

# BANGOR DAILY NEWS

## June 28 Letters to the Editor

6/28/10

### A solid investment

I would like to publicly thank the Maine retired military leaders who recently highlighted that early learning programs, including pre-K, are the best tool to increase student achievement and thus graduation rates and future career success.

As a retired banker and businessman, I concur wholeheartedly: Giving kids the right start in life through the highest-quality early education pays great dividends for Maine businesses — today and tomorrow.

While many recognize early learning programs have long-term economic benefits, early learning investments can also help jump-start our local economies now.

A new report from America's Edge found these investments provide a strong boost to local businesses — generating \$1.75 for every \$1 invested in quality early learning. That investment is as high, or higher, than investments in other major sectors such as manufacturing, transportation or utilities. This increased spending, in turn, helps support our Bangor-area economy.

Small and large business leaders carefully monitor their bottom lines and critically analyze how to generate the most return from every dollar invested, especially during the current economic downturn. The rate of return on early education certainly makes it a solid economic development strategy for Maine. And, in the process, these investments help prepare the next generation for career successes, be they military, public or private sector.

**Arthur Comstock**

*Orono*