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## **Governor and First Lady Host Annual Easter Egg Event to Highlight Importance of Pre-K Investment**

**Harrisburg, PA** – Governor Tom Wolf and First Lady Frances Wolf today hosted pre-school classes from across the commonwealth at the annual Easter Egg Event at the Governor's Residence. The event was co-sponsored by Pre-K for PA, a non-partisan advocacy group that supports the expansion of publicly funded pre-k. Over 100 pre-school aged children participated.

"The long-term benefits of high-quality early childhood programs are tremendous – it reduces costs to our schools, enables stronger earning potential in our workforce, and leads to increased tax revenues to support a robust economy," Governor Wolf said. "Frances and I are very proud that Pennsylvania delivers high-quality, publicly funded pre-k to many at-risk children, but a serious investment must be made to continue toward the goal of providing access to all at-risk kids."

In his 2019-20 budget, Governor Wolf proposed an additional \$50 million to support high-quality pre-k programs in the commonwealth. With \$115 million in funding increases secured over the past four years, this additional investment will more than double the funding for Pre-K Counts programs since 2014-15 and increase funding for Head Start Supplemental Assistance by 77 percent.

"Today, Pennsylvania ranks 18th of the 30 states investing in high-quality pre-k with nearly 100,000 eligible children still lacking access," said Jodi Askins, founding partner of Pre-K for PA. "With Governor Wolf's proposal to invest \$50 million in this year's budget, 5,500 more children will be able to access high-quality pre-kindergarten, a fundamental building block of our state's education system that helps ensure children have the strong foundation necessary to enter kindergarten ready to learn."

Studies show that children who participate in high-quality pre-kindergarten perform better in school, graduate at higher rates, and earn more throughout their working lives compared to

peers who do not have access to early learning programs. Additionally, children who were previously enrolled in Pre-K Counts outperform their economically disadvantaged peers in third grade math and reading.

[Governor Wolf's budget](#) also leverages \$15 million in federal funding to expand high-quality childcare programs to nearly 1,000 Pennsylvania infants and toddlers. It also includes a \$5 million investment for evidence-based home visiting programs, to serve an additional 800 vulnerable families.

For more information on pre-k in Pennsylvania, visit [Pre-K for PA](#).

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