



GOVERNOR JOSH SHAPIRO

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Tuesday, March 26, 2024

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Governor Shapiro and First Lady Lori Shapiro Host Annual Easter Egg Hunt at Pennsylvania Governor's Residence, Emphasize Importance of Investing in Early Childhood Education



Harrisburg, PA – Today, **Governor Josh Shapiro** and **First Lady Lori Shapiro** welcomed pre-K students, teachers, and advocates from across the Commonwealth to the Pennsylvania Governor's Residence for the 2024 annual Easter Egg Hunt.

Since taking office, Governor Shapiro has been focused on building safe and healthy communities – and he knows that an important part of doing that is supporting Pennsylvania students and children and addressing critical workforce shortages. The Governor has been fighting for investments in early childhood education programs to give our children a ladder up and to help address the staffing shortages in these programs.

"Lori and I were excited to welcome preschool students and teachers to the Residence today – and we will continue our work to ensure every child in Pennsylvania receives a quality education and has the freedom to chart their own course and the opportunity to succeed," said **Governor Josh Shapiro**. "Well-funded early childhood education programs prepare Pennsylvania students for success and support our teachers and

workforce at the same time – and that’s why my budget invests an additional \$30 million in Pre-K Counts and \$2.7 million in our Head Start program. This funding would provide opportunities for our kids to get a head start in high-quality, affordable, accessible pre-K programs, and to support the hard-working educators in every classroom. This is commonsense – let’s get it done.”

The Governor’s [2024-2025 budget proposal](#) makes significant investments in early childhood development and education, including an additional **\$30 million** for the Pre-K Counts program to give more parents access to stable childcare for their kids and **\$2.7 million** in funding for the Head Start Supplemental Program to help address staffing shortages in early childhood education programs.

"Every Pennsylvania child deserves access to high-quality pre-K, and Josh and I were thrilled to host pre-K students, educators, and advocates from across Pennsylvania today to bring attention to how having access to early childhood education creates opportunity for families and workers," said **First Lady Lori Shapiro**. "As the proud parents of four kids, we know firsthand the importance of providing children with the educational opportunities and resources they need to thrive. We are grateful for the dedication and commitment of Pennsylvania educators who support children across the Commonwealth every day and provide them with a quality education."

This is Governor and First Lady Shapiro's second Easter Egg Hunt in partnership with Pre-K for PA, welcoming pre-K classrooms from across Pennsylvania to the Governor’s Residence to participate in an Easter Egg Hunt and celebrate the importance of high-quality, accessible early learning programs.

"Pre-k teachers earn roughly half of their K-5 counterparts in public schools and face the tough choice of staying in their chosen profession as wages increase across other sectors," said **Steve Doster, State Director for ReadyNation and a principal partner in the Pre-K for PA Campaign**. "Our coalition is excited to work with Governor Shapiro to advance his proposed investment, which is a critical first step in closing this gap and ensuring adequate staffing levels to operate state funded pre-k programs at current-funded capacity."

In addition to the traditional Easter Egg Hunt, the Governor and First Lady joined Pennsylvania students and children at various stations, including a reading station hosted by the [State Library of Pennsylvania](#), a live goat station hosted by the Steinmetz Family Farm of Berks County, and a station with live bunnies from the PA Farm Show.

For more information about how Governor Shapiro’s proposed 2024-25 budget invests in Pennsylvania students and children, visit shapirobudget.pa.gov.

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