



For Immediate Release

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New Preschool Classroom for 3-Year-Olds Expands Strong Beginnings Program in North Ed Region

TRAVERSE CITY, Mich. – Families with toddlers have another option for preschool in the northwest Michigan region. As part of its involvement with [Strong Beginnings](#), Northwest Education Services (North Ed) is pleased to announce it has added another preschool classroom to serve children who are 3 years old.

“While we already have three Strong Beginnings classrooms in the northwestern Michigan area, we are thrilled to add another with the help of additional state funding,” said North Ed Early Childhood Coordinator Tracy Spincich. “This high-quality preschool program designed for 3-year-old children is an essential support for families and an excellent educational start for young kids.”

The new Strong Beginnings classroom is located in Kalkaska at Birch Street Elementary and can accommodate 14 students for a full school day, four days per week. The other three classrooms that are already established are at Mancelona Elementary School, Homestead Hills Elementary in Benzonia, and a program located at Northwestern Michigan College’s (NMC) main campus in Traverse City that’s operated by Munson.

Families interested in enrolling children in a Strong Beginnings preschool may access more information by calling 231.922.6437 or by filling out a pre-application form at https://www.nmcaa.net/child_devel.asp. Families are encouraged to submit a pre-application form for any of the locations in case openings arise.

Strong Beginnings is a statewide program administered by Clinton County Regional Education Service Agency Office of Innovative Projects. The organization is researching and testing the efficacy of a publicly funded two-year preschool program. Following the passage of [Public Act 103 of 2023](#) and the availability of additional state funding, Strong Beginnings expanded its preschools by an additional 28 classrooms throughout Michigan.

North Ed applied to Clinton County RESA through a competitive bidding process for funding to support the Strong Beginnings preschool classrooms in northwest Michigan, including Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska and Leelanau counties. North Ed was originally approved for three preschool classrooms and was awarded funding for one additional classroom following the July 2023 passage of PA 103.

“North Ed is committed to pursuing early childhood education opportunities because we know research shows that these learning experiences early in life contribute to critical success in

children's schooling and life," said Spincich. "We look forward to serving these young children and their families with these essential supports."

A high-quality preschool program, Strong Beginnings is designed for 3-year-old children and their families, providing ongoing family liaison support and access to community resources. These classrooms operate with play-based learning and high-quality curriculum and assessment. Students in each classroom are engaged by a highly-qualified teacher and teaching assistant, with additional support provided by North Ed's team of early childhood specialists.

For additional support with early childhood education and resources, visit www.HelpMeGrow-mi.org/northwest.

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