

2022 North Carolina General Assembly Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Wesley L. Boykin

District: House District 4

Party Affiliation: Democrat

Current Occupation: Retired

1. What are your views on the needs of young children (prenatal to age 5) and what specific steps would you take to address these needs?

Our children begin development at birth and many beliefs are structured by the age of five. All young children need is a fair chance to succeed in life. This includes love and nurturing from their family unit, good health care and nutrition, safety and security, and opportunities for early learning. Young children's beliefs come from interactions with parents, books, technology, and other care givers. Therefore, it is important that our young people are appropriately introduced to diversity, equality, and integrity so that they store information to make informed decisions at an age-appropriate time. I will work to pass policies that ensure adequate early childhood care facilities are available across the state, especially in rural communities like District 4. I would also invite educators, parents, and other influencers to provide an open dialogue to help me effectively legislate on an ongoing basis.

2. What steps would you take to ensure that children birth to age five have access to high-quality and affordable early learning programs?

As a career researcher, I would do my own meta-analysis of existing research studies to determine best practices for this age group. As stated, I would also invite educators, parents, and other influencers to have a discussion to help me legislate with these audiences in mind. I would ensure that funding is available to provide the technology, environment, and other resources necessary for young children to learn and grow.

3. 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 the federal child care relief funding?

The steps I would take to stabilize and sustain North Carolina's early education system and childcare workforce is to conduct a gap analysis to determine what we have and what is needed for future education and its funding. This analysis would include those most impacted: parents, young adults, care givers, local educators, and decision makers.

4. What are your views on how to provide all children with access to a sound, basic education beginning in early childhood?

In 1997, the Supreme Court of North Carolina (the Court) affirmed that the state must provide every student with an equitable, sound, and basic education. Yet, 25-plus years later, the state has not yet met this obligation. Since that ruling, in 2018, WestEd was chosen to lead an investigation into the major needs of North Carolina's public education system. After numerous studies, WestEd created a multi-year action plan for ensuring North Carolina is able to serve all students and meet its state constitutional obligations in the following areas in which I am in agreement: Staffing each classroom with a competent, well-trained teacher; Staffing each school with a competent, well-trained principal; and Identifying the resources necessary to ensure that all children have an equal opportunity to obtain a sound education that leads to lifelong learning and success.