



House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

Memorandum

TO: All Members of the House of Representatives

FROM: Representative Brendan F. Boyle
Representative John Sabatina
Representative Dennis O'Brien
Representative Kevin J. Boyle

DATE: February 25, 2011

SUBJECT: Co-sponsorship of Legislation – Bright Futures (Former HB 2407)

In the near future, I plan to reintroduce my “Bright Futures” legislation which would amend the Public School Code of 1949, ensuring students are eligible for Pennsylvania’s Pre-K Counts Program regardless of parental income. This legislation is fundamentally identical to House Bill 2407 introduced last session.

Making access to quality pre-kindergarten programs available to Pennsylvania families is crucial to our state’s overall educational system. The Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts Program provides half-day and full-day pre-kindergarten to approximately 12,000 children in this state. The program has been crucial in making children eager to learn as they enter kindergarten. Moreover, the program’s successes cannot be understated. For example, nearly every child showed age-appropriate or emerging age-appropriate proficiency in literacy, numeracy, and social skills after attending Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts in 2009-2010.

Currently, eligible children live in families earning up to 300 percent of the federal poverty level, or roughly \$66,000 for a family of four, and may be affected by other risk factors such as having special needs or learning English as a second language. Priority funding is given to approved providers that serve the highest number of at-risk eligible students, or those students at risk of educational failure because of limited English proficiency, poverty, community factors, academic difficulties, or economic disadvantage. My legislation would not alter this system of priority funding but simply ensure that all students are eligible for the program, regardless of family income.

Research makes it clear: access to quality early childhood education programs is crucial for success later in life. If you would like to co-sponsor this important piece of legislation, please contact Kristen Womelsdorf in my Harrisburg office at 717-787-3055 or kwomelsd@pahouse.net.