

deaeyc Early Childhood Education Candidate Questionnaire

Answers Submitted By: Bruce Ennis

1. What are your views on the needs of young children (birth to kindergarten) and what specific steps would you take to address these needs?

Far too many young children (birth to kindergarten aged) have proven to be underserved coming from homes that are economically disadvantaged. Some of those children face the added challenge of communicating and learning in a language that presents a barrier in participation. To address this need, we should continue to make greater investments in our preschoolers. Learning takes place immediately from birth and children should have an opportunity to be subjected to regimented instruction prior to entering Kindergarten,

2. What are your views on the ways in which we can close the education achievement gap with a particular focus on the early years?

Despite a number of educational reforms, we have found little success because the reforms have underperformed. Beginning with our preschoolers, we can develop our own strategies, for example a state building or more modern educational facility and system that is globally competitive. I support greater investments in our young children.

3. What is the role of the state/city/federal government to provide for programs that will be addressing the socio-emotional and mental health issues young children will experience in the coming weeks and months resulting from the disruption in their lives brought on by the Covid-19 pandemic?

The Covid-19 pandemic has very much added socio-emotional issues to ongoing mental health issues some children may already be experiencing otherwise. I believe both state and federal government play a role, especially with regard to those eligible for education assistance due to their demographic. This would require experienced educators addressing these specific needs in the classroom and within the community.

4. What steps would you take to attract, and retain quality educators in the early childhood education field?

As an elected official and while serving as a member of our state's Joint Finance Committee in the General Assembly, greater investments in teacher units must continue. I am a strong advocate of rewarding educators who have proven competent in childhood education and willing to increase compensation to retain them to continue in this important field.

5. As an elected official, what would be your top 4 priorities in the first 100 days in the position?

The top priorities if re-elected include building for the future and creating an environment where our children can flourish and achieve their full potential. Prioritizing special education so that children obtain the support they need to succeed. Containment of healthcare costs. Continuing hands-on constituent services.

6. How would you improve the economy of your city, our State and/or our nation?

I would work to eliminate onerous regulations and laws that have stifled job creation and growth. Identify new industry which could lead to diversity in our economy. Also, retain our current work force to meet neighboring states and global competition.