

La Opinión

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Editorial: Preschool education awaits

Preschool education is crucial for children's development and their preparation for school and adult life. Scientific findings increasingly stress the importance of brain development at an early age. Quality preschool education prepares children academically, providing them with a solid foundation in reading and math, while also teaching them how to get along with others and resolve problems peacefully.

The advantages of solid universal preschool education in society are unquestionable, but its implementation still faces major hurdles. A poll of public preschools revealed that over 75% have a waiting list and have been forced to turn away low-income children. A study by RAND Corp. indicates that the quality of education in California is mixed, in the best of cases, and that it falls short in key areas for preparing children for grades K-12.

There are now four bills (SB 1629, AB 2759, SB 1298, and AB 2467) laying an important foundation for a solid preschool system. The measures combine different aspects, ranging from program consolidation and an information system to identify best practices to a system to transfer students to elementary school and to help parents make decisions.

These proposals, now awaiting Governor Schwarzenegger's signature, must not fall victim to the current budget dispute. Preschool education is too important to be pushed onto the back burner. We hope the governor will do the right thing and enact these laws as soon as possible.