

Dear Editor:

As a member of this community, I encourage everyone to support the Governor's FY 2009-2010 budget proposal to increase funding for Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts by \$8.641 million to serve an additional 1,050 children

Additionally, another critical investment proposed by the Governor is increased access to child care subsidies through Child Care Works which would remove 2,000 children from the waiting list. Additionally, we encourage the support of the members of the General Assembly to use federal funds made available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to cut the child care waiting list in half from the 16,000 children who are waiting today.

Research shows that young children who are exposed to high-quality pre-K experience greater behavioral, emotional and cognitive development that increases their school readiness. They score better on standardized tests, have greater academic success, experience fewer grade retentions, need less special education remediation and are more likely to graduate from high school. Once they graduate from high school, they are likelier to earn family-sustaining wages, contribute to the tax base and require less welfare involvement than their peers who did not attend pre-K.

Without a doubt pre-K and other early childhood education investments positively impact students, schools and communities in our area as well as across Pennsylvania. Let's support pre-K.

Sincerely,