

2022 North Carolina General Assembly Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Julie von Haefen

District: House District 36

Party Affiliation: Democrat

Current Occupation: State Representative

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?

We must be doing more to support North Carolina's youngest children. The steps we take to ensure young kids have access to a quality education and a safe and healthy living environment has a profound impact on their future. I am proud to have introduced and sponsored numerous pieces of legislation related to the needs of young children, including increasing funds for children with disabilities, fully funding the NC Pre-K Program, and increasing subsidy rates so childcare centers can keep costs low and provide more opportunities for children to attend an early education program. I recently began volunteering one day a week at an NC Pre-K classroom in Raleigh so I can fully understand the needs of our earliest learners, and the needs of our teachers.

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 I stated above, I am proud to have sponsored numerous pieces of legislation in support of high-quality and affordable early learning programs. I sponsored HB262, which would invest \$30M in funds to the Smart Start Program. I am also a sponsor of HB364, which appropriates \$12.5M funds to expand the NC Pre-K Program. I am a primary sponsor of HB 574, a bipartisan bill to increase the childcare subsidy rate to help lower childcare costs in NC. An increased subsidy rate would allow more providers to improve quality and availability for families.

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 General Assembly must do more to provide support and stability to our early education system. I fully support any effort to extend this federal relief to ensure we are retaining and supporting our workforce. Increasing the subsidy rates would also create a statewide floor to help mitigate the inequities between rural and urban counties. We also need to invest in our early childhood education workforce by increasing wages and creating clearer pathways to early education careers.



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

Public education is the reason I first decided to run for office. I support fully funding the Leandro decision and am proud to be a leader on this issue in the General Assembly. In both 2021 and 2022, I introduced comprehensive legislation to fully fund the Leandro Comprehensive Remedial Plan (HB 946 and HB 1079). The state has the reserves to fully fund the Plan, and I will continue to fight for the funding that our students, teachers and schools deserve.