

Illinois Governor Suggests Preschool for All

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CHICAGO, Feb. 12 — Gov. Rod R. Blagojevich announced Sunday that he wanted Illinois to become the first state in the nation to offer universal preschool to 3- and 4-year-olds.

Mr. Blagojevich, a Democrat who is up for re-election this year, said the preschool proposal would particularly help middle-income families, many of whom earn too much to qualify for existing state preschool but not enough to pay for school on their own.

The plan, which would require approval from state legislators, would cost the state \$45 million in each of the next three years, the governor said. By then, he said, all of the state's 4-year-olds would be covered, as would more than 55,000 3-year-olds.