

HauppaugePatch

LI Business Leaders Gather in Islandia and Urge Support for Governor's Proposed Early Learning Budget to Strengthen LI Businesses

Posted by Allison Gayne February 20, 2013

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Long Island business leaders, along with New York State Senator John Flanagan, Chair of the State Senate Education Committee, and New York State Education Department Regents Member Roger Tilles, released today an *America's Edge* report showing that investments in high-quality early care and education have a “multiplier effect,”



producing an immediate boost to New York businesses and long-term economic benefits through a more skilled future workforce.

Participating in a news conference at the CA Technologies on-site child care center were *America's Edge* members Lisa Mars, Vice President for Human Resources at CA Technologies, Kevin McCrudden, President of Motivate America, Inc., and Michael DeLuise, President of the Melville Chamber of Commerce. They were joined by Jenn O'Connor, New York State Director of *America's Edge*, a national nonprofit business leaders organization.

The *America's Edge* report cites research showing that key “quality components” of early care and education programs significantly contribute to both short- and long-term benefits for New York businesses, including on Long Island. The report shows that investments in quality early learning have an immediate economic impact, with every dollar invested generating a total of \$1.86 in sales of local goods and services throughout the state.

It also notes that every dollar invested in New York's early learning sector has one of the highest economic output multipliers – out-performing investments in manufacturing, transportation, and wholesale and retail trade.

“People don't think about how the quality components of early learning programs drive an immediate boost for New York's businesses, including here on Long Island,” said

McCrudden. “We should invest in all sectors that are good for New York businesses and our state’s economy. And one of those sectors is definitely quality early care and education.”

Senator John Flanagan voiced his support for the need for quality early care and education programs across New York, stating, “It is clear that one of the most basic foundations for educational success is quality early care and education. While we have one of the best education systems in the nation, the *America’s Edge* report highlights the need to continue our commitment to our youngest students so we can help them become the leaders of tomorrow and give them the tools they need to be part of a highly skilled workforce in a growing global economy. This will benefit our businesses both now and in the coming years.”

Mars outlined the need to create and attract skilled workers to Long Island and across New York, highlighting the need for employees to have advanced skills in math, reading and writing, as well as the increasingly important “soft skills,” such as communication, collaboration and critical thinking. The report documents that, by 2018, 63 percent of all jobs in New York will require post-secondary education, but only 37 percent of New York public school students graduate “college and career ready.”

“The bottom line for New York businesses, including here on Long Island, is that we have to build an education infrastructure to ensure a pipeline of skilled workers for the future,” said Mars, who has led CA Technologies’ efforts to establish Montessori Child Care Centers at several campuses, including the Islandia location. “And the foundation of that infrastructure is high-quality early learning.”

The report also shows that quality components are key to the long-term economic outcomes for New York businesses and economy. Children who participate in high-quality early learning programs are more likely to achieve more academically and financially as adults. Those in these programs, as cited in the report:

- are 31 percent more likely to hold a job considered semi-skilled or higher
- can earn 36 percent more as adults
- are four times more likely to have earned a four-year college degree by the age of 30

These results, according to the report, translate into impressive returns on investment, as much as \$16 for every \$1 invested.

“We have been hit hard on Long Island by the economic downturn and now by Sandy. We are resilient,” said Deluise. “As we look at the opportunities for rebuilding after the devastation from Superstorm Sandy, few investments offer such dramatic and proven short- and long-term economic benefits as quality early care and education.”

The business leaders applauded Governor Cuomo’s proposed \$25 million increase in funding for full-day Pre-K funding in high-needs districts but urged that this funding – and all funding for New York’s early learning programs – be used wisely to increase

access to programs and to improve the quality of those programs. Quality factors include:

- Highly skilled teachers who are appropriately compensated for what they know and do.
- Smaller class sizes and small child-to-teacher ratios.
- Comprehensive, age-appropriate curricula.
- Strong family involvement
- Screening and referral services for developmental, health or behavior problems.

“The plan for full-day pre-K and all of our early learning programs should align quality standards and integrate research-based strategies for implementing those quality standards,” said O’Connor.

America’s Edge is a national, nonprofit business leaders organization with almost 900 members from across the country, who work to strengthen business and the economy through proven investments in children and youth.

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