



Week of 03/19/07

What's New with Pre-K Today?

More than 400 organizations agreed to sign on to the letter to the Pennsylvania General Assembly in support of the governor's proposed investment of \$75 million in pre-K. That letter hit the desk of legislators today and is just the beginning of a series of communications to policymakers. Let's keep the momentum going! Legislators need to hear from us again and again and again! But it is exciting to have had such an overwhelming response from the field in such a short amount of time. You're the best!

The Request for Proposal to apply for Pre-K Counts was released this past week. For more information on the RFP click here:

http://www.prektoday.org/info_counts_summary.shtml

There is lots of excitement about the proposal from the Pre-K Today Coalition Partners. It a fabulous opportunity for child care, Head Start and public schools.

Terry Casey, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Child Care Association: "Pre K Counts marks a defining moment in time for Pennsylvania - a time when we recognize that learning begins much earlier than once was thought of as just school-age; a time when we recognize that community early care and education programs like child care are recognized as excellent providers of quality early learning experiences for 3 and 4 year olds; and a time when Pennsylvania moves up the report card of progress for its children! "

Blair Hyatt, executive director of Pennsylvania Head Start Association: "The Governor's Pennsylvania Pre K Counts proposal offers Head Start programs expanded opportunities to collaborate with other pre-K providers to offer quality pre-K programs supported by comprehensive services and meaningful parent involvement," Hyatt said." The proposal challenges the Head Start community to take a leadership roll in helping create high-quality pre-K programs that effectively serve all at-risk children."

"As educators, we know that high-quality pre-kindergarten increases a child's social, behavioral and cognitive readiness for school and enhances academic achievement," said Jim Weaver, president, Pennsylvania State Education Association (PSEA). "We support the governor's proposed pre-K initiative and are thrilled we will be able to partner with our friends in Head Start and the child care community."

What's Happening Next?

The House and Senate are in legislative session in Harrisburg Monday through Wednesday of this week. The House will not be back in Harrisburg until April 16. The Senate will be back in Harrisburg next Monday through Wednesday (March 26-28) and then break until April 16.

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717-236-5680

This is the perfect time to set up a district office visit with your legislator! Please call and set up a time to visit your legislator's local office and talk about pre-K. Legislators want to hear from their constituents- that's you – and why you think pre-K is good for your community.

What Can You Do this Week to Support Pre-K?

We urge you to take the following action steps (if you have not already done so) this week:

- 1. Reserve May 8 in your calendar to come to Harrisburg for Lobby Day. We need to see you there!***
- 2. Call your legislator's local district office and set up a time to go and visit along with some of your partners from the school district, child care, Head Start and early intervention. You also may wish to invite key business leaders and other community leaders who support pre-K. If you don't know who your legislators are, click on the link below and enter your address and zip code. Go here:***
<http://www.capwiz.com/papartnerships/state/main/?state=PA&view=myofficials#0>
- 3. Once you've met with your legislator(s), please click below (you can also access this from prektoday.org under "Share Results on your Legislative Visits") to enter summary information from contact with legislators:***
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