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## Pre-K programs ensure good start for children

**We often hear about 'No Child Left Behind' and test scores that leave school districts scrambling to make sure their students are proficient in math and reading.**

The way to ensure a bright future for Pennsylvania is to make sure no child starts behind.

I am writing to encourage everyone support programs that provide learning opportunities for young children including Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, the governor's proposal in the 2007/08 budget for pre-kindergarten. Pre-K Counts will enable 11,000 3-and 4-year olds across Pennsylvania to attend high-quality pre-kindergarten in the 2007-2008 school year.

In Susquehanna County, Pre-K counts funding could support early learning programs at Blue Ridge School District, Forest City School District, Treasure House Child Development Center in Montrose, and Tiny Treasures in Forest City.

Studies show that children who attend high-quality pre-K enter school more prepared and achieve greater success. This means fewer grade retentions, less remediation and higher standardized test scores.

Furthermore, kids who attend pre-K are more likely to grow up and graduate from high school, earn higher wages and contribute as active members of their communities. Giving children the opportunity to develop socially, behaviorally and cognitively before they start kindergarten just makes sense. Pre-K helps foster a lifelong love of learning and who could argue with that?

I urge readers to support pre-K investments in the state budget that will positively impact students, schools, and communities in our area and the Commonwealth as a whole.

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