



March 3, 2013

As educators take up Governor Tomblin's education reform measure (S.B. 359) this week, we are encouraged by proposals to shift education decisions to the local community, but disappointed at the lack of emphasis the reform measure places upon affirming the fundamental rights of parents to provide for the education of their children.

Take the proposal for full-day preschool for example. Efforts to encourage children to start learning early are not misplaced. Children who learn to read at an early age do better in later years of their education *and* are more productive citizens in general.

But it does not follow that those results are *only* obtainable if professional educators are the ones doing the pre-schooling. Our children need more, not less, time with their parents. But, when talking education reform, a key decision-maker is often left out: mom and dad. That should change.

Another reason to be cautious in expanding our state's commitment to preschool is that it is a very expensive option. If full-day preschool is going to be given as an option, then there is going to arise an obvious need for teachers, desks, classrooms, etc. In a state that already spends nearly \$10,000 *per student* in public education, West Virginia ought to move forward with caution.

Perhaps the question that ought to be considered is whether an *increase* of state spending is wise, given that moms and dads - already hard-pressed to adequately support their children - will ultimately foot the bill through taxes.

Learn more about this issue and how the Family Policy Council of WV is working to advance, defend, and equip West Virginia's families through policy, politics, and preparation by visiting FamilyPolicyWV.com/action.



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