

Bottom-line view

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In response to the news story, "Study: 90% of Pittsburgh's young adults unfit for military service" (May 13 and TribLIVE.com): Business leaders share similar concerns about the future of our work force and agree that quality early education is key.

About 95 percent of Waste Management's jobs in Pennsylvania require a high school diploma, and 40 percent require at least a bachelor's degree. The skills we need in our employees are already forming in the first five years of life. Quality early learning experiences help children build the academic and vitally important social skills they need to succeed in school and the work force.

Pittsburgh is already seeing a return on its early education investment. A report from the Partnership for America's Success states that according to Pittsburgh Public Schools, nearly half of the children who received early intervention services in pre-kindergarten because they had disabilities or developmental delays entered kindergarten without the need for expensive special education services. This is an almost immediate cost savings to our schools and our communities.

I support Gov. Corbett's decision to maintain funding for early childhood education in his budget proposal and urge our state leaders to do the same because it is critical to Pennsylvania's bottom line.

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