

FY 2008 QUESTION NUMBER: 22

QUESTION:

Please provide an update on the status of state requirements to offer pre-kindergarten services to all FARMS eligible children.

BUDGET PAGE REFERENCE: 3-64

ANSWER:

The *Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002* (Education Article J-401 of the Annotated Code of Maryland) requires that by the 2007–2008 school year at the parent’s request, all Maryland counties provide access to a prekindergarten experience for all four-year olds whose families are income eligible based on the Free and Reduced-price Meals System (FARMS) criteria. Four-year olds, who would not otherwise qualify based on family income, but who represent a student population that exhibits a lack of school readiness, may be admitted as space permits (Code of Maryland Administrative Regulations 13A.06.02.03). Currently, MCPS serves 2,553 children in prekindergarten/Head Start programs.