

LAYING A STRONG FOUNDATION FOR SUCCESS

A GUIDE FOR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Dear Friends,

Thank you for your continued interest in our strategic, collaborative effort to increase state priority for early childhood education. Groundwork remains steadfast in our objective to advance quality early learning and development as the most transformative strategy to improve school outcomes, increase the life-long success of Ohio's children, and lay a strong foundation for economic prosperity in our state. By working together, we can amplify this vital message to ensure that it's heard by all those who work with, support and care about kids.

Here at Groundwork, we not only share your passion for Ohio's children and our state's economic future, but we are as thrilled as you are about advancing this critical discussion with Ohio's new governor. Because of our unified efforts during the Vote for Ohio Kids Leadership Forum, both candidates for governor shared robust, well-reasoned plans for Ohio's kids. Now that all of the votes have been counted, the transition is in full swing with Governor-elect Mike DeWine at the helm. Once again, we are eager to work with you to help support his ambitious new agenda, "Opportunity for Every Ohio Kid." **In his first budget, Governor-elect Mike DeWine has proposed to:**

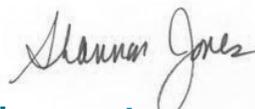
- Create a cabinet-level Director of Children's Initiatives to coordinate children's programs across all state agencies so they work better for the people they serve.
- Serve more children in high quality early learning environments by increasing the state's commitment to quality capacity and access via a strategic \$150 million investment.
- Triple the number of families served by voluntary, evidence-based home visiting in his first term to target the children most at-risk.
- Continue to grow Ohio's quality public preschool program to serve more vulnerable children.

Included in this letter is some additional information for you to use as you are meeting with policy makers and community leaders around Ohio. In addition, we ask you to please refer to the checklist inside for specific ways you can actively participate in this exciting effort. We need "all hands on deck" to support our new governor and his child-focused agenda.

Again, thank you for your unwavering commitment to Ohio's youngest and most vulnerable children and for joining with us to ensure that they reach their full potential. For more information, please check out our resources at www.groundworkohio.org.



Warm personal regards,



Shannon Jones
Executive Director
Groundwork Ohio

UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUES

1.



AND KIDS WHO START BEHIND, OFTEN STAY BEHIND.

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

So it's no surprise that only **43%** of **OHIO'S WORKFORCE** has a degree or credential **for available jobs.**

YET **65%** of **JOB**s 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 college readiness and career success.

2.

Targeted high-quality programs that reach 0-5 year olds can improve school readiness and lifelong success, but... **NOT ENOUGH CHILDREN IN OHIO HAVE ACCESS TO QUALITY EARLY CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES.**

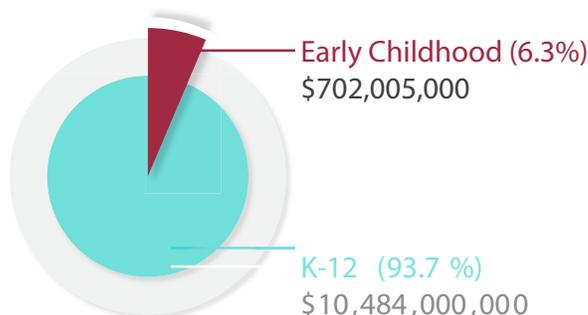


Of those children who are eligible for a publicly funded early childhood program (i.e. publicly funded child care, public preschool, evidence-based home visiting, Head Start)...

ONLY **50.6%**
ARE RECEIVING SERVICES

3.

Despite extensive research on the value of investing in our kids' early education and development, **OHIO IS NOT INVESTING ENOUGH IN PROGRAMS TARGETED AT OUR YOUNGEST, MOST AT-RISK LEARNERS.**



Current investments in the education of Ohio's children do not reflect what we know about brain science and the economics of human development. Only 6.3% of Ohio's \$10.5 billion education budget is spent on children under 5—the most critical period of development that prepares kids for success in school and beyond.

A SMART PUBLIC INVESTMENT

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 and responsive caregiving, the brain architecture does not form as expected and will lead to disparities in learning and behavior.

Experts conclude that when investments are made in high-quality early childhood education programs for our most at-risk kids, they are:



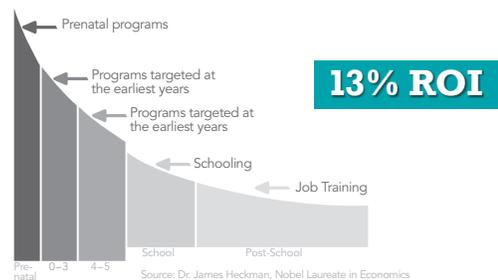
MORE LIKELY TO

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

Providing high-quality early childhood education for Ohio's youngest and most at-risk children 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.**

LESS LIKELY TO

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



GET INVOLVED TODAY

- Join the Groundwork effort to amplify the voices of business and community leaders, teachers, providers, pediatric and mental healthcare professionals and child advocates. Stay engaged with timely updates by signing up for our "e-news" at GroundworkOhio.org.
- Share your support for investing in Ohio's early childhood education programs with business associates and on your social media accounts. Be sure to tag @MikeDeWine and @GroundworkOhio! Check out sample posts/tweets at GroundworkOhio.org/Engage.
- Write a letter to Governor-elect Mike DeWine thanking him for his thoughtful agenda and stressing the importance of making strategic investments in quality early childhood education. Visit GroundworkOhio.org/Engage for a sample letter and contact information.
- Submit op-eds and letters-to-the-editor expressing your support for our shared agenda. Refer to GroundworkOhio.org/Engage for tips.
- Attend Groundwork's Advocacy Day at the statehouse on May 8 to educate policy makers about the benefits of and critical need for early childhood education. More information at GroundworkOhio.org/AdvocacyDay.



SAVE THE DATE

MAY 8, 2019

Groundwork Ohio
ADVOCACY DAY

GroundworkOhio.org

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