

## Candidates Early Childhood Education Survey Results

The Children Matter Action Fund is surveying all candidates for Pennsylvania House and Senate seats to learn more about their views on childcare and early childhood education. We invite you to learn more by reviewing their responses below; by contacting their campaigns; and by following them on social media. Let them know your views on the importance of ensuring young children in Pennsylvania get the early education supports they need and deserve.

Name: Pam Iovino

Website: <http://www.pamforpa.com>

Current Job: **State Senator**

Social Media: @pamforpa

Campaign Contact Person: **Jacob Redfern**

You are running for election in which

Campaign Contact Cell Phone: **412-440-8218**

House or Senate District?: **Senate District 37**

Campaign Contact Email Address: **[jacob@pamforpa.com](mailto:jacob@pamforpa.com)**

**Q: What are your views on the benefits, or drawbacks, of allocating additional state funds for high-quality early learning education?**

A: As highlighted in the question pre-text, Pennsylvania significantly lags behind its neighbors on preschool age children per capita spending, and this puts Pennsylvania children at a competitive disadvantage for the duration of their lives. These are facts and evidenced based. We must invest more in high-quality early learning education so that our children have the opportunity to reach their potential. Investing in high-quality early education helps to ensure all students start grade school with the skills and knowledge they need to succeed in school and throughout their lives. Successful citizens decrease demands on human services safety nets, justices systems and increase revenues to economies and quality of life.

**Q: Will you support increasing annual investments in the Pre-K Counts and Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program line items?**

A: Last year, I joined some of my fellow Senate Democratic colleagues in writing a letter to Senators Costa and Hughes recommending a \$40 million increase in the Pre-K Counts line item and a \$10 million increase in the Head Start Supplemental Assistance Program line item. Although short of the funding levels requested, I was happy to see Governor

**Q: How important, or unimportant, is expanding access to high-quality child care to working families in your district?**

A: Although already evident for many, the pandemic has emphasized the connection between access to high-quality child care, minimal disruption to children's development and education, and economic stability for a family, making this a very important issue for families in my district. And although a temporary condition of the pandemic, continued

**Q: If you support increased state investment in subsidized child care for infants and toddlers at the campaign's recommended levels, how will you help the campaign expand child care for working families? OR If you do not support the proposed increases in access to child care, please explain why.**

A: We all know the reality of the hit that revenues will take due to the pandemic. That said, as I did in November 2019, when I joined my Senate Democratic colleagues in writing a letter to Governor Wolf asking for a \$77 million increase in state investment toward child care, which would allow about 5,000 eligible infants and toddlers to access high-quality

Q: Improved parenting skills, increased family economic self-sufficiency, improved maternal and child health and reducing abuse and neglect are just a few of the key benefits realized through evidence-based home visiting services. How do you view the needs and benefits of home visiting to families?

A: Similar to investments in high-quality early education, increasing funding to home visits will pay dividends for children and their families and the future for all, especially in low-income households. Spending on home visits is investing in positive outcomes which are always less costly on human services and greater returns to communities and

Q: How will you support the expansion of state investment dollars to serve those in your district who can benefit from home visiting?

A: I believe we should use the six successful home visiting models as a foundation for further investments in home visits for vulnerable populations. Building upon the best practices established through those programs will ensure public dollars benefit as many people as possible in the most efficient way possible. I will use my appointment on the

Q: What would you do to increase payments to high-quality providers to improve their ability to retain qualified professionals?

A: I agree we should increase payments to high quality providers. I have co-sponsored legislation that would direct over \$160 million to childcare centers and Pre-K and Head Start programs, many of which have been severely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and have been forced to lay off high-quality professionals. Continued support for

Q: How will you champion early care and early childhood education?

A: Quality early care and early childhood education are goals that need to become policy in Pennsylvania. Given both the social and economic benefits the expansion of the two could bring to a region and a state, they represent obligations of the lawmaker to fight for their enactment. Under Republican control of the State House and Senate, we've seen limited efforts made to increase the affordability and quality of child care and early childhood education in our state. I will continue to push for the state for full and fair funding of public education, including Pre-K. We cannot continue to rely on local municipalities and their local property taxes to fund the majority of our public education.