

## 2024 North Carolina State Office Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Evelyn Davidson

District or Office: NC House District 118

Party Affiliation: Democrat

Current Occupation: Nurse

### Questions for 2024 Candidates for State Office in North Carolina

**1. The most rapid period of brain development happens in the first five years of life, laying the foundation for all future learning, health, and success in school and life. What are your views on the needs of young children (prenatal to age 5) and what steps would you take to address these needs?**

I believe that we should encourage brain development in all children. Infants: have the baby Einstein CDs, and books available at the public library in sufficient numbers for the community the libraries serve. Increase in public preschool programs starting at age 3. Assist communities in obtaining funding to make this happen.

**2. Every county in North Carolina is considered a "child care desert" with not enough supply to meet the demand. When parents do find child care, the average cost is nearly \$10,000/year, which is higher than the cost of public college tuition. What steps would you take to ensure that families have access to high-quality and affordable early learning programs for their children?**

Assist communities in access to any existing funding to promote child care centers that are affordable and safe. Encourage CPR, first aid, safety, and early childhood development courses for teens who wish to provide child care after school, holidays, and weekends. Encourage fellow legislators to join me in this endeavor.

**3. Currently, child care teachers in North Carolina earn an average of \$14/hour, less than most retail or service workers. Since 2021, federally-funded Child Care Compensation Grants have provided higher wages and bonuses to more than 40,000 North Carolina early educators, but that funding has expired. This summer, the NC General Assembly appropriated funds to extend the grants for a short time, while also recognizing the need to explore long-term solutions to attract and retain a qualified early childhood workforce. What steps would you take to stabilize and sustain North Carolina's early education system and child care workforce as we approach the end of Compensation Grant funding?**

I recognize that NC must find a solution to stabilize funding for child care teachers in NC. The work that child care teachers provide help to mold our future leaders and work force. They should be paid accordingly, and be offered benefits. Communities must also step up to help assist with fund raising to shore up wages for these vital workers.

**4. Working parents depend on child care, and businesses in nearly every sector have identified child care as a critical factor in their workforce challenges. A new study from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Foundation found that insufficient child care is costing North Carolina about \$5.65 billion each year. What are your views on how the issues facing our state's child care system impact the state's economy? What specific steps would you take to ensure that our child care system can keep up with the demand as more working families need child care?**

Encourage businesses to offer child care as a benefit for working families. Sick child care needs to be addressed, as most child care centers send home children that are sick which means the parents must leave work to care for the child. This topic needs more research to be able to find safe, affordable alternatives.

**5. North Carolina currently spends approximately 1% of the annual state budget on early childhood programs, including Smart Start, NC Pre-K, and Child Care Subsidy Assistance. Nearly all early childhood programs in every county of the state have waiting lists and only serve a fraction of eligible children and families. What are your goals for overall early childhood funding and/or what types of early childhood programs would you support making an investment in at the state level?**

To promote growth of the NC's economy, we must increase the annual state budget which funds early childhood programs, including Smart Start, NC Pre-K and Child Care Subsidy Assistance. Realistically it will have to be increased in increments as not to over burden the tax payers. Encouraging private sector child care centers and early child hood programs is a must. Each community needs to look at what they need and make a plan as to how to obtain it, first at the community level working up to state level. NC House is here to support the people.

**6. If elected, what would be your top 5 priorities for 2025?**

1) Family/ child care; 2) Support teachers/education; 3) Human rights/women's reproductive rights; 4) Affordable housing; 5) Firearm safety

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