

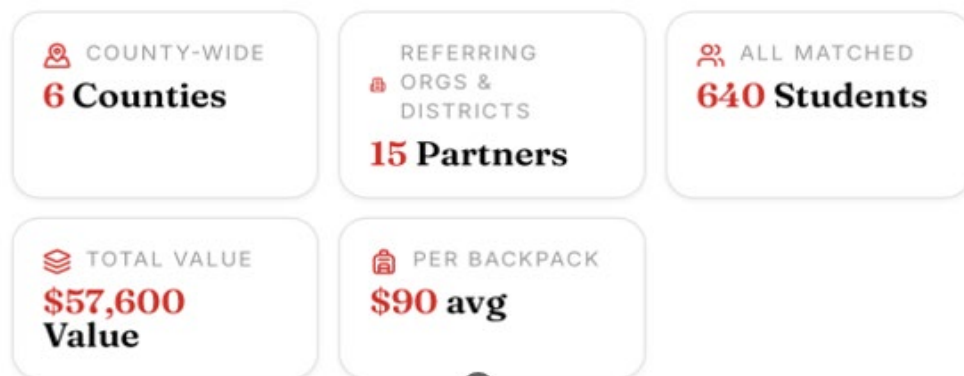


PROJECT READINESS 2026 IMPACT REPORT

640 Backpacks, 640 Fresh Starts.

Project Readiness's 2026 Backpack Drive was a success, thanks to the generosity of our individual, corporate, and congregational donors. We routed 640 filled backpacks to 15 different receiving non-profit organizations and school districts located across 6 New Jersey counties. These organizations and districts, in turn, distribute the backpacks to eager students!

Of the 640 backpacks, which have an average value of \$90 USD/backpack, 79 were provided by individual donors, 191 by corporate donors, and 215 by congregational donors, each as an in-kind contribution. Project Readiness purchased the backpacks and supplies for the remaining 219 backpacks, and assembled them for students at our Denville office. Assuming the average \$90 value/backpack, the 2026 backpack drive raised a total of \$57,600 USD in monetary and in-kind donations – **a \$57,600 USD investment in the futures of these students.**

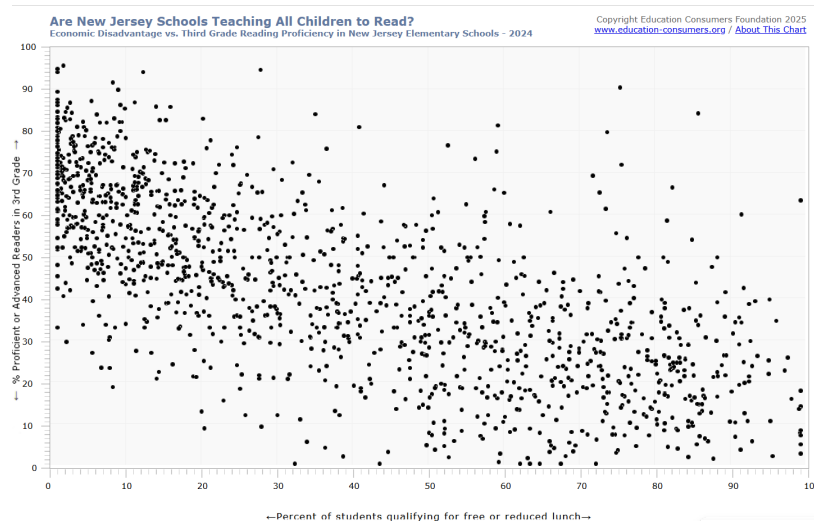




PROJECT READINESS 2026 IMPACT REPORT

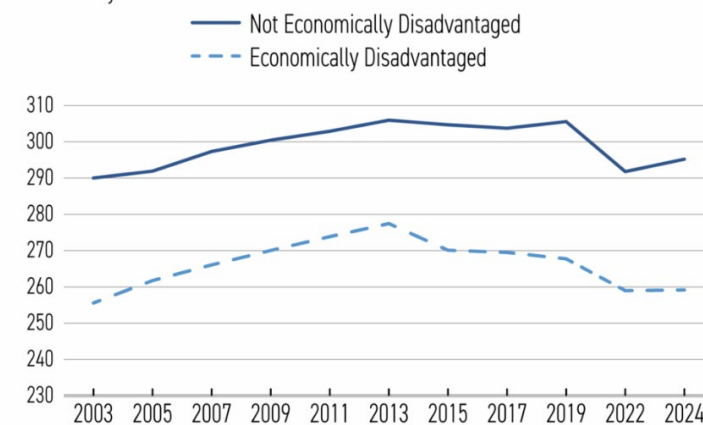
You didn't just fill a backpack. You removed a barrier.

In New Jersey, the relationship between income and student achievement is well documented. The following chart correlates declines in NJ 3rd grade math achievement with an increase in the percentage of students in a given district receiving free or reduced lunch. Source: The Education Consumers Foundation (2024).



The "Opportunity Gap" Persists in NJ Test Scores

National Assessment of Educational Progress, Math Gr. 8 Scale Scores,
New Jersey



Source: The Nation's Report Card, NAEP Data Explorer.
<https://www.nationsreportcard.gov/ndecore/landing>

NEW JERSEY POLICY PERSPECTIVE | NJPP.ORG



PROJECT READINESS 2026 IMPACT REPORT

From empty-handed to ready on day one.

The data is clear: free school supplies work to improve student experience in myriad ways:

Kids In Need Foundation surveyed more than 7,400 educators nationwide about students receiving free classroom supplies. Among teachers using its resource centers:

Reported student outcome	Teachers reporting an impact
Class preparedness	99%
Interest in learning	99%
Class participation	97%
Confidence	97%
Self-esteem	96%
Social engagement	96%

Educators also reported that supplies helped them:

- Create a more equitable learning environment: 99%
- Meet students’ needs through daily instruction: 99%
- Expand the variety and scope of classroom projects: 98%

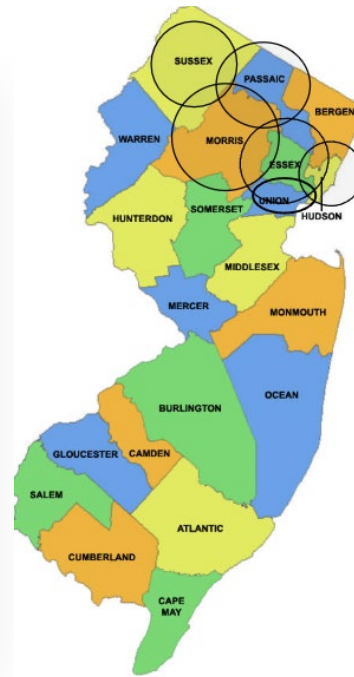


PROJECT READINESS 2026 IMPACT REPORT



Loading Day at 75 Bloomfield Ave., Suite 304, Denville, NJ — 640 backpacks ready for 6 counties

Denville HQ • Volunteers + kids helping load



Our Denville volunteers and families — every backpack matched



PROJECT READINESS 2026 IMPACT REPORT

Our Referring Partners:

Each Project Readiness student comes to us from a via a referring partner, as Project Readiness is not a vetting organization. Our referring partners are split between area non-profits such as Nourish.NJ and Sparrow House Outreach, state school districts and schools such as East Side High School in Newark, and government entities such as Head Start of Morris County. This year, Project Readiness was proud to add partnerships with Mary's Hands, Eagle Academy for Young Men of Newark, the Dover School District, and Thomas A. Edison Career and Technical Academy to our roster, enlarging our statewide coverage to **six counties**. **This keeps Project Readiness on pace to meet its goal of adding one NJ county per year, with the ultimate goal of statewide coverage.**

REFERRING NON-PROFITS

nourish.NJ

Family Promise
of Morris County

Caring Partners
OF MORRIS & SUSSEX

Homeless
Solutions
A Hand UP, Not a Hand OUT



more than
bootstraps



Catholic Charities
Diocese of Paterson
Mary's Hands
In the Presence of Sacred Faith, We Heal

HeadStart.gov

REFERRING SCHOOLS AND NJ SCHOOL DISTRICTS



EAST SIDE HIGH SCHOOL
HIGH SCHOOL | 9-12
Once An East Sider, Always An East Sider



William L. Dickinson High School
Diversity, Honor, Success

Eagle
Academy for
Young Men
of Newark



Dover Public Schools
Omnibus Lucet



Thomas A. Edison
Career & Technical Academy



PROJECT READINESS 2026 IMPACT REPORT

The highest praise -- a parent testimonial:

Today, I feel the need to write these words from the bottom of my heart. Sometimes, after going through difficult moments in life, it can be hard to find the exact words to express what we truly feel. But I want to try, because I feel that a simple “thank you” is not enough to express what this kindness has meant to my daughters and to me. Thank you for being there.

Thank you for thinking of my daughters.

Thank you for making them feel important.

And thank you for reminding us that, even during the most difficult moments, we are not alone.

As a mother, one of the most painful things is not always being able to give your children everything you wish you could. There are moments when you have to make difficult choices, prioritize what is most important, and try to keep a smile on your face for your children, even when you are worried about so many things inside.

I have experienced moments when all I wanted was for my daughters not to feel the weight of the difficulties we have been through. I have tried to protect them, keep them happy, and teach them that even when life presents us with obstacles, we should never lose hope.

That is why this assistance meant so much more to me than a gift card to purchase clothing. It meant a moment to breathe.