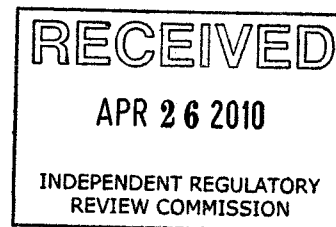


**From:** Cynthia Ash [cyash@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Sunday, April 25, 2010 4:41 PM  
**To:** Cynthia Ash  
**Subject:** letter to IRRC 4-25-10



2817

Independent Regulatory Review Commission  
333 Market Street  
14th Floor  
Harrisburg, PA 17101  
Fax number: (717) 783-2664  
[irrc@irrc.state.pa.us](mailto:irrc@irrc.state.pa.us)

RE: Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts final omitted regulations (#6-319)

Dear Commission members:

I am writing to express my support for the Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts final omitted regulations re-submitted to you on April 7, 2010 (#6-319).

The quality expectations of Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, which are included in the regulations, are essential to gaining positive outcomes for our young children. Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts is giving our at-risk children, such as those living in low-income families, those with special needs, and English language learners the strong start that research shows can help them overcome these risk factors and enter school ready to learn.

An important piece of these guidelines is promoting inclusive classrooms.

- Research has shown many positive effects of including children with disabilities in early childhood programs. The benefits accrue not only to children with disabilities but also to children with typical development, their families, classroom teachers, and the community at large.
- The quality expectations of Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, which are included in the regulations require approved providers to collaborate with infant/toddler and preschool Early Intervention services to provide a smooth transition for children entering classrooms, facilitate the Early Intervention services needed for children enrolled in PA Pre-K Counts classrooms, and facilitate identification of children who are not receiving Early Intervention services but are eligible.
- PA Pre-K Counts has been a contributing factor to the increase of EI children in typical settings. Historically, less than 50% of preschool children receiving Early Intervention services received their services in typical early childhood settings. Since the creation of PA Pre-K Counts and targeted efforts to promote inclusion in PA Pre-K Counts classrooms, 15% more preschool children receiving Early Intervention services are enrolled in typical classroom settings.
- Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts is serving a proportionate amount of children receiving Early Intervention services. Approximately 4% of Pennsylvania's three and four year olds are participating in Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts, with 7.5% of those children receiving Early Intervention services. Across Pennsylvania, between 5%-7% of preschool children are receiving Early Intervention Services.

Franklin County Head Start has been able to serve more children due to the support of funds received to create, in collaboration with school districts, 5 pre-K counts classrooms that serve many children who have disabilities in an inclusive setting. Franklin County Head Start has also been able to identify children, after enrollment into the pre-K program, who have developmental delays and/or disabilities and thus have been able to help the children receive services through the local LIU. Research has shown that the earlier the delays and disabilities are addressed, the better the outcomes and possibilities for future success in life.

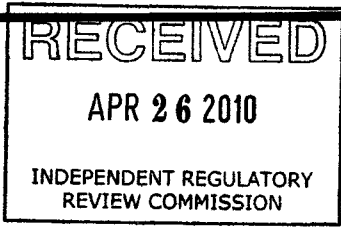
Pennsylvania Pre-K Counts is working because it is providing high quality pre-kindergarten to our at-risk children in inclusive classrooms.

Please approve these regulations in full.

Sincerely,  
Cynthia Ash MEd, Assistant Director, Franklin County Head Start

2817

**From:** Cynthia Ash [cash@fchsonline.org]  
**Sent:** Monday, April 26, 2010 10:22 AM  
**To:** IRRC  
**Cc:** Carol Sutton; Pamela Eyer  
**Subject:** support letter  
**Attachments:** letter to IRRC 4-25-10.htm



Please read the attached letter of support for the Pre-K program which explain the benefits to the community and the education of children and families we serve.

*Cindy Ash, MEd*  
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Franklin County Head Start  
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