intervention (PEI) services. Currently, the Bucks IU provides PEI services to approximately 3,300 students annually. With a strong foundation in education and educational services, the Bucks IU continues to serve as a preschool provider for the Federally-funded Head Start and Early Head Start programs and for the State-funded Pre-K Counts program.

Bucks IU Early Childhood Programs (ECP) support **21 Head Start classrooms (387 children)**, **10 PreK Counts classes directly through the Bucks IU (162 children)**, and **11 additional PreK Counts classes through a partnership with the Neshaminy School District (150 children)**. Staff exclusively assigned to ECP exceeds 230 and proudly averages over seven years of employment per person!

PreK Counts, Head Start, and Early Head Start programs are provided at no-cost to income eligible families. Preschool Early Intervention services are provided at no-cost to students who qualify. The Bucks IU can assist interested parties in determining which program's eligibility may best align with their needs.

Information and Questions

Please visit the Bucks IU website for more details on each of these programs, or to start the application process online:

- **Head Start:** <https://www.BucksIU.org/HeadStart>
- **PreK Counts:** <https://www.BucksIU.org/PreK-Counts>
- **Online Application:** <https://www.BucksIU.org/HS-PreK-Application>

Should you have additional questions, please contact the Bucks County Intermediate Unit's Early Childhood Programs at 215-348-2900 extension 8800.

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ABOUT THE BUCKS COUNTY INTERMEDIATE UNIT (Bucks IU):

Celebrating over 50 years of service! The Bucks IU supports improvements and advancements in student learning by providing exceptional educational programs, innovative professional development, and advanced business/technology services. We serve people from ages birth through adults, students in public and private schools along with their staff and administrators, and the community of Bucks County. The Bucks IU is also the liaison between local schools and the Pennsylvania Department of Education. For more information, go to www.BucksIU.org or call 215-348-2940.