



**For Immediate Release**

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## Dozens of Openings for Free Preschool

### *GSRP Programming Available to Families with 4-year-olds*

**TRAVERSE CITY, Mich.** – Families with 4-year-old children are encouraged to make use of free high-quality preschool programming available now through Great Start Readiness Program (GSRP), which has dozens of openings throughout the region.

There are more than 90 slots at regional GSRP classrooms that can be filled by 4-year-olds, according to recent counts, with Grand Traverse County accounting for more than half of the openings in the five-county region. Antrim and Benzie counties each have more than a dozen openings, while Kalkaska and Leelanau each have fewer than 10. Availability will vary based on location, but families of all income levels can now access GSRP by submitting an [application](#) through Northwest Michigan Community Action Agency (NMCAA).

Children who are 4 years old on or before Dec. 1, 2024, and meet program requirements are eligible for enrollment for the 2024-25 school year. In addition to completing the application, parents are encouraged to contact their local school district or community preschool service provider to inquire about current availability.

In June, the Michigan Department of Lifelong Education, Advancement and Potential (MiLEAP) was awarded \$8.7 million in [GSRP grants](#) to help fund new classrooms, staff recruitment, training and facility improvements, as well as expand access to high-quality preschool to more children as the state makes progress toward its PreK for all goal. Northwest Education Services (North Ed) is one of 56 intermediate school districts (ISDs) across the state working with their local public schools and community-based organizations to strengthen the early childhood education network.

“GSRP classrooms are staffed by highly qualified teachers who work to support our youngest learners as they gain some of the basic skills they’ll use throughout school and life after graduation,” said Tracy Spincich, North Ed’s Birth to Five Early Childhood coordinator. “Through recent investments at the state level, more families now have access to free preschool through GSRP, which not only benefits the family pocketbook, but helps children develop academically in the long run as well.”

As of Aug. 15, families of any income with a 4-year-old child are eligible for GSRP if they plan to attend full time. All GSRP classrooms are staffed by teachers with early childhood degrees and

follow Michigan child care licensing guidelines for health and safety to provide quality learning experiences for students.

GSRP classrooms are designed to encourage the development of children and prepare them for successful entry into kindergarten using developmentally appropriate practices, guided by research-based curriculum. Children are introduced to math, reading and thinking skills through fun, hands-on activities and gain opportunities to learn how to share, take turns and make friends.

GSRP classrooms are located in local school districts as well as community-based programs. Families will be expected to commit to either a four- or five-day schedule, depending on program offerings. Program offerings will vary based on geographic location and operator, and may include options for transportation and fee-based before- and after-school programming.

For additional support with early childhood education and resources, call the northwest Michigan Help Me Grow coordinator at 231.922.7878, email [HelpMeGrow@NorthwestEd.org](mailto:HelpMeGrow@NorthwestEd.org) or visit [www.HelpMeGrow-mi.org/Northwest](http://www.HelpMeGrow-mi.org/Northwest)

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