

# KENNEBEC JOURNAL

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## Educare to give Maine 2 economic ‘bounces’

A great event was held in Waterville on Sept. 27, when the new Educare facility held its ribbon-cutting ceremony. I want to thank everyone who was involved in making Educare in Waterville a reality. This new early learning center will provide wonderful educational and enrichment opportunities to hundreds of youngsters each year at a critical time when their young brains are developing at warp speed and laying the critical foundations for all their future social, cognitive and emotional development.

At the Educare Center ribbon cutting, businessman and Educare founder George Kaiser stated it well when he said, “Educare is the great equalizer, ensuring that students of all socioeconomic classes are given a chance to succeed in school and in life.”

As a business leader, I would also like to point out that high-quality early learning programs such as Educare are key to ensuring that we continue to grow our businesses and maintain a vibrant economy. Research studies have shown that high-quality early-education programs can make a huge difference in the lives of children by greatly increasing the likelihood that these children will graduate from high school and enter the work force with the 21st century skills that businesses demand.

Maine will receive two economic “bounces” from Educare. The first one is the short-term job growth and local economic benefits greater Waterville will receive from the center and its new staff. And the second, longer-term economic benefit will be experienced by Maine businesses when Educare graduates join our work forces ready to take on the challenges of Maine’s future economy.

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