

2024 North Carolina State Office Candidate Questionnaire

Name: Gloristine Brown

District or Office: NC House District 8

Party Affiliation: Democrat

Current Occupation: Legislator

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 every child should have access to protective shelter, daily nutritious meals, clean drinking water, health and dental care, and provided opportunity to a good education. I will support programs offering parental support as well. As a legislator, I will continue to advocate for all agencies and community programs to be funded, so funds can reach all children and parents.

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?

Continue to advocate for more funding to strengthen the programs already in place and to ensure families know about all programs available.

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?

Advocate for recurring funding for childcare programs, push the need for work incentivize grants for childcare, ongoing professional development, training for early childhood development, and continue to find solutions to enhance better pay for the workforce.

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?

This issue is causing problems that could have been avoided. Sadly, parents are making tough decisions concerning their children, which causes them to take great pay cuts, which hurts the economy. I will keep fighting to pass Leandro.

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 keep advocating to my colleagues that early childhood has an urgent need, which intel recurring funding. I support Pre-K programs, Head Start and Early Head Start, Child Care Subsidies, Home Visiting Programs, and Early Intervention Services.

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

EDUCATION

HEALTH CARE

RURAL BROADBAND

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION