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Pre-K Counts Initiative to Help Combat Crime

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What effect does pre- kindergarten have on the crime rate? Plenty. That's the word from some education and law enforcement officials urging state lawmakers to spend 75 million dollars on "pre-k" in next year's budget. WFMZ's Jaccii Farris has the details. 156 "My name is John Morganelli and I'm the District Attorney." >>REPORTER: They may not understand what a district attorney does.. 218 "I help the police enforce the law you understand

what that means we all want to obey the law." >>REPORTER: But these wide eyed pre-k students are excited to hear him read Officer Buckle and Gloria. 331 "Officer Buckle checked to see if Gloria was sitting at attention and she was, see what a good dog." >>REPORTER: Morganelli came to story time at Spark Early Childhood Center because he believes pre-k programs like this one help mold at risk kids into model citizens. >>JOHN MORGANELLI: 1059 "You know we have less people going into the criminal areas, less gang members, less kids that might get into drugs." >>REPORTER: Bethlehem is one of 75 school districts in the state who offer pre- k. Governor Ed Rendell hopes to boost that number with a 75 million dollar Budget initiative. The result, 11 thousand more at risk kids in classrooms like this one. Possibly saving them from becoming a statistic.. >>BRUCE CLASH: 2745 "The research is very compelling, for instance in one study kids who are left out of pre kindergarten were five times more likely to be law breakers by age 27 2425 "Do you remember how man is these?" >>REPORTER: Spark teacher Martha Hernandez says it's just common sense, kids who attend pre-k become better socialized adults. >>MARTHA HERNANDEZ: 1932 "I always see a poster that what I learned in kindergarten is what I need to learn for my whole life." Jaccii Farris 69 News.

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