September 25, 2018

Dear ________________,

On behalf of the Maine Association for the Education of Young Children (MaineAEYC) and the Family Child Care Association of Maine (FCCAM), I respectfully write to request that you respond to the questions submitted below regarding your agenda for the young children and their families living in Maine.

The mission of the FCCAM is to unify, promote and strengthen quality professional family child care in the State of Maine. MaineAEYC promotes high-quality early learning for all children, birth through age 8, by connecting practice, policy, and research. We advance a diverse, dynamic early childhood profession and support all who care for, educate, and work on behalf of young children and families.

The questions and answers, if received in time, will be published verbatim on MaineAEYC and FCCAM websites (mainaeaeyc.org and fccamaine.wordpress.com) from October 15 through November 6. They will also be posted at our MaineAEYC and FCCAM tables at education conferences and events in Calais, Bangor, Rockport, Brunswick, Portland, and Wells on October 13th, 18th, 20th, 27th, and 30th, where hundreds of educators will be able to read your responses. We request that your full response not exceed 600 words. To meet our publication deadline, your responses must be received by no later than Friday, October 12th. If you do not respond, the publication will state “Did Not Respond.” No answer to any individual question may exceed 300 words. Please send your responses to me at tara@maineaeyc.org.

As tax-exempt organizations under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, we cannot support or oppose any candidate for public office. We hope that you will take this opportunity to communicate your views on how you as Governor will lead policy and investments regarding young children and their families.

Sincerely,

Tara Williams

Tara Williams
Executive Director
Maine Association for the Education of Young Children
207-274-1478
tara@mainaeaeyc.org
SHAWN MOODY
2018 Maine Candidate Questionnaire on Early Childhood Education

1. What are your views on the needs of young children (birth to 3rd grade) and what specific steps would you take to address these needs?

We need to make sure that our young children are well nourished, have safe homes, and a stable environment where they can begin to develop social and educational skills necessary for them to succeed. We need to ensure that our young children have access to educational opportunities to begin preparing them at a young age for the jobs of the future. I believe the first step in achieving these goals is to ensure we have a strong economy that provides good paying jobs for Maine families. We must continue to grow our economy. Second, we need to build a strong safety net for our most vulnerable citizens in Maine, including our children. We need to provide services for those who have hit a bump in the road, but we need to help them get back into the workforce, as quickly as possible. Third, we need to tackle the high costs of childcare. Child care can be very expensive for Maine families. We need to look outside the box at what we can do to improve the quality of our childcare centers, but also reduce the cost, so parents can go to work and trust their child is being cared for in a safe and healthy location.

2. What do you consider the appropriate federal/state/local investment in programs that support young children’s early care and education (such as home visiting, child care, Head Start, and public PreK)? Please be as specific as possible.

I believe that we need to develop a comprehensive evaluation system to determine which programs are most effective, and then adequately resource those programs. I would review every agency, and use a set of 5 to 10 metrics to evaluate programs to ensure they are producing the intended results. If a program is working and producing positive results, then we need to make sure we resource the program to scale. This means directing funding away from programs that are not achieving desired outcomes, and using this money to resource programs that are. This includes every agency within state government, including our efforts to provide young children’s early care and education. If the program is working, I am committed to finding a way to fund it to ensure that our children have access to the resources they need to grow up into productive, healthy adults.

3. What steps would you take to support, attract and keep quality early childhood educators for both child care centers and family child care?
Maine is experiencing a decline in the number of programs within its child care structure, which includes both home-based (referred to as family child care) and center-based early care and education. The decline is projected to continue, while families in many parts of the state struggle to find child care so they can go to work.

This problem is not unique to early childhood education. We have seen a shortage of qualified workers across all sectors of our economy. I have over 40 years of executive experience creating jobs and growing Maine’s economy. We need to continue to grow our economy so that Mainers have more opportunities for higher paying jobs. We must grow our population by keeping our Maine kids here, and attracting former Mainers back home. We need to stop telling our children there is no opportunity in Maine. There is no greater opportunity for upward career mobility than there is right now. I support efforts to keep and retain talent in Maine through tuition reimbursement and student loan forgiveness. I also support efforts to allow our teenagers to get into the workforce at a younger age so they are able to learn the basic skills required to maintain employment. Lastly, I think we need to think creatively about how we improve opportunities for professional development for people in this industry, and then compensate people for making investments in their future.

JANET MILLS
2018 Maine Candidate Questionnaire on Early Childhood Education

1. What are your views on the needs of young children (birth to 3rd grade) and what specific steps would you take to address these needs?

Maine's youngest need an equal opportunity to have happy, healthy and productive lives from birth onward. The best investments to ensure this equal opportunity center around early childhood education and other efforts to support parents. I would take the following specific steps as Governor: 1.) re-convene the Children's Cabinet or an equivalent so all state agencies are making the needs of young children a priority; 2) expand and protect Home Visiting and 3) expand Head Start so more eligible young children receive the benefit of this cost-effective program.
2. What do you consider the appropriate federal/state/local investment in programs that support young children’s early care and education (such as home visiting, child care, Head Start, and public PreK)? Please be as specific as possible.

It would be appropriate to harness investments in Head Start to substantially reduce the current waitlist and also expand the reach of the home visiting program far beyond the 10% of eligible participants now receiving the benefit of the program.

3. What steps would you take to support, attract and keep quality early childhood educators for both child care centers and family child care?

(Background: Maine is experiencing a decline in the number of programs within its child care structure, which includes both home-based (referred to as family child care) and center-based early care and education. The decline is projected to continue, while families in many parts of the state struggle to find child care so they can go to work.)

I will be Maine's cheerleader, recruiter, and closer-in-chief. Maine's Governor should set an example of valuing and praising those who look out for the health and well-being of our youngest residents. Beyond that needed leadership, I will do the following: 1) Ensure that leadership at DOE values opportunities for professional education and coaching; 2) protect existing programs at our university and community college system that produces our early childhood education workforce and; 3) reward those early childhood educators who participate in quality rating systems.

Alan Caron
2018 Maine Candidate Questionnaire on Early Childhood Education

MaineAEYC and FCCAM did not receive a response from Alan Caron.
Dear Tara,

Thank you for contacting my campaign about completing a candidate questionnaire.

While I am actively seeking support from Maine voters around the state and across the political spectrum, I am not seeking endorsements from any groups.

As a job applicant to become Maine’s next Governor, I will gladly meet with groups of Maine voters who would like to interview me for this position, schedule permitting. However, given the time constraints in this campaign, I am unable to prioritize responding to candidate questionnaires from interest groups over meeting with Maine voters.

I am running for the highest office in our state as an independent, Clean Elections candidate because I want to be beholden only to the Maine people, and not to party leaders, special interests, or wealthy campaign contributors. My policy priorities and issue positions are available on my website: HayesForMaine.com.

Once again, thank you for your communication and I look forward to meeting you on the campaign trail.

Sincerely,

Terry

Hayes
Maine State Treasurer
2018 Candidate for Governor