



Ohioans Have Spoken.

It's time to invest in early learning.



Diverse stakeholders across Ohio have made clear their support of this unique bipartisan issue.



82% of Ohio voters express strong support for state funding toward quality early education programs for kids.



There is extensive, longitudinal child development & economic research that proves the lifelong impact on kids & the high return on public investment of quality early learning programs.



Majorities in all parties support these programs.

REPUBLICANS 68%

DEMOCRATS 95%

INDEPENDENTS 84%



Ohio's business leaders understand the importance of investing in early learning.

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The research and science are clear: a child's physical, social-emotional, and cognitive development are inextricably intertwined. Investing in both high-quality early learning and healthcare for Ohio's most at-risk kids gives them the opportunity to reach their full potential.”

Deborah Feldman, Dayton Children's Hospital

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By prioritizing early childhood education, making education more affordable, accessible, and building in-school support programs, Ohio's governor will put Columbus back on the path to prosperity.”

Rick Ricart, Ricart Automotive Group

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It's up to all of us—businesses, residents, elected officials and nonprofit organizations—to provide the tools that allow Ohioans to succeed, starting with our youngest neighbors.”

Ohio's PNC Regional Presidents

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Research demonstrates that a child's brain undergoes its most crucial period of development from birth to the age of 3. That's good news for the youngsters who head off to high quality child care as their folks head off to work—and a significant challenge for millions nationwide who will languish in low-quality environments because that's all their parents can find or afford.”

Jim Spurlino, Spurlino Materials



Kids who start behind often STAY behind.

**OHIO KIDS ARE
NOT READY
FOR SCHOOL**

ONLY
40%
come to
kindergarten
**READY TO
LEARN.**

THUS ONLY
43%
of Ohio's workforce
HAS A DEGREE
or credential for
available jobs.

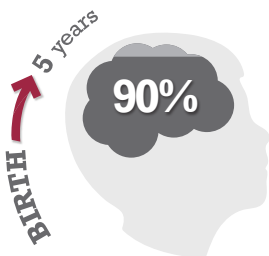
YET
65%
of jobs in 2020
**WILL REQUIRE
MORE THAN**
a high school diploma.

Furthermore, a consistent 30-point gap persists between the percentage of disadvantaged versus non-disadvantaged students performing at grade level from kindergarten through the start of high school. The gap between black and white students starts at a 23-point difference in the percentage of students prepared to enter kindergarten. A few years later, that gap has grown to a 33-point gap in Third Grade Reading performance—and by the time kids reach 8th grade, there is a 36-point difference in the percent of students performing at grade-level for the Eighth Grade Math assessment. These assessments are both strong predictors of college readiness and career success.



Extensive research shows we must reach kids long before kindergarten.

Brains are built on a foundation of early experiences.
**IN THE FIRST FEW YEARS OF LIFE, MORE THAN 1 MILLION
NEW NEURAL CONNECTIONS ARE FORMED EVERY SECOND.**



Without consistent & responsive caregiving, the brain architecture does not form as expected and will lead to disparities in learning and behavior.



Too few of Ohio's 0-5 year olds have access to early childhood experiences.



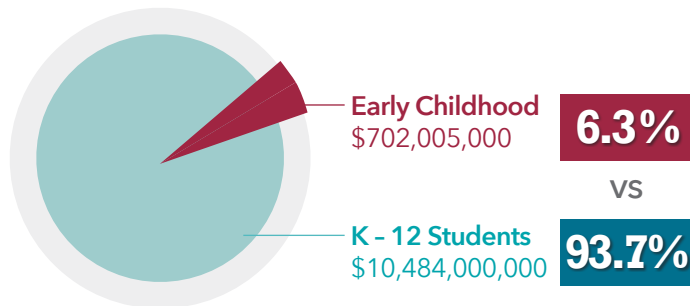
ONLY **50.6%** OF THOSE ELIGIBLE

for a publicly-funded early childhood program (i.e. child care, public preschool, evidence-based home visiting, Head Start) are receiving services.

Learn More: www.GroundworkOhio.org



Current investments do not reflect what we know about the brain science of early development.



Despite the indisputable research, Ohio is not investing enough in programs targeted at our youngest, most at-risk learners. Only 6.3% of Ohio's education budget is spent on children under 5—the most critical period of development that prepares kids for success in school and beyond.



INVESTING IN THE EARLIEST YEARS PAYS DIVIDENDS TO OHIO.

Experts conclude that when investments are made in high-quality early childhood education programs for our most at-risk kids within their first 5 years of life, they are:



More likely to...

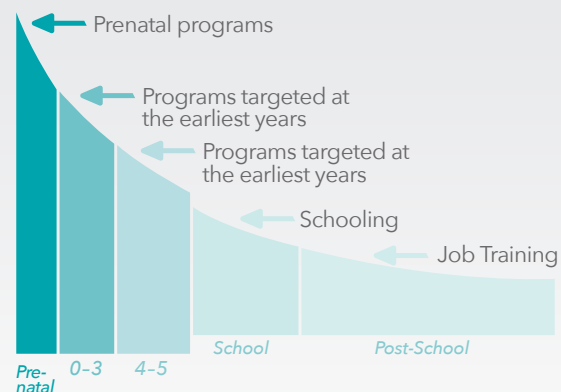
- Be kindergarten ready.
- Graduate high school.
- Have higher earnings and better health.



Less likely to...

- Be held back a grade.
- Be reliant on public assistance.
- Engage in criminal behavior.

Providing high-quality early childhood education for Ohio's youngest learners during the most critical period of their development yields the greatest return on public investment → **upwards of 13%**



The earlier we invest, the higher the return and the better we can leverage dollars spent later.



@GroundworkOhio



How Can You Respond?



Support children and families through the development of a comprehensive early childhood system that defines and coordinates leadership, recruits and engages stakeholders, finances strategically, enhances and aligns services, ensures accountability, and implements continuous improvement.



Increase access to and improve the quality of early childhood education in Ohio. This requires rates for quality-rated providers to align with federal guidance that recommends publicly funded providers be reimbursed at the 75th percentile of the most-recent market rate—to provide sufficient access for publicly funded children to quality care. This also requires incrementally expanding the eligibility criteria from 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) to 200% of the FPL to serve more at-risk children in a quality rated program that positions them for success early and drives outcomes throughout the lifespan.



Empower parents and improve outcomes for Ohio's at-risk infants and toddlers by tripling the number of children and families served by voluntary, evidence-based home visiting services that reduce infant mortality, prevent abuse and neglect, promote healthy development and increase school readiness.



Promote young children's healthy development and elevate the importance of social and emotional development through Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) by improving access and quality of physical and behavioral health services through Medicaid levers including: 1) eligibility and enrollment; 2) quality improvement; 3) benefits; and 4) payment and/or delivery systems.



Follow the science, and act early to improve the lives of children at risk, or living in the toxic stress of severe poverty. DeWine has made such efforts a leading priority. The task now is ensuring that the first state budget of his tenure includes the necessary commitment.”

Akron Beacon Journal Editorial Board



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