

Erie-Times-News

Pre-kindergarten initiative lauded

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Those of us who spend our days educating and caring for young children know that learning begins long before a child enters kindergarten.

There are landmark research studies that show that children who attend highquality preschool programs benefit socially, behaviorally and cognitively. Kids who attend prekindergarten do better on standardized tests, need less remediation and special education, and are more likely to stay in school and graduate.

So what can we do to help quality child-care programs continue to meet the needs of working families and developmental needs of children? Support PreK Counts. Pennsylvania PreK Counts is the governor's proposed prekindergarten initiative for the next fiscal year.

It calls for a \$75 million investment to create half-day and fullday preschool programs in school districts, Head Start, and education centers across the state, serving as many as 11,000 children ages 3 and 4.

We have an incredible opportunity to help kids in our communities be more prepared for school and have a greater chance of success when they get there.

Nancy Anne Kalista