



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: Nick Miller

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Current Job: Small Business Owner

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You are running for election in which district? PA State Senate (14)

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

A: I support using state funding in order to better the quality of pre-k education. As former Vice President of the Allentown School Board, I have had a first-hand account of how underfunding education is detrimental to children's academic, social, and emotional health. Whether a child comes from significant means or very little, they deserve the chance to begin their academic journey on a level playing field.

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: They are significantly important. We should always support working families and provide them with every resource possible in order to support their children, from education to child care.

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

A: Absolutely. Child care workers and preschool teachers are essential figures in a young child's life and deserve to be treated with the same level of respect as other educators with similar qualifications and experience. As such, this equal treatment should translate to salary and benefits. Matching salaries will also entice more people to accept these positions and ensure high retention rates among those employed.

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

A: I most certainly will support this motion. Home visiting grants families the opportunity to learn how to best take care of their children and attend to their needs. A method of prevention rather than punishment, home visiting emphasizes the needs of children who may have otherwise suffered from abuse or neglect. It is important that we allocate adequate funds into preventative programs such as these instead of continually funding measures that work to punish after the fact.

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 am a firm believer in raising the minimum wage. Pennsylvania's minimum wage is a measly \$7.25/hour—that is less than the current cost of two gallons of gasoline! The state's minimum wage has not been raised in well over a decade, and it is time that we finally provide Pennsylvanians with a sustainable, living wage. Securing higher wages and benefits for employees will attract more people to rejoin the workforce, as well as help working families afford quality child care for their children.

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

A: We must increase affordable housing as well as provide rental assistance. The cost of living in the Lehigh Valley is ever-increasing, making it more difficult with each passing day for folks to settle down here in the community. If elected, I will introduce a bill that creates an untaxed savings account for first-time homebuyers. This will help renters become homeowners. If residents are able to save money untaxed, this will greatly increase their ability to purchase a home, as well as spend some of this saved money on other services, such as child care.

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: There needs to be more work done regarding mental health in our classrooms. As we navigated our way through this pandemic, it became increasingly apparent that our students were struggling with mental health and have been afraid to voice their struggles. We must guarantee support and proper mental health services for students who are struggling, while allowing them to still pursue a high-quality education. It is essential that we provide trained and caring experts in these areas to help support our children, as well as the financial resources to implement it.

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

A: Yes, it is imperative that we use any and all resources to support our community members. The Lehigh Valley is a very racially diverse community, with many people of color living below the poverty line. Supporting a refundable State Earned Income Tax Credit would mean lessening the financial burdens from these folks and instead working to close the racial wealth gap. Additionally, its creation would secure a brighter, more stable future for children all across the Commonwealth. We must ensure that lower income families receive much-needed tax relief and are able to invest in the next generation.

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

A: There is a considerable gap between those who have access to the internet and those who do not. This gap represents a barrier to equitable access of resources, including health services and educational and employment opportunities. If elected, I will fully support House Bill 2071, which effectively creates the Pennsylvania Broadband Development Authority, which will be charged with administering Federal and State funds allocated for the purposes of expanding broadband services in Pennsylvania. This is very much a bipartisan issue, and I intend to work with Democrats and Republicans alike to bring high-speed internet to folks across the Commonwealth.