



## **Kara Johnson: Get The Facts**

Regarding the Sept. 22 editorial in the Tyler Paper, “Perry Was Right To Veto Early Education Bill,” as the Governor’s race heats up and political accusations begin to fly, it’s important to get the facts right about early education in Texas.

The majority of research on early childhood education shows clear evidence of immediate and future gains for children who participate in high quality pre-k programs. Pre-kindergarten programs have been proven to prepare children to meet kindergarten readiness standards, thereby setting them up for success in early elementary school and their entire school career.

Gov. Perry’s veto of a pre-k funding bill in 2009 does not signal his disapproval of early childhood education. Rather the veto emphasized expansion of existing high quality pre-k programs to serve more children across the state. This veto did not signal the end of pre-k in Texas; in fact, continued pre-k funding is evidence of a statewide commitment to the education of our young children.

To value the needs of current K-12 students over children coming into the system is shortsighted and dismissive of the evidence that pre-k prepares children for success in school and life. Not only do limits on pre-kindergarten jeopardize positive outcomes for young children, these limits also constrain Texas’ potential to be an economically rich state. This campaign season, remember to get all the facts from every candidate before heading to the polls.

More information on high-quality early care and education is available at [www.tecec.org](http://www.tecec.org).

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