

DHS: The Impact Schools that Teach

April 17, 2015

Governor Wolf's proposed FY 2015-2016 budget includes historic investments in education to prepare our children for the jobs of tomorrow. Pennsylvania's early child care and education initiatives are among the most beneficial and cost-effective investments in the Commonwealth's future. The Department of Human Services' budget proposal includes federal funding investments focused on improving child care safety, increasing access through subsidies and supporting continuous quality improvement:

FY 2015-2016 Proposed Budget Initiatives

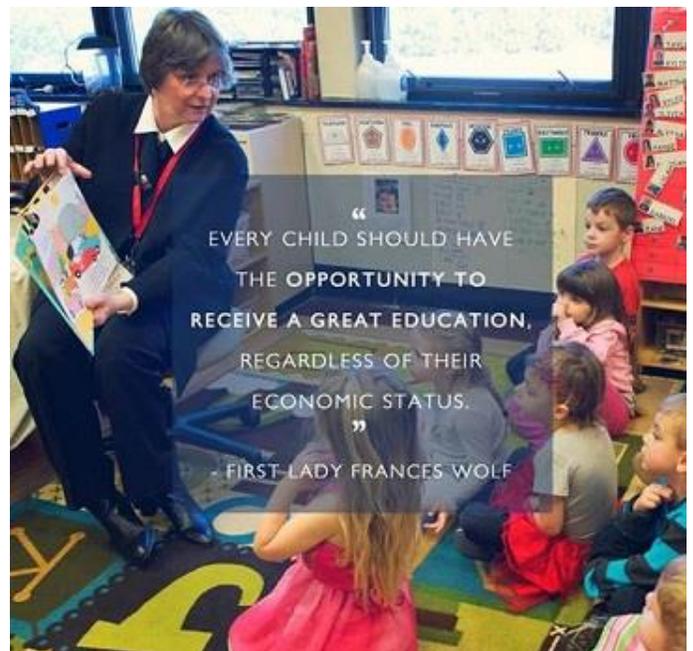
- \$17.8M in increased funding to provide childcare subsidies to an additional 3,600 children. Child care subsidies make quality child care more affordable, support the healthy development of children and help low-income parents access the stable care they need to go to work or to school and support their families;
- \$11.4M to increase the Rising STARS tiered reimbursement rates for STARS 3 and 4 providers. This proposal will help close the gap between the state subsidy reimbursement and the true cost of quality care, and incentivize providers at lower STAR levels to improve their level of quality;
- \$2.0M to establish infant/toddler add-on rates for STARS 2, 3, and 4 providers. Providing infant/toddler care comes with higher costs due to more stringent staff to child ratios and the need for additional equipment;
- \$3.9M for an additional 60 staff for child care inspections as a result of the reauthorization requirements of the Child Care and Development Block Grant program.

With new investments in PA Pre-K Counts (\$100M) and the Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program (\$20M), through the Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE), the Governor will be able to increase the number of children served in high-quality pre-kindergarten by 75%. This proposal represents the first step in achieving Gov. Wolf's goal of universal access to high-quality pre-kindergarten programs. DHS is partnering with PDE on efforts to expand access to high-quality pre-kindergarten programs, as high-quality STAR 3 and 4 child care providers may offer Pre-K Counts.

"One Book, Every Young Child"

Pennsylvania's First Lady Frances Wolf kicked off the 10th year of the "One Book, Every Young Child" initiative on April 2nd. This statewide program supports reading and instills a love of learning in PA children. Throughout April, state officials from PDE and DHS will read Philadelphia author Greg Pizzoli's *Number One Sam* to preschoolers in the month-long event highlighting the importance of early literacy.

"This administration is committed to schools that teach, and that starts with ensuring our children have a quality



early education that provides them with the skills needed to succeed," said Mrs. Wolf. "One Book, Every Young Child supports this goal and engages children in the magic of reading." Learn more at www.paonebook.org.