

From: [Tahsha Smith](#)
To: [Senate Finance Committee](#)
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Committee Chair, Members of the Committee, for the record my name is Tahsha Smith I am a parent of a child attending Nome Preschool, a site included in the Pre-K Grant which is slated to be eliminated from the Department of Education and Early Development Budget for fiscal year 2016.

The most notable component of the grant is a certified teacher, hired by Nome Public Schools and funded by the Pre-K Grant, teaching the students at Nome Preschool. The benefits of the certified teacher and the Pre-K Grant are as follows.

1. The data continually conveys each year that students who enter kindergarten having attended either the Nome Preschool or Kawerak Head Start are routinely well prepared for kindergarten. This directly correlates with the placement of a highly qualified, certified teacher pedagogically prepared for the task of teaching Pre-K students.

2. The grant combines the efforts of the federally funded Kawerak Head Start, the privately funded Nome Preschool, and Nome Public Schools to share the cost of educating our young learners. Neither entity is able to shoulder this burden of quality early childhood education on its own. The Pre-K Grant, broken down, is \$6000 per student which is substantially lower than the cost per student in Kindergarten through 12th grade (\$17000 per year).

3. Research shows the long term benefits of pre-kindergarten education produce fewer students in need of remedial educational resources, lower drop out rates, and lower rates of incarceration later in life. All of which are much more costly to the public than the \$6000 per student cost of the Pre-K Grant.

As a parent and community member in Nome, I ask that you reconsider the elimination of the Pre-K Grant. We are proud of our preschool system. Removing the Pre-K Grant cripples our ability to continue the same high standard of early childhood education. Again we implore you to help in sustaining our progress.