

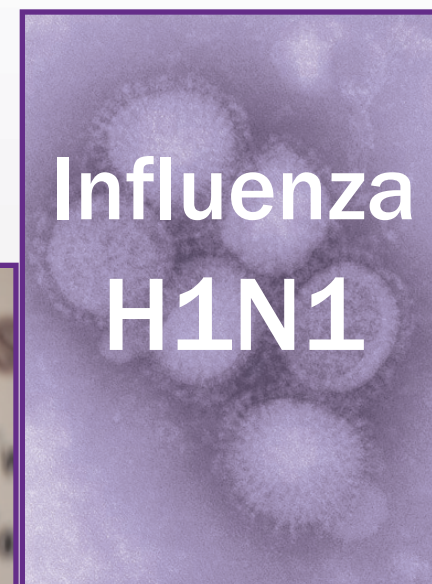


Andrew J. Spano, Westchester County Executive  
County Board of Legislators

# Westchester County Department of Health

Budget Report  
November 2009

Submitted to Westchester County Board of Legislators



# THE THREE CORE FUNCTIONS & ESSENTIAL SERVICES OF PUBLIC HEALTH

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## **Assessment**

- Monitor health status to identify community health problems.
- Diagnose and investigate health problems and health hazards in the community.
- Evaluate effectiveness, accessibility, and quality of personal and population-based health services.

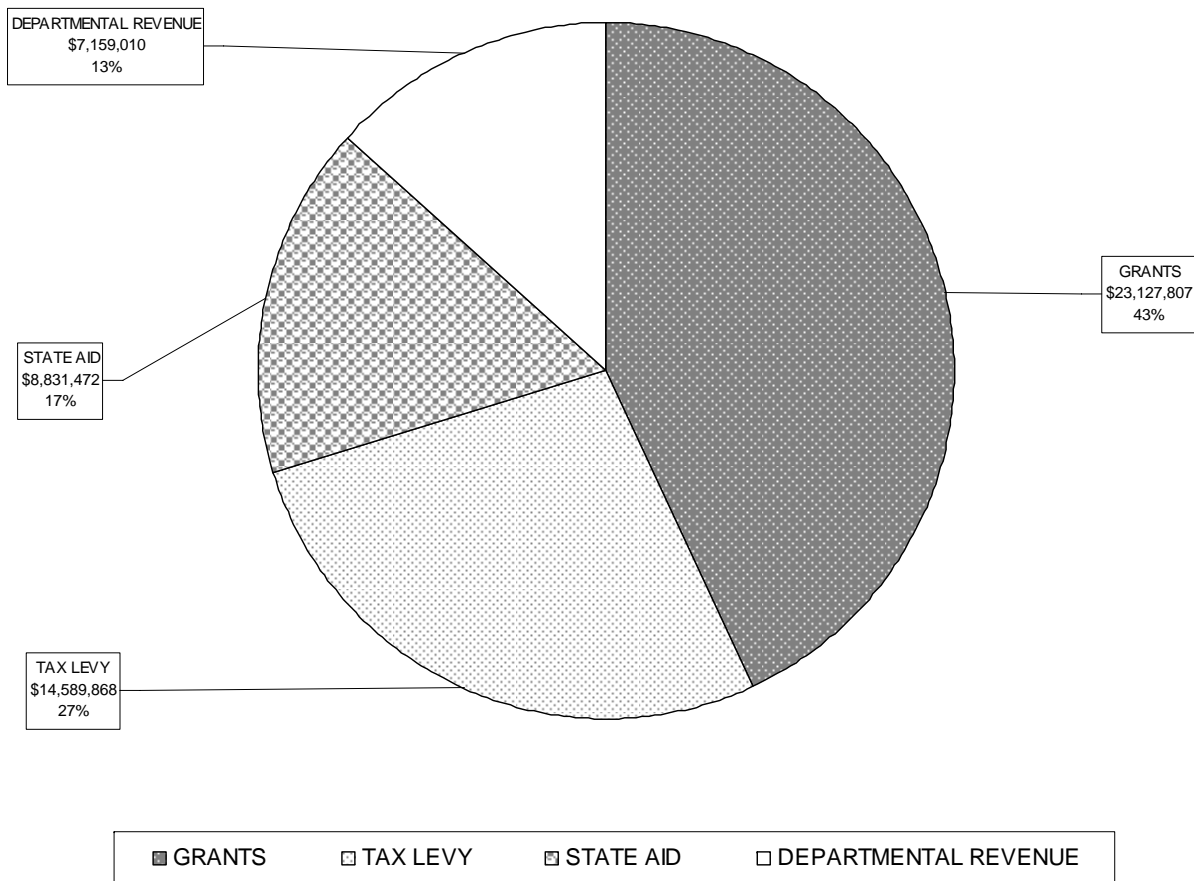
## **Policy Development**

- Develop policies and plans that support individual and community public health efforts.
- Enforce laws and regulations that protect health and ensure safety.
- Research for new insights and innovative solutions to public health problems.

## **Assurance**

- Link people to needed health services and assure the availability of health care.
- Assure a competent public health workforce.
- Inform, educate, and empower people about public health issues.
- Mobilize community partnerships to identify and solve public health problems.

### WESTCHESTER COUNTY DEPT. OF HEALTH PROPOSED BUDGET - 2010 AS OF 11/16/09



# NUTRITION & FITNESS

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*A Health Department survey of 8,600 Westchester elementary school children in grades K, 2 and 4 revealed that more than one in three children (34%) is either overweight or at risk of overweight. This is greater than the national rate of 32.2%. Westchester is addressing the obesity epidemic through multiple programs:*

## **Be Fit Westchester**

- County departments collaborated to promote healthy lifestyles at Department of Parks events, community health fairs, health promotional conferences and schools.

## **Fit Kids**

- Nearly 67,000 children in 112 schools in Westchester have participated in Fit Kids activities designed to promote healthy lifestyle behaviors. (This represents about 45.7% of the County's student enrollment and 40.9% of Westchester's public schools.)
- Nearly 60 schools in Westchester have enrolled in the Fit Kids program, giving them further access to Health Department resources that promote healthy eating and increased physical activity.
- Fit Kids schools' successes include serving healthier school lunches, creating edible school gardens, providing nutrition education in elementary schools and offering increased opportunities for physical activity by establishing walking clubs and more active playtime during recess.

## **Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Nutrition Program**

- For fiscal year 2009, the WIC caseload was 8,763 and the program served 104% of its target.
- Our local economy benefited from more than \$7 million worth of food purchased with WIC checks.
- About 4,550 WIC families used a \$24 coupon book to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at local Farmers' Markets (total value \$109,200).
- We prepared and served healthy food samples at WIC clinics using foods from the new WIC food list to model good nutrition and gave out measuring cups and other incentive items to promote increased physical activity, improved nutrition and portion control.

# CHRONIC DISEASES

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## Statistics

- Heart disease, stroke, and other diseases of the circulatory system were the number one cause of all hospitalizations for Westchester County residents, accounting for 15,570 hospitalizations, in 2008.
- Cardiovascular disease was the leading cause of death among Westchester County residents, accounting for 40.0% of the total deaths in 2007.
- Diabetes was a factor in 16.2% of all hospitalizations, in 2008 and accounted for 2.1% of all deaths, in 2007.

## Chronic Disease Prevention Initiatives

The Health Department, along with the County Departments of Communication, Senior Services, and Parks are working to reduce chronic disease. Efforts include partnering with faith based organizations and other community and medical partners.

- We work to identify residents with heart disease and diabetes and get them into care.
- We encourage healthy lifestyles, proper nutrition, reduce sodium/salt intake and increase physical activity;
- We integrate free health screenings and healthy food options into community and cultural events, such as soul food cookouts and health fairs;
- We partner with the Hudson Valley Association of Housing Authorities, the African American Men of Westchester, the Westchester Medical Center and other groups to provide free health screenings and health education for seniors, adolescents and adults who live at municipal housing sites.

## It's My Healthcare

- A joint effort of Westchester County and representatives of the County's medical community, this initiative launched in 2008 and continues to encourage residents to become active partners with their healthcare professionals to improve their health.
- To date, more than 24,000 brochures have been distributed (English or Spanish) through community outreach activities and nearly 50 presentations have been made to community groups.

# HEALTH DISPARITIES

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Based on the priorities in the County Executive's Blue Ribbon Task Force for the Elimination of Health Disparities among African Americans report, ***Health Disparities Among Blacks in Westchester: A Snapshot:***

- The Mentoring Initiative to promote careers in the health professions to students of color has continued. More than 800 students have been involved in Mentoring initiative activities. Approximately 40 black health professionals have participated as mentors, providing 20 students with one-on-one meetings and guidance.
- Westchester County's 2<sup>nd</sup> "Rx for Success: Dare to be a Doctor" conference was held on October 17, 2009. More than 500 middle and high school minority students attended, along with nearly 200 parents and teachers. Both this year and last year, they interacted with more than 20 prominent African-American and Hispanic physicians who shared their experiences and inspiring stories.

# HIV and AIDS PREVENTION & SERVICES

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*The AIDS epidemic continues to disproportionately affect certain geographic regions and high-risk segments of the population. Outside of New York City, Westchester is the New York State county with the most people living with AIDS and HIV.*

- In Westchester County, more than 3,800 people are reported living with HIV or AIDS. It is also estimated that 1,000 residents in Westchester are undiagnosed but have HIV or AIDS.
- Increasing numbers of middle-aged women of color are getting infected through heterosexual transmission.

Westchester County Health Department has implemented new initiatives to prevent and treat new cases of HIV and AIDS:

- The Health Department partners with community-based organizations and coalitions to provide HIV Prevention education and free rapid HIV testing at community and cultural events and other nontraditional sites such as faith-based organizations, housing projects, supermarket parking lots and sports clubs.
- To date in 2009, more than 1,000 people have been tested for HIV/AIDS through these nontraditional sites.
- In addition, a unique partnership with ten hair salons and two barbershops that serve the African-American community was launched in December 2008. Since that time, 18 testing events have taken place at these sites and more than 110 people have received free rapid HIV testing. HIV prevention and other health education materials are also made available to clients at these partnering hair salons/barbershops.

The Health Department administers \$5.5 million in federal Ryan White Title I CARE Act funds for community-based health and supportive services for persons with AIDS in Westchester, Rockland and Putnam Counties.

## 2009 H1N1 INFLUENZA

*In April 2009, the CDC reported that a new strain of influenza had been identified in the United States. By 5/1/09, the first laboratory confirmed cases of this flu were identified in Westchester County residents. As was the case in the rest of the U.S, H1N1 influenza was circulating widely throughout Westchester County. It is anticipated that H1N1 will be the dominant strain of flu circulating this fall. Currently, H1N1 is causing illness similar to the regular flu. Since April 2009,*

- 130 Westchester County residents have been identified to have laboratory confirmed 2009 H1N1 influenza, but only a small sample of individuals were tested.
- WCDH has increased the monitoring, testing, and investigation for 2009 H1N1 influenza from hospitals and physicians, schools, camps, childcare facilities.
- Guidelines have been developed for the medical community, schools and colleges, camps, and congregate settings such as child care facilities, correctional facilities and shelters.
- We are publicizing and communicating information that is changing almost daily at times to the medical community, schools and camps, via conference calls to educators and business leaders, responding to telephone inquiries from school officials, parents, physicians, the general public and the media.
- WCDH has helped dozens of school districts craft their communications with parents and staff about H1N1.
- WCDH has developed a fall public information and marketing campaign to drive home our 3-pronged approach: vaccination and prevention, infection control and treatment. We continue to update our comprehensive website, which communicates health information in a multimedia approach in both English and Spanish. With federal grant money, we plan to promote our public information campaign on local television and radio, on and in buses, on posters affixed to buildings in high-traffic areas in many communities throughout Westchester and on digital signs in White Plains. We are also distributing written materials.

# STD PREVENTION & SERVICES

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*Cases of syphilis and Chlamydia, two of the three sexually transmitted diseases (STD) that are monitored under New York State Public Health Law, have been on the rise over the past few years.*

- In 2008, the number of Westchester County residents with:
  - Early syphilis, the most contagious type, continued to be elevated at 53, compared with 57 cases in 2007, 29 cases in 2006 and 22 cases in 2005. This marked increase in early syphilis cases has also been seen in New York City and elsewhere.
  - *Chlamydia trachomatis* infections increased to 2,561 in 2008, compared to 2,465 in 2007, 2,144 in 2006 and 1,676 in 2005.
  
- The Health Department responses to these increases include:
  - Teaching residents at high risk about STD prevention through events at housing projects, churches, health fairs and festivals;
  - Educating the medical community to follow STD screening, testing, and treatment guidelines;
  - Aggressively managing and investigating cases to ensure all infected residents are treated, and identifying, evaluating and treating exposed partners/contacts;
  - Initiating Internet Partner Notification, to reach anonymous sexual partners of infected residents through internet chat rooms;
  - Providing more than 10,000 teens a year with information about how to prevent STDs and refer them for needed screenings through the TeenAWARE program;
  - Providing free STD screenings at dozens of events throughout the year through a partnership with the Westchester Medical Center mobile van.

# CHILDHOOD LEAD POISONING PREVENTION

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*Lead paint, lead dust, lead in toys, jewelry, candy and folk medicines endangers Westchester County's children.*

## **The Health Department's Lead Poisoning Prevention Program:**

- In 2008, LPP monitored and tracked more than 31,000 blood lead screening tests performed on children.
- Twenty-two lead-poisoned children had their treatment and their home environment remediation managed and supervised by us in 2008.
- WCDH provide information on the Lead Safe Westchester program to help property owners reduce lead paint hazards to create a safer environment for children;
- WCDH educate medical providers of children and pregnant women to ensure blood lead testing of at risk populations;
- WCDH trains contractors and landlords on how to safely remove lead paint;
- WCDH awarded a \$504,268 state grant to identify lead hazards in homes in targeted areas of the cities of Yonkers, Mount Vernon, New Rochelle and White Plains to prevent children from becoming poisoned by lead paint.
- WCDH inspected 550 homes in the 10701 zip code for the possible presence of lead and approved 68 work plans from property owners to remediate their properties.

# TOBACCO USE PREVENTION

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*"The adverse health effects from cigarette smoking account for 440,000 deaths, or nearly 1 of every 5 deaths, each year in the United States." (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)*

## **ATUPA (Adolescent Tobacco Use Prevention Act):**

- There were 78 legal actions and 8 vendors had their tobacco licenses suspended in 2008 after being caught selling cigarettes to minors by Health Department inspectors who made 4,325 enforcement checks accompanied by minors.
- During the first half of 2009, a total of 1,915 checks resulted in 36 legal actions with 2 license suspensions.
- Enforcement has paid off: compliance by tobacco vendors has gone from 52% in 1997 to 98% today.

## **Worksite Smoking Law:**

- The Health Department enforces the County's worksite smoking law.
- In 2007, 60 workplace complaints resulted in 4 legal actions, similar to 2007 in which there were 68 workplace complaints that resulted in 9 legal actions.

## **Community Presentations:**

- To date in 2009, the Chronic Disease Prevention Program has made more than 10 presentations to schools and community agencies about the dangers of smoking and has distributed tobacco prevention education at numerous community and health events.

## **Partnerships:**

- The Health Department is a member of the steering committee of the POW'R against Tobacco Coalition, a four county tobacco prevention coalition. The Health Department and POW'R sent a joint mailing to Westchester County vendors to encourage them to eliminate point-of-purchase tobacco advertising.
- DeCicco's became the first supermarket chain in 2008 to stop selling tobacco in their four Westchester stores.

# ANIMAL VECTOR CONTROL

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*Tick borne diseases, West Nile Virus and rabies are endemic threats to the health of Westchester residents.*

## **Tick borne Diseases:**

- Surveillance, public outreach and education are the most cost-effective methods for tracking and preventing tick borne diseases such as Lyme disease, Ehrlichiosis and Babesiosis.
- For 2009, presentations and/or materials were provided for 15 events that reached about 1,600 people.
- A children's book "Lyme in Rhyme" was purchased and distributed to every public elementary school and library in Westchester, along with nature centers. Three hundred books were given out.
- Educational materials are also provided to local, county and state parks and the bow hunter association.
- WCDH took the lead in persuading NYS DOH to switch to sentinel surveillance to track any changes in the nature and spread of the disease so that resources could be redirected to education and prevention measures.

## **West Nile Virus:**

- Health Department staff evaluated and as needed treated 66,818 catch basins with larvicide.
- Through September 2009, 587 mosquito batches were collected and analyzed. Of these 5 were positive for WNV.

## **Rabies:**

- Life-saving rabies prophylaxis was provided to 359 county residents.
- In 2009 to date, 890 bites were reported and 552 animals were analyzed for rabies. Of those animals tested, 25 were positive for rabies (7 bats, 2 cats, 15 raccoons, and 1 skunk).

# ENSURING FOOD SAFETY

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## **Food Service Establishment Inspection Policy:**

- About 10,000 inspections of 3,600 restaurants were made in 2008.
- Besides issuing a summons, health inspectors also deliver a printed closure warning notice if, during a reinspection, the original violations have not been corrected.

## **Calorie Posting at Chain Food Service Establishments:**

- The new Calorie Posting law passed by the Westchester County Board of Legislators went into effect on May 12, 2009.
- Health Department staff verifies compliance with this law while conducting routine sanitary inspections at chain restaurants.
- Most establishments appear to be complying; 9 food service establishments were cited for non-compliance with the law.

## **Food Allergies:**

- Nearly 50,000 Westchester residents have food allergies; many of them life-threatening.
- In November 2008, the Board of Health passed a draft code change requires all food service establishments to post a uniform allergy warning statement on the menu or menu board.
- The code became effective May 1, 2009 and requires that the statement "If you have a food allergy, please speak to the owner, manager, chef or your server," be posted on menus and/or menu boards.
- 23 food service establishments have been cited for non-compliance.
- The department was one of two counties nationwide selected to receive the Innovative Food Defense Grant, a competitive grant of up to \$62,500 to develop products that will complement, develop or improve the state and local food defense program.

# PROTECTING DRINKING & RECREATIONAL WATERS

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- The Health Department protects Westchester's waters by providing oversight of almost 60 sewage treatment plants, whose flows range up to 100 million gallons per day. This oversight ensures that all plants operate in accordance with their state and local operating permits.
- Through September 2009, Health Department staff inspected 90 septic systems and approved plans for 219 new septic systems.
- 296 Septic System Contractors currently maintain licenses through the Health Department Septic System Management Program to install and repair septic systems.
- The Septic Collector Law, which went into effect on January 24, 2008, requires that anyone who evacuates and transports septage be licensed and report information regarding the evacuation. As of September 2009, 120 Septage Collectors are licensed. The data reported on the reporting form provides valuable insight on the condition of septic systems and all reports of surface wetness prompt an investigation by field staff. Site investigations have led to the repair of dozens of failing systems.
- Through September 2009, 786 private wells were tested in accordance with the new Private Well Water Testing Law, effective November 19, 2007. This law requires that private drinking water wells be tested for sanitary and aesthetic water quality upon the sale or lease of a property. Further, the law requires remediation, if necessary, to establish safe levels of contaminants in the well water supply.

# ENSURING SAFE HANDLING OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS

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## **Petroleum Bulk Storage (PBS):**

- The Health Department routinely inspects 7,647 registered petroleum storage tanks located at 2,671 facilities to ensure they are being operated in a manner that protects the facility occupants, neighbors and the environment.
- In 2008, based on over 1,600 inspections, administrative charges were brought against 321 facilities for code violations. The Board of Health assessed a total of \$685,179 in fines.

## **Gasoline Vapor Recovery:**

- Vapor recovery systems are required by NYS Environmental Conservation Law to minimize the amount of gasoline vapors emitted to the atmosphere from gas stations during gasoline pumping.
- Reducing vapors minimizes the amount of benzene and other potentially hazardous chemicals that residents and car owner would be exposed.
- Westchester County has become the first county to be delegated authority from the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation to inspect and enforce gasoline vapor recovery systems.
- There are approximately 700 gasoline dispensing facilities in the county and Health Department staff will inspect their vapor recovery systems during the routine inspections of their petroleum bulk storage tanks.

# EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS 2009 Highlights

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- WCDH focused its emergency preparedness activities primarily on readiness and response to a potential outbreak of novel H1N1 flu. This included reviewing and updating our:
  - Pandemic Flu Annex;
  - Continuity of Operations Plans;
  - Strategic National Stockpile Plan;
  - Point of Distribution (POD) Standard Operations Guide.
- In addition, site-specific security plans were prepared for locations throughout the county that might serve as potential POD sites in a mass vaccination campaign.
- A web-based computer application was also developed to help coordinate the provision of prophylaxis among first responder agencies in the event of a large scale public health emergency.



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# **Children with Special Needs**

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**DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
Joshua Lipsman, M.D., J.D., M.P.H., Commissioner**

# Children with Special Needs (CSN)

CSN includes two large programs that serve young children with developmental delays and disabilities:

Early Intervention Program (EIP) – serves infants and toddlers from birth to 3 years of age

4410 Preschool Education Program (PEP) – serves preschoolers 3 and 4 years of age

# Services

Services may include speech, occupational and/or physical therapy, special education, counseling and family training, and other supportive services.

In accordance with federal law, services are provided to the extent appropriate in a child's natural setting or the least restrictive setting. Between 1993 and 2009, the percentage of Westchester children served in a home/community setting increased:

- from 55% to 87% in EIP
- from 31% to 74% in PEP

## **Program Growth**

*It is projected that 11,103 children will receive services during SY09/10 at a cost of \$129 million. From SY04/05 to SY09/10, growth showed:*

### **Early Intervention Program:**

The number of children receiving services increased by 28% from 5267 to 6716.

The cost of the program increased 13.6% from \$40.4 million to \$45.9 million.

### **Preschool Education Program:**

The number of children receiving services increased by 12% from 3900 to 4367.

The cost of the program increased 34.6% from \$60.9 million to \$82 million.

## **Cost per child**

The cost of services per child in PEP is three times higher than in EIP.

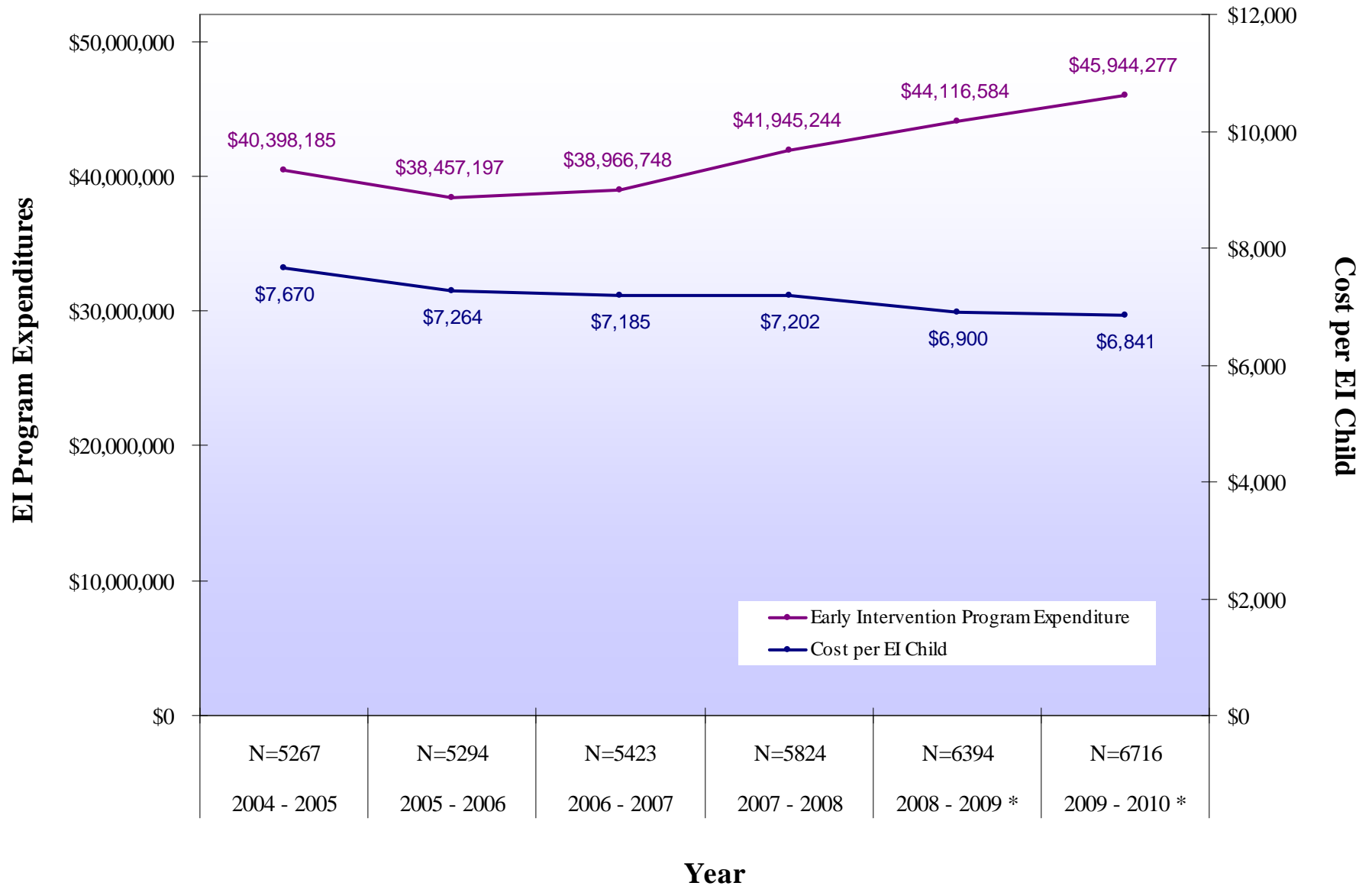
The County has the authority to make service decisions in EIP but not in PEP. Quality and satisfaction with services have not been compromised.

From SY04/05 to SY09/10, the cost per child in EIP decreased by 10.8%, while the cost per child in PEP increased by 20.4%.

### Westchester County Early Intervention Program

Program Years: 2004-2005 to 2009-2010 \*

Total EI Program Expenditures and Cost per Child by Year of Service

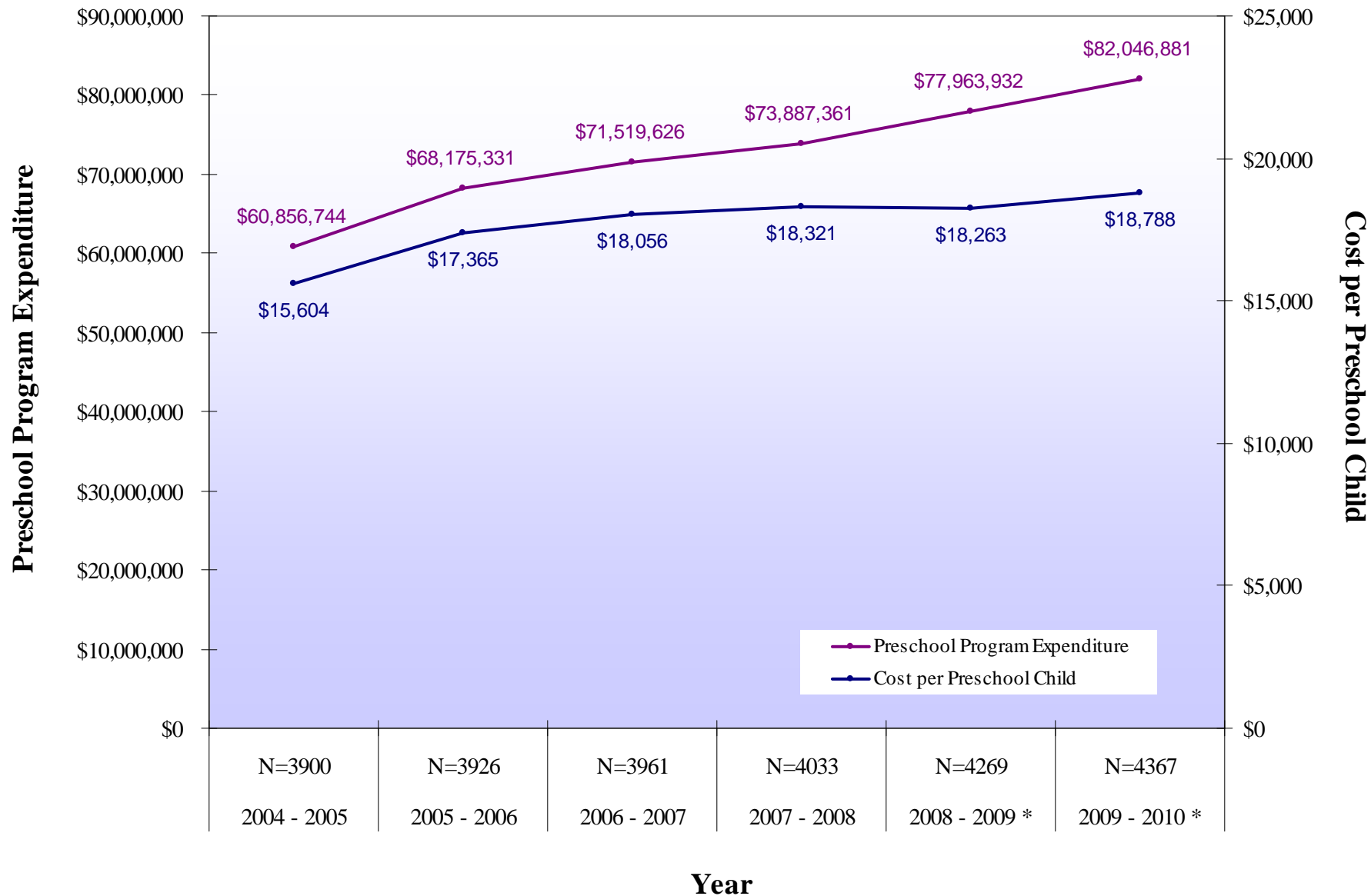


\* 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 figures are estimated.

### Westchester County Preschool Program

Program Years: 2004-2005 to 2009-2010\*

Total Preschool Program Expenditures and Cost Per Child by Year of Service



\* 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 figures are estimated.

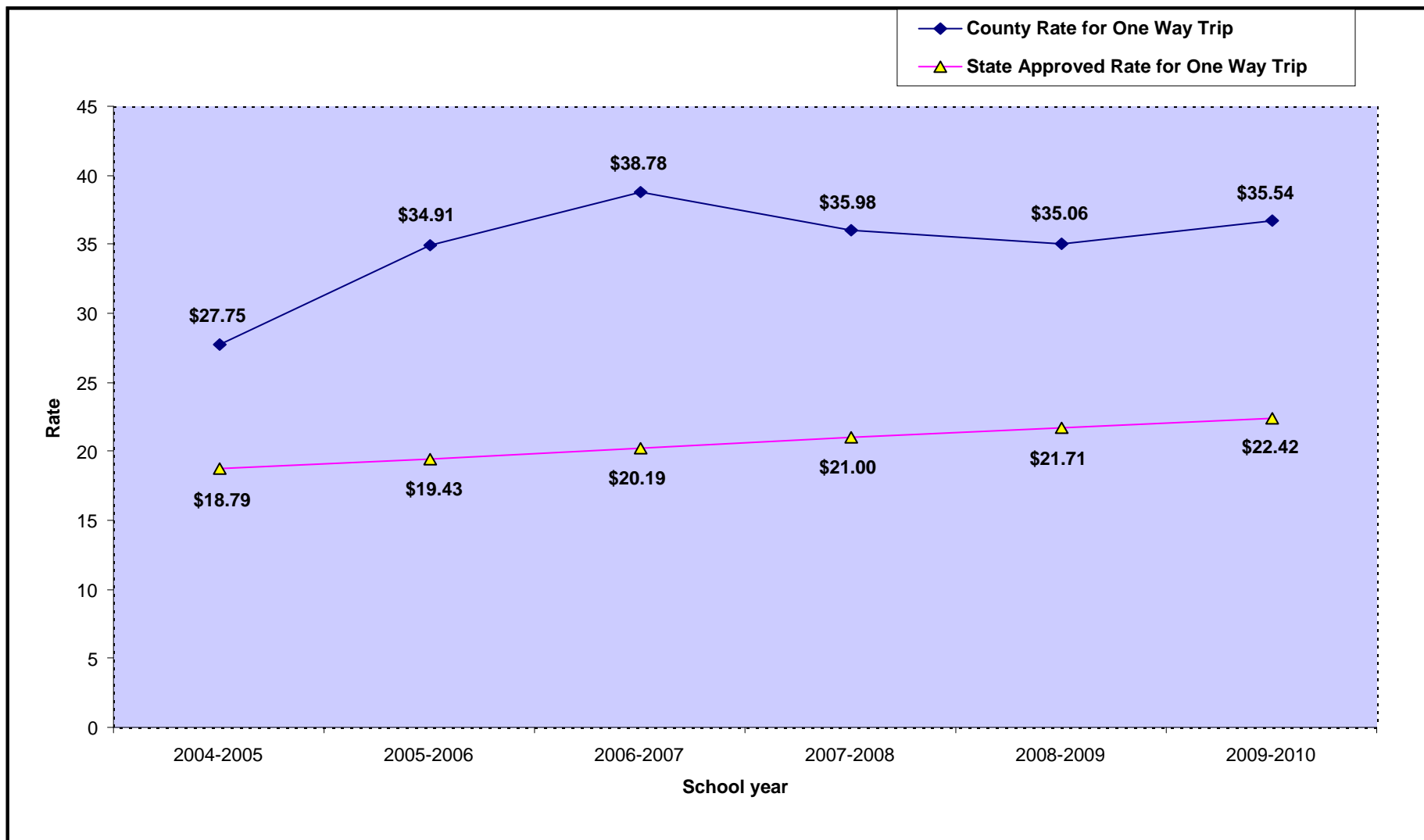
## Transportation Costs

The cost of transporting children continues to increase due to the rising costs of fuel, insurance, personnel, and vehicle maintenance. Overall, costs for a one way trip in SY 09/10 will be 28% higher than in SY04/05.

Due to the New York State Education Department's cap on state aid for transportation costs, Westchester's effective rate of reimbursement is anticipated to decrease from 41%, to only 37.5% per round trip in SY 09/10. In SY 09/10, this cap is expected to shift approximately \$3.6 million to County tax levy share.

# Westchester County Preschool Transportation Costs – County Rate and State Approved Rate

## Program Year: 2004-2005 to 2009-2010



# Quality Improvement Initiatives

Administrative initiatives to ensure quality of services, provider accountability and contractual compliance among the 250 contracted providers include:

- Ongoing program and fiscal audits;
- Intensive reviews of evaluations and service plans to ensure ongoing program eligibility;
- Rigorous staff supervision to ensure adherence to regulatory standards;
- Provider training, including dissemination of guidance memoranda, best practice guidelines, and hands-on training and observation.

## Children with Special Needs Number of Children Served and Total Program Expenditures

School Year <sup>1</sup>	Early Intervention			Preschool			Total
	Number of Children	Program Expenditures	Cost Per Child	Number of Children	Program Expenditures	Cost Per Child	Program Expenditures
1990 - 1991	265	\$4,233,857	\$15,977	955	\$14,318,302	\$14,993	\$18,552,159
1991 - 1992	255	\$4,737,916	\$18,580	1040	\$15,539,443	\$14,942	\$20,277,359
1992 - 1993	385	\$4,467,516	\$11,604	1356	\$16,666,396	\$12,291	\$21,133,912
1993 - 1994 <sup>2</sup>	894	\$5,110,862	\$5,717	1621	\$20,390,210	\$12,579	\$25,501,072
1994 - 1995	1571	\$7,813,635	\$4,974	1881	\$22,908,233	\$12,179	\$30,721,868
1995 - 1996	2002	\$9,758,357	\$4,874	1861	\$23,069,208	\$12,396	\$32,827,565
1996 - 1997	2453	\$14,028,003	\$5,719	2280	\$25,883,261	\$11,352	\$39,911,264
1997 - 1998	2987	\$18,220,119	\$6,100	2523	\$27,882,639	\$11,051	\$46,102,758
1998 - 1999	3512	\$22,556,602	\$6,423	2601	\$29,905,132	\$11,498	\$52,471,734
1999 - 2000	4261	\$28,095,867	\$6,594	2900	\$34,446,338	\$11,877	\$62,539,205
2000 - 2001	4916	\$31,648,910	\$6,438	3182	\$38,892,326	\$12,223	\$70,541,236
2001 - 2002	5510	\$36,246,422	\$6,578	3388	\$43,650,016	\$12,884	\$79,896,438
2002 - 2003	5941	\$40,213,419	\$6,769	3525	\$48,599,185	\$13,787	\$88,812,604
2003 - 2004	5878	\$40,931,346	\$6,963	3788	\$56,150,791	\$14,823	\$97,082,137
2004 - 2005 <sup>3</sup>	5267	\$40,398,185	\$7,670	3900	\$60,856,744	\$15,604	\$101,254,929
2005 - 2006 <sup>3</sup>	5294	\$38,457,197	\$7,264	3926	\$68,175,331	\$17,365	\$106,632,528
2006 - 2007 <sup>3</sup>	5423	\$38,966,748	\$7,185	3961	\$71,519,626	\$18,056	\$110,486,374
2007 - 2008 <sup>3</sup>	5824	\$41,945,244	\$7,202	4033	\$73,887,361	\$18,321	\$115,832,605
2008 - 2009 <sup>4</sup>	6394	\$44,116,584	\$6,900	4269	\$77,963,932	\$18,263	\$122,080,516
2009 - 2010 <sup>4</sup>	6716	\$45,944,277	\$6,841	4367	\$82,046,881	\$18,788	\$127,991,158
<sup>1</sup> School year is July 1 through June 30 of the following year.							
<sup>2</sup> Early Intervention Program became effective as of July 1, 1993 and took over the Family Court Program							
<sup>3</sup> Updated 10-15-09							
<sup>4</sup> Estimated							

## **LEGISLATIVE REFORM PRIORITIES**

### **Early Intervention Program – Commercial Insurance**

In 2009, one bill was recommended for insurance reform:

- A3719: Facilitates payment of claims by health insurers to municipalities for early intervention services; deems certification of the individualized family services plan by the early intervention official to meet any precertification, preauthorization, and medical necessity requirements imposed on benefits under the policy; prohibits an insurer from denying any payment of an early intervention claim based certain factors.

In 2005, a total of \$97.6 million was billed statewide for EI; however, rates of reimbursement from insurers remained low, approximately 10% to 11%.

Westchester County increased its rate of reimbursement on billable claims from 12% of approximately \$1.3 million in 2004 to 15.5% of approximately \$1.6 million in 2008.

In 2009, approximately 72% of EI children in Westchester were privately insured of which 32% of their covered services were billable to the insurance companies.

# **LEGISLATIVE REFORM PRIORITIES**

## **4410 Preschool Education Program**

### **Align Programmatic and Fiscal Responsibility for Preschool Administration:**

- In 2009, the state's Executive Budget recommended adjusting cost shares for the Preschool Special Education Program to better align fiscal responsibility with programmatic responsibility.
- This legislation intended to move fiscal responsibility to the school districts thus assuming a 15% share of preschool special education costs. This would reduce state share from 59.5% to 50.6% of program costs and the county share from 40.5% to 34.4%.
- Without this legislation, program costs are estimated to cost the state almost \$1.5 billion and counties \$607 million in FY 08/09.