

deaeyc Early Childhood Education Candidate Questionnaire

Answers Submitted By: Donyale Hall

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?

These are the formative years that are crucial to the success/failures when a child enters the K-12 school system. As a mother of 10 children, who range in age from 30 to 8, I have seen firsthand how critical pre-k programs are. It has been my experience to see the difference when my children were introduced to conceptual learning prior to entering kindergarten. Those that had that foundation excelled academically. As Lt. Governor, I would push for expansive pre-k programs for all children.

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?

As previously stated, I would leverage the influence of the Lt. Governor's office to support pre-k programs for all children. In addition, I would work to address the inequities surrounding access to technology and digital disparities.

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?

I currently have 4 school-aged children. Two are in high school and two are in elementary school. I see firsthand how stressful remote learning and lack of social interaction has devastated our children. The pathway forward must include a strong strategic plan for recovery. I will advocate strongly for the creation of a local cross-sectional task force comprised of local decision makers, education leaders, and representatives of school staff, families, local health officials, and other community members can support identifying mitigation strategies to provide for programs that will be addressing the socio-emotional & 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.

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

I believe a long term strategy is needed to attract and retain highly qualified and experienced childhood educators. Key parts of this strategy needs to include higher pay for higher education, retention bonuses, robust training, and a supportive work environment.

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

My top 4 priorities for the first 100 days In this position are as follows:

- Advocate for immediate reopening of schools with proper supports in place to mitigate the spread and prevent future outbreaks of COVID-19
- Advocate for the immediate reopening for our state's economy with proper supports in place to mitigate the spread and prevention of future outbreaks of COVID-19
- Advocate for education reform from the cradle to college, expansion of vocational opportunities to trade certification, attacking technology disparities with reformed spending directed at closing the education achievement gap
- Advocate for a strategic plan of economic development and job growth

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

I will be a strong advocate for economic advancement opportunity in the following areas:

- PRIME job growth (Planned Revitalization for Industrial Manufacturing Execution)
- Strategic economic development plan to leverage opportunity zone resources
- Affordable housing
- Business incubators
- Tax incentives for seed investors
- Eliminate excessive regulatory restrictions

