

## **Public invited to forum on state's early education plan**

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POTTSTOWN -- Gov. Ed Rendell's proposed agenda and budget for pre-K children will be outlined in a public forum on Wednesday afternoon.

Parents, educators and community members are invited to attend the presentation, "What Is in It for Children?," from 2 to 4 p.m. at the Pottstown Middle School, 600 N. Franklin St.

The programs that will be discussed include the newly proposed Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, and the expansion of existing programs, Head Start supplemental, child care subsidy, Keystone STARS, Early Intervention and the Educational Accountability Block Grants.

The new Pre-K Counts proposal will make it possible for 11,000 additional 3- and 4-year-old children to enroll in pre-kindergarten next year.

This voluntary program will enable school districts, Head Start providers, child care centers and nursery schools to deliver pre-kindergarten education to more children across the commonwealth, with a focus on children who are at risk of future academic failure, according to a press release from the state Department of Education.

The governor's 2007-08 budget also provides \$25 million in Accountability Block Grants for school districts that choose to launch a full-day kindergarten program or expand their existing full-day kindergarten program.

Coordinating this effort will be the new "Office of Child Development and Early Learning," which will also be explained at the forum. This new office is a branch of the Department of Education and Public Welfare.

Registration is needed to attend. This can be done by sending your name, organization and e-mail address to Gerri Griffin at [gerri@uwsepa.org](mailto:gerri@uwsepa.org), fax to 215-665-2531 or call 215-665-2580.

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