

Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts at a Glance

Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts will provide high quality pre-kindergarten services to 11,000 3 & 4 year olds in the Commonwealth so that they can enter school ready to learn and succeed in school and in life.



What is Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts

- High quality pre-kindergarten education for 3 and 4 year olds in Pennsylvania which is free to families, with a focus on children at risk of academic failure
- Full or half-day pre-kindergarten classes in schools, Head Start, Keystone STARS child care programs with a STAR 2 rating or higher, or nursery schools
- More than 140 grantees (lead agencies) with more than 300 early learning programs participating
- Classrooms available in most of Pennsylvania's 67 counties
- Administered by the Office of Child Development and Early Learning, Pennsylvania Departments of Education and Public Welfare
- \$75 million public investment for the 2007-2008 school year

Why Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts is unique

- The quality components of Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts will provide high quality early education to children who can benefit most from the experience.
 - teachers with the education and expertise to teach young children;
 - a curriculum that will help our children grow, academically and socially;
 - regular review of each child's progress and teaching methods and learning activities that are best for each child;
 - assistance for child and family to ease adjustment to pre-kindergarten and on to kindergarten;
 - small class size (no more than 20 students per one teacher and one aide) so that each child can have plenty of one-on-one time with the teachers.
- Assessment of the quality of the program and the children's progress will ensure that all Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts programs are providing high quality early education.
- By including all early learning programs, PA Pre-K Counts is building a quality early education system so our children have the best educational experience possible from the early years through graduation.

Why Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts is important

- Children who attend high quality pre-kindergarten do better in school; are less likely to repeat a grade or require special education services; are more likely to graduate high school and attend college; have higher earnings; and are more productive citizens.
- Pennsylvania's investment in quality pre-kindergarten programs could save Pennsylvania \$100 million in future special education costs. Additional future tax savings are possible because children who are better educated are more productive as adults, likely to be healthier, pay more taxes, and less likely to require public assistance.
- Quality pre-kindergarten prepares children for reading and math, but also for paying attention, following directions, and getting along with others. Pre-kindergarten gives children a chance to learn, become excited about school and be better students.

Who is eligible for Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts

- PA Pre-K Counts is designed for children who are between age 3 and until they enter kindergarten; and are at risk of academic failure, either because of income (300% of the federal poverty level, or a family of four earning \$61,950), language (English is not your first language), cultural or special needs issues. Each program offering PA Pre-K Counts classrooms will have their own guidelines, so contact the program directly for its eligibility and enrollment information.

How families enroll in Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts

- Families enroll directly at each grantee program. For a list of programs, visit the PDE website [Go to www.pde.state.pa.us and click "Pre K-12," then "Early Childhood," then "Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts."] Many of the grantees listed are partnering with early learning programs in their area and may have locations in nearby cities. Contact the lead agency listed for information on enrollment and locations.
- Classrooms are opening now.

For more information, visit the Pennsylvania Department of Education website at www.pde.state.pa.us.