



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Meeting Street's Olneyville Kindergarten Readiness Program Receives \$5,000 BankRI Grant to Support Expansion, Reach More Children this Summer**

*The free, 6-week program prepares children from low-income families, and without prior exposure to structured preschool learning, for a successful entry into kindergarten*

**PROVIDENCE, R.I.** – As the current school year approaches its finish line, Meeting Street is already gearing up to start preparing some of Providence's youngest students for their first classroom experience in the fall when they begin kindergarten. The school's effort, its Olneyville Kindergarten Readiness program, has been awarded a \$5,000 grant by **Bank Rhode Island (BankRI)** to support expansion to 40 children this summer.

"This is a program that aligns perfectly with BankRI's commitment to improving lives through education, especially for children," said Mark J. Meiklejohn, President and CEO, BankRI. "When it comes to a child's education, every kid deserves the chance for a level playing field regardless of their socioeconomic status."

Meeting Street created the Olneyville Kindergarten Readiness (OKR) program in 2012 to help close the school-readiness gap that exists for children living in the Olneyville neighborhood of Providence by supporting successful entry into kindergarten. It was developed to benefit children from low-income families unable to afford preschool or structured educational preparatory programs, which are identified as a primary driver of poor grade-school performance.

Delivered by veteran kindergarten teachers who work at the school the children will attend – William D'Abate Elementary – OKR provides a 6-week, 90-hour classroom curriculum proven to improve young students' readiness to learn. It is delivered at no cost to participating children or their families.

For each year of the program's existence, children who have participated have shown dramatic improvement in the six domains of the Kindergarten Readiness Assessment. And as OKR continues to grow, pre- and post-program survey data will expand.

**About Bank Rhode Island**

Bank Rhode Island, a wholly owned subsidiary of Brookline Bancorp, Inc. (NASDAQ:BRKL), is a full-service, FDIC-insured financial institution headquartered in Providence, Rhode Island. The bank operates 20 branches and more than 55 ATMs throughout Providence, Kent, Newport and Washington Counties. For more information, visit [www.bankri.com](http://www.bankri.com). You can also find BankRI on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/BankRhodeIsland](https://www.facebook.com/BankRhodeIsland).

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