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The need for Head Start

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To the editor:

Several years ago I helped with a kindergarten screening for a local school district. The purpose was to give the teachers an idea about the skills the children already had so that they could plan appropriately.

I had one little girl dressed in her finest with bows in her hair, painted fingernails and a frilly dress. She could match colors. Then, I had a somewhat disheveled little boy who could match, recognize, name, read and spell all the colors. These two children would be in the same classroom.

Unfortunately, children who start school behind their peers usually stay behind.

Young children may be cared for at home or cared for by neighbors, relatives or child care professionals. Young children may or may not be read to, taken out to explore the neighborhood or given the opportunity to hop, skip and run. Young children may or may not have the opportunity to play with other children and learn what it means to take turns and share.

Young children may or may not have the opportunity to develop skills important to their success in school.

Head Start and PA Pre-K Counts proposed by the governor were designed to provide young children with learning opportunities they may otherwise not experience.

If every child is truly Pennsylvania's future, it is important that we support the quality early care and education programs being discussed in the state legislature.

Linda McDonough

Meyersdale

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