Candidate Questions on Child Care, Early Learning, and Families

Questions to Assess Support

- The average cost of full-time, center-based child care for an infant in Alabama is $5,715 and in some areas is higher than college tuition. **What are your ideas for improving access to high-quality early childhood programs for working families in Alabama?**

- Alabama's payment rates for child care providers who serve children receiving child care assistance are too low to support high-quality child care and adequate salaries for child care teachers. **Would you support increasing funding for child care assistance so that programs and teachers can earn more? Would you support a refundable tax credit for teachers working in high need areas at very low wages?**

- In Alabama, nearly half of child care centers are not licensed by the Department of Human Resources. The Minimum Standards for licensing cover very basic health and safety issues, including staff background checks, the number of children who can be cared for by one adult, safe transportation standards, and emergency procedures and plans. **Do you support providing a basic level of health and safety requirements to protect ALL children in Alabama?**

- Alabama currently invests $77.5 million in high-quality prekindergarten, but we are only able to serve 28% of 4-year-old children. **Will you support increased state investments in prekindergarten?**

- Home visiting programs build strengths in families and communities without an infrastructure investment. They are effective in improving health and school readiness outcomes by supporting parents as their children's first teachers. **How would you support greater access to home visiting programs, especially in rural areas where few programs are available?**

Questions to Assess Intensity of Focus on Child Care & Early Learning

- **How do you plan to make early care and education a priority?**

- **How will you make sure low-income and vulnerable children and working families have access to high-quality early care and education?**

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