

Children First Action Fund General 2022 Survey Results

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

Name: Isaac Riston

Website: ristonforpa.com

Current Job: Floating Substitute Teacher

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You are running for election in which district? HD - 169

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

A: Using additional state funds for high-quality pre-k education provides students with a better start to their education and can allow economically disadvantaged students to have a better footing as they start school. This will, in turn, provide a better wealth of citizens who will be able to improve our society as a whole. Our education spending is important but I also don't want to take away from other important programs that people in our state rely on. I don't believe that it has to be an "either or" situation, where funding must be shifted from one essential program to another, so I look forward to working with people on capitol hill to end tax loopholes and make changes to our current charter school formula.

Q: How important, or unimportant, are increased public resources to expand access and affordability to high-quality child care to working families in your district?

A: Working families need to have high-quality child care because it will allow them to be part of the workforce. Many people don't go to work because of the high cost of child care so making it more affordable to everyday Pennsylvanians will allow them to have better career options and improve the economy of the state.

Q: Should the wages for child care workers and preschool teachers be commensurate with those of other educators with similar qualifications and experience?

A: Yes, I would also like to help increase the pay of child care workers in Pennsylvania because it will attract more people to the career field. People who have the same qualifications, credentials, and experience should make similar salaries as long as the workrate is the same. Both Kindergarten teachers and early childcare workers are worth their weight in gold and they should be paid accordingly.

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

A: Yes, I will support the expansion of state investment dollars into home visiting. I look forward to working in the state legislature to find revenue sources to do this and to fully fund schools. I believe

that the state will see a big return on investment with students performing better and with improving our society as a whole.

Q: In addition to making child care more accessible and affordable, what other policies would you champion to help businesses facing a workforce shortage?

A: I would like to see Pennsylvanians able to safely return to the workforce. In order to do so I would like to see PA businesses provide higher wages, and I believe that workers also need help with medical costs, so the state should look at limiting prices of life-saving medications.

Q: What other government resources or policies would you consider for families that are struggling with keeping costs, especially child care, under control?

A: I would consider looking at supporting a UBI program, or something similar to the child tax credit done by the federal government to help support families at a state level. I would work with my colleagues in Harrisburg to help PA families be able to cover daily expenses and allow them to be able to go back to work and earn a living wage by passing a \$15 minimum wage.

Q: Which mental health supports are needed most in your district and how will you work to increase access to families that need them?

A: I believe that southwestern York County needs easier access to comprehensive mental health services. I know that TrueNorth does provide services online and over the phone but that is not always the best experience with internet connection not being what it needs to be in these rural communities. Increasing infrastructure for mental health services to be provided more easily to York County residents would help with this issue. Additionally, the passing of a \$15 minimum wage may make services more affordable to families.

Q: Would you support the creation of a refundable State Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC)? Why/why not?

A: I would support a refundable State Earned Income Tax Credit because I believe that an EITC would benefit poor working families in the state. It is important to know that while I do support EITC, I would rather the state provide a Universal Basic Income program. The reason I believe in a UBI over EITC is because it would provide benefits to home-based caregivers such as stay at home moms and dads. It allows the state to see past what we have recognized as “real jobs” and allows the state to explore supporting all people of the state.

Q: What would you do, if elected, to expand the access to affordable broadband internet?

A: Southwestern York County doesn't have the best broadband access in the state. I want to be able to increase coverage of gig fiber internet to these communities. I want to allow and help fund municipalities to be able to develop their own broadband programs that will best support the infrastructure needed and who will be in it for the long haul rather than being discouraged from immediate profit losses.