



4.20.07

## Positive steps to start early learning on the right foot

It's a no brainer: a little high-quality education before kindergarten goes a long way.

Study after study shows that children who attend high quality pre-schools before kindergarten -- known in the child development community at "Pre-K" programs -- do better in school, are less likely to repeat a grade or require special education services. They're also more likely to graduate from high school attend college and have higher earnings.

But up until now, state funding for such high quality programs just hasn't been there.

Yesterday, however, Gov. Ed Rendell was at the Pittsburgh Athletic Club in Oakland at the annual Early Childhood Legislative Leadership breakfast to voice his support for the \$75 million Pre-K Counts Initiative, which would greatly expand quality pre-kindergarten opportunities to children and families across the state.

This year marks the first year, in fact, that dedicated funding for pre-K programs has been proposed in the governor's budget.

Will it pass? Who knows? But Mr. Rendell is strongly campaigning for it, as is Jim Rohr, CEO and chairman of PNC Financial Services Inc., who co-chairs the Pre-K Counts Public-Private Partnership for Educational Success. And on Monday, parents and teachers rallied at the state capitol in favor of the plan, as well as funding for full day kindergarten.

Under the plan, families in participating communities would be able to enroll their children in half- or full-day, quality, pre-kindergarten classrooms located in schools, Head Start sites, child care programs and nursery schools.

It's just a start, though: the first year of Pre-K Counts would serve 11,000 children in the 2007-08 school year -- hardly enough to cover all eligible children.

But it's a start.

Want to know more? Visit the [Web site](#) for the Pennsylvania Department of Education. Select the link for the "2007-08 Proposed Education Budget."

Here's another good [site](#) for Pennsylvania Pre-K Today.



[Previous article](#)  
[Parent Exchange archives](#)

---

[Search](#) | [Contact Us](#) | [Site Map](#) | [Terms of Use](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [Advertise](#) | [About Us](#) | [What's New](#) | [Help](#) | [Corrections](#)

Copyright ©1997-2007 PG Publishing Co., Inc. All Rights Reserved.