

# THE TRUTH ABOUT DEGREED TEACHERS FOR FLORIDA'S 4-YEAR-OLDS

A few vocal groups are spreading misinformation about degreed lead teachers in pre-k classrooms.  
It is time to *Separate Fact from Fiction*

**Fiction**

**FACT**

We can gradually increase the quality of Florida's pre-k programs without requiring degreed teachers. Nothing will be lost.

Scientific research clearly establishes that a child's foundation for learning occurs at a very young age. If missed a child is at a disadvantage.

Current pre-k instructors without a college degree will likely lose their jobs if Florida requires degreed teachers.

Jobs will not be lost. Degreed teachers will elevate the status of the entire early learning workforce. Current pre-k personnel who seek to improve the quality of pre-k education will be encouraged to acquire credentials in order to become lead teachers. Florida TaxWatch has charted a variety of realistic paths that will enable them to accomplish this goal.

Improving the quality of Florida's pre-k program will take funding away from K-12.

According to Florida Tax Watch, for every dollar Florida spends on pre-k the state will recoup 7 dollars in subsidizing costs associated with social problems and k-12 failures.

Private and faith based providers will not be able to participate if degreed lead teachers are required.

Florida's pre-k program is voluntary and optional for all providers whether they are public, private or faith based. Reimbursement rates are the same for any participating provider.

The Legislature will need to write a new law to require degreed lead teachers in pre-k classrooms.

In order to ensure degreed teachers in pre-k classrooms by 2013, and to fulfill the original voter intent, a simple amendment change in FS 1002.65 is all that is needed now.

We do not have the teacher capacity to recruit degreed teachers for pre-k classrooms.

Florida TaxWatch has researched and designed a multifaceted teacher recruitment model that is available to meet the demand for high quality degreed teachers in Florida.

*Continued*

**Fiction**

**FACT**

Degreed lead teachers do not make a difference for pre-k students.

Research has established that children taught by degreed teachers are better prepared to positively interact with their peers, engage in more creative activities, and develop more expansive vocabularies. It has been documented that it really DOES make a difference.

This requirement will have an immediate impact on pre-k providers across the state.

State agencies and providers have 6 years to prepare for delivering quality education for Florida's pre-school children. Amending the pre-k statute to clearly define legislative intent will enable the stakeholders to begin planning now.

There will be a fiscal impact this year.

There is no immediate fiscal impact for fulfilling the legislative intent for degreed teachers in Florida Statutes this year. Any worthwhile program, including providing a quality pre-k education will have future cost factors. We need to begin planning now so we can phase in our plans to ultimately deliver the quality programs supported by Florida voters, parents and educators.

I'm for children but don't support degreed teachers

We cannot ignore our responsibility to provide all children in Florida the right start in their early formative years. The voters spoke, the research confirms—a quality pre-k education, including degreed lead teachers, creates the foundation every child deserves.

See Florida TaxWatch's *Routes to Degreed Teachers* study.

**Join Governor Crist in defending the facts. Author or Support an amendment today, to get degreed teachers in Florida's pre-k classrooms by 2013.**



**CHILDREN'S  
CAMPAIGN,  
INC.**

P.O. Box 1718 ~ Tallahassee, FL 32302  
Ph: 850.425.2600 Fax: 850.425.2620

Website: [www.iamforkids.org](http://www.iamforkids.org) ~ Email: [campaign@iamforkids.org](mailto:campaign@iamforkids.org)