

Letters to the Editor
Philadelphia Inquirer

http://www.philly.com/inquirer/opinion/20090518_Letters_to_the_Editor.html?viewAll=y

May 18, 2009

Early education saves state money

Given the troubled economy, the partisan back-and-forth in Harrisburg, as described by Dan Hardy's article Tuesday, "GOP vs. Rendell on school funding," should come as no surprise. However, our commitment to wise investments like high-quality early education must rise above this partisan debate.

Early childhood is the primary window of opportunity when we can provide a strong educational foundation so that children are equipped to do well in school, attend college or job-training programs, and get good jobs.

At-risk children who miss this window are less likely to graduate high school, and more likely to engage in crime. With a cost to taxpayers of up to \$2.3 million for every child who adopts a life of crime, we can either pay for success now, or pay much more for failure later.

Continued investment in programs such as Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, Keystone STARS, Head Start Supplemental, Child Care Works, and Early Intervention deserves priority in next year's state budget.

Jack Brennan
Chairman
Vanguard Group Inc.
Valley Forge

Lynne Abraham
District Attorney
City of Philadelphia