

deaeyc Early Childhood Education Candidate Questionnaire

Answers Submitted By: Dan Zitofsky

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?

I believe there is proven methods and results by starting children early before pre K years with skills. We need to sharpen the pencils in state budgets and help provide funding for POC children. In my research we are extremely under normal full pay rate per child. I truly believe this is a cause of our students typically behind the national average in reading, math and writing later in years.

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?

We need to incorporate annual surveys to get a full picture of POC reimbursements. This should be taken care of with all providers and not just those that accept POC. It should be full reimbursement of the actual market rate rather than just 75%,

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 state has taken in Cares Act money for Covid and a portion needs to be isolated for providers to adequately provide the increased care necessary during these times. We are seeing parents going through financial and mental hardship and we cant allow kids to go backwards in their growth do to the corona shut downs.

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

In order to maintain quality educators in the early childhood education, theres no doubt that budgets need to be increased to attract top quality certified and trained teachers. We cant attract those educators at the income they are receiving, leaving our children missing out on the best foundation for their later years in school. Our early educators need to be compensated equivalent to what teachers in grade schools are receiving. The state needs to sharpen their pencils and reduce wasteful spending to increase both

salaries and health insurance for the staff. There is a terrible lack of health insurance in the industry and this hurts in recruiting or retain quality staff.

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

Depending on the current situation with the Covid Shut downs but should we still be in the same situation, my priorities would be: 1) work with legislatures on budgets for increased efforts of technology, supplies and staff for a competent virtual learning experience, 2) Work with larger educational packages to include early education for health care packages to reduce the cost and allow a co-op type program to gain more affordable care, 3) Review the Cares act funding the state has received and work with legislatures to enhance reimbursement 4) Work with legislatures to focus on full reimbursement for all facilities. If full reimbursement implemented that more programs will accept POC families and the children will have continuity of care.

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

Overall this is a great question and can be implements in many ways. I would start with small businesses. We need to work with small businesses and corporations to make it much more business friendly. Currently we are ranked 38th for small business in the US and 49th on growth. We understand the economic policies and quality of life for families when we have both quality higher paying jobs and business in the state. We have to work on bringing quality higher paying jobs here and the only way to do that is to improve the education where qualified candidates chose Delaware as a place they want to live and raise a family. Doing so, increases, values, taxes and spending overall bringing more money in to the state for programs such as early learning. e's economy. Let's make it the story of inclusive prosperity for all.