

## 2018 Gubernatorial Election Outcomes Analysis

The following resource provides both a snapshot of the policy positions on early childhood education (ECE) held by the 36 governors who won elections on November 6, 2018, as well as an early education profile for each governor. The profiles include relevant policy initiatives, campaign pledges, and quotes each governor has publicly stated regarding critical early learning and care issues.

State	Governor	ECE Stance
Alabama	Kay Ivey (R)*	Strong ECE advocate. Has made ECE a policy priority while in office and would likely continue to do so.
Alaska	Mike Dunleavy (R)	Has previously proposed ECE funding cuts.
Arizona	Doug Ducey (R)*	Supportive of early learning, but averse to extensively funding it or accepting additional federal funding.
Arkansas	Asa Hutchinson (R)*	Supported ECE in the past, but not a policy priority.
California	Gavin Newsom (D)	Strong, vocal advocate for funding ECE programs.
Colorado	Jared Polis (D)	Strong advocate for ECE; made it a major feature of his gubernatorial platform.
Connecticut	Ned Lamont (D)	Made ECE funding a significant component of his campaign platform.
Florida	Andrew Gillum (D)	Enthusiastic ECE advocate who has called for increased investment.
Florida	Ron DeSantis (R)	Has not publicly supported early childhood education programs or investments.
Georgia	Stacey Abrams (D)	Strong proponent of ECE investments and has made these programs a cornerstone of her campaign.
Georgia	Brian Kemp (R)	Vocal advocate for funding certain ECE programs; highlights his wife's experience as a Pre-K teacher in his advocacy for ECE investments.
Hawaii	David Ige (D)*	Has supported state funding for ECE programs.
Idaho	Brad Little (R)	Has become a vocal proponent of increasing Idaho's ECE investments.
Illinois	J.B. Pritzker (D)	One of the country's leading early education philanthropists and a vocal advocate for ECE investments on the campaign trail.
Iowa	Fred Hubbell (D)	Strong advocate for funding ECE programs; his advocacy for ECE investments highlights his background in child care.
Iowa	Kim Reynolds (R)*	Has advocated for early literacy and President Trump's child care plan.
Kansas	Kris Kobach (R)	Has not publicly supported early childhood education programs or investments.
Kansas	Laura Kelly (D)	Strong proponent of ECE investments; made these programs a cornerstone of her campaign.
Maine	Janet Mills (D)	Supporter of ECE, but not made it a priority issue in her campaign.



Maryland	Larry Hogan (R)*	Has publicly stated the importance of early learning for the development of children.
Massachusetts	Charlie Baker (R)*	Has been a vocal proponent of ECE investments while in office.
Michigan	Gretchen Whitmer (D)	Strong proponent of ECE investments; made these programs a cornerstone of her campaign.
Minnesota	Tim Walz (D)	Strong proponent of ECE/child care funding, programs, and improvements. His campaign platform delves deeply into ECE policy proposals.
Nevada	Adam Laxalt (R)	Campaign website advocates for early literacy programs.
Nevada	Steve Sisolak (D)	Has not publicly supported early childhood education programs or investments.
Nebraska	Pete Ricketts (R)*	Unsupportive of public investments in ECE.
New Hampshire	Chris Sununu (R)*	Has been a vocal proponent of ECE investments in office.
New Mexico	Michelle Lujan Grisham (D)	Strong proponent of ECE investments; committed to making them a hallmark of her administration.
New York	Andrew Cuomo (D)*	Has been a vocal proponent of ECE investments in office, but not made it a campaign priority.
Ohio	Mike DeWine (R)	Strong proponent of ECE investments and has highlighted plans to invest in these programs during his campaign.
Ohio	Richard Cordray (D)	Strong proponent of ECE investments and has highlighted plans to invest in these programs during his campaign.
Oklahoma	Kevin Stitt (R)	Has largely not engaged on ECE programs or investments, though he has commented on the important role a child's early home environment plays in his or her long-term success.
Oregon	Knute Buehler (R)	Has largely not engaged on ECE, though he has committed to rejuvenating innovation, including with a focus on early learning.
Oregon	Kate Brown (D)*	Strong, vocal advocate for funding and expanding ECE programs.
Pennsylvania	Tom Wolf (D)*	Highly supportive of ECE investments and program expansions.
Rhode Island	Gina Raimondo (D)*	Strong advocate for the long-term benefits of ECE investments; pledged greater investments next term.
South Carolina	Henry McMaster (R)*	Has not extensively engaged on ECE, but has stated that early education has to be excellent, and that it is the way out of poverty.
South Dakota	Kristi Noem (R)	Other than efforts to maintain the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit while in Congress, has not publicly engaged on ECE.
Tennessee	Bill Lee (R)	Believes ECE is critically important for ensuring children read at grade-level.
Texas	Greg Abbott (R)*	Has been a vocal proponent of ECE investments in office.



Vermont	Phil Scott (R)*	Strong proponent of ECE investments and has highlighted plans to invest in these programs during his campaign.
Wisconsin	Scott Walker (R)*	Has largely not engaged on ECE programs or investments, though he has advocated for policies that would ease the burden of child care costs.
Wisconsin	Tony Evers (D)	Strong proponent of ECE investments and has highlighted plans to invest in these programs during his campaign.
Wyoming	Mark Gordon (R)	Has highlighted the importance of ECE programs, but believes they are a local matter.

\* Denotes incumbent governor.

## Alabama Governor Kay Ivey (R)

### Overview

Strong ECE advocate. Gov. Ivey has made ECE a policy priority while in office and would likely continue to do so.



### Policy Positions

- Established a "Strong Start, Strong Finish" education initiative, which features early childhood education as one of three core priorities. ([Source](#))
- Believes education, including early education, "is the key to helping families, creating a stronger economy, and making Alabama the talk of the nation—in a good way." ([Source](#))
- Announced an expansion of the state's First Class Pre-K program in April 2018 in conjunction with the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education announced. ([Source](#))

### Quotes

- "Having a strong start to one's educational journey is critical to having a strong finish when it comes time to enter the workforce." ([Source](#))
- "Early childhood education is the cornerstone of a child's healthy development." ([Source](#))
- "We know that investing in quality early learning impacts a child's future far beyond the classroom. Alabama remains committed to ensuring the highest quality early learning experiences for our children, so that every child has access to the opportunities that prepare them for success in life." ([Source](#))
- "For the 11th year in a row, our First-Class Pre-K program was recognized for being the highest-quality Pre-K in the nation. In fact, Harvard University is currently developing a full-length documentary on Alabama's Pre-K program to share across the country with those interested in following our lead. Our First-Class Pre-K is certainly a bright spot for Alabama." ([Source](#))
- "I'm thrilled to announce the W.K. Kellogg Foundation has awarded the Alabama Department of Early Childhood Education a \$1.5 million grant that will go a long way in helping us to expand our Pre-3 program. Ensuring that our children receive a high-quality, early childhood education is a key component to my 'Strong Start, Strong Finish' initiative." ([Source](#))



- “Alabama needs a comprehensive approach of collaboration that improves education from Pre-K to the workforce. That’s the goal of Strong Start, Strong Finish. Every child deserves a strong start to their educational experience. Developmentally-appropriate policies will strengthen and support education from pre-K through the third grade. This impacts a child’s social, emotional, and cognitive development.” ([Source](#))
- “The most important part of a child’s learning journey is a solid educational foundation. Providing a high-quality education for all Alabamians, at every stage of life, is my goal. For the 12th consecutive year, Alabama is a national leader in this arena. I am proud of the work of our Pre-K programs and I am thankful for the dedication of Secretary Ross in leading this program.” ([Source](#))
- “A strong start in the early years of a child’s education ensures a strong finish in their later educational endeavors. Whether a student will find success in school and the workforce is traditionally evidenced in their performance by third grade. If we haven’t given our students a strong learning foothold by the third grade, they will be fighting an uphill battle for the rest of their educational careers; this program addresses that truth head-on.” ([Source](#))

## **Alaska Governor Mike Dunleavy (R)**

### **Overview**

Governor-elect Dunleavy is indifferent to ECE at best; he has not commented on the subject, but previously proposed ECE funding cuts.

### **Policy Positions**

- None.

### **Quotes**

- None.

### **Relevant Information**

- In his capacity as state senator in 2015, Governor-elect Dunleavy proposed to cut funding for several ECE-related programs in Alaska's Department of Education and Early Development. ([Source](#))



## Arizona Governor Doug Ducey (R)

### Overview

Gov. Ducey verbally supports early childhood learning, but appears averse to extensively funding it or accepting additional federal funding.



### Policy Positions

- Rejected \$56 million in federal funding to cover the cost of child care and early childhood education for low-income Arizonans. ([Source](#))
- Declared May 11, 2018 Child Care Provider Appreciation Day in honor of the importance of high quality child care services for Arizona's children and families. ([Source](#))
- Supported a proposal to provide the Arizona State Schools for the Deaf and the Blind with the necessary resources to fully staff its Early Childhood and Family Education program. ([Source](#))

### Quotes

- "Literacy is essential for success in almost every endeavor, field, career, and industry. In fact, research shows that early-childhood reading proficiency is one of the strongest indicators of a student's likelihood of graduating from high school. Together, we can improve literacy, foster academic success and ensure educational excellence for all Arizona children." ([Source](#))
- "The challenge that all the educators here will tell you is that the average child in this country who comes from a disadvantaged community enters kindergarten at 5 (are) 12 to 14 months behind if they don't have access to high-quality early learning." ([Source](#))
- "Research shows that a quality early childhood education experience can yield significant long-term benefits on overall development of a child... It's the most profitable investment we can make in their future." ([Source](#))

## Arkansas Governor Asa Hutchinson (R)



### Overview

Gov. Hutchinson has supported ECE in the past, but it does not appear to be a policy priority.

### Policy Positions

- Accepted \$26 million in federal funds to expand Arkansas' child care assistance program, enabling the state's Department of Human Services to assist up to 3,800 additional children from low-income families. ([Source](#))

### Quotes

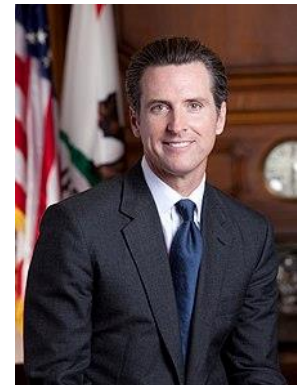
- "Success in life depends to a large degree on the quality of education early in life." ([Source](#))
- "Early childhood education is a building block for success in life." ([Source](#))
- "Experts in academic success generally agree that access to high-quality learning programs for preschool children greatly improves the potential for success in high school and beyond." ([Source](#))

### Relevant Information

- Gov. Hutchinson is the current chair of the National Governors Association's Education And Workforce Committee, which works on early childhood, K-12, and post-secondary education issues. ([Source](#))



## California Governor Gavin Newsom (D)



### Overview

Governor-elect Newsom is a strong, vocal advocate for funding and expanding ECE programs.

### Policy Positions

- Campaigned on a "California Promise" / "Cradle to Career" platform, which commits to extensive investments in ECE. ([Source](#))
- Advocates for universal Pre-K, as well as access to high-quality preschool or transitional kindergarten for all families who want it. ([Source](#))
- Governor-elect Newsom also seeks to develop a universal Pre-K system that is integrated with K-12 schools and universities. ([Source](#))
- Emphasizes the importance of prenatal care and developmental screenings. ([Source](#))
- Argues affordable, high-quality childcare pays off for that child's growth and California's economic growth. ([Source](#))
- Implemented a "Preschool for All" program as mayor of San Francisco, funded by a voter-approved tax. ([Source](#))
- Named ending child poverty his governing "north star." ([Source](#))

### Quotes

- "As governor, I'm calling for the "California Promise," a new way of thinking about education as a lifelong pursuit. Our role begins when babies are still in the womb and it doesn't end until we've done all we can to prepare them for a quality job and successful career. I will realize this vision by expanding prenatal care, expanding affordable, high-quality child care, adopting universal pre-K, launching college savings accounts for every incoming kindergartener across the state, investing in K-12 community schools, increasing incentives to attract and retain high-quality teachers, launching a new higher education coordinating council to set bold statewide goals and holding institutions accountable to them, guaranteeing two years of free community college tuition and connecting our early childhood, K-12 and higher education data systems to improve student outcomes. Each of these initiatives represents my commitment to reinvesting in our cradle-to-career public education system." ([Source](#))



- "As mayor of San Francisco, we implemented Preschool for All, and as governor, I'm committed to universal preschool, equipping all of California's children with the tools to succeed when they start kindergarten." ([Source](#))
- "While I'm a firm believer in universal preschool, I believe that beginning learning at 3 years old is already too late. We need to double-down on the readiness gap by emphasizing prenatal care and the first three years of a child's life when nearly 85 percent of brain development occurs." ([Source](#))
- "Early Childhood Education is cornerstone of a happy/successful society. US enrolls just 50 percent of its 3-year-olds in ECE – unacceptable." ([Source](#))

## Colorado Governor Jared Polis (D)

### Overview

Governor-elect Polis is a strong advocate for ECE and made it a major feature of his gubernatorial platform.

### Policy Positions

- Introduced the Child Care for Working Families Act in 2017 in his capacity as congressman. The law seeks to establish a nationwide plan to ensure all families can access affordable, high-quality preschool and child care. The Act would:
  - Create a federal-state partnership to ensure families making under 150 percent of their state's median income do not pay more than seven percent of their income on child care.
  - Support access to high-quality preschool programs for low- and moderate-income 3- and 4-year olds.
  - Increase wages and training for teachers and caregivers. ([Source](#))
- Committed to free preschool and full-day kindergarten for all Coloradans on the campaign trail. He pledged to do so by creating a bipartisan group which will craft ballot language seeking voter approval to increase taxes to pay for the program. ([Source](#))



### Quotes

- "The biggest impact that we can make for kids is early childhood education." ([Source](#))
- "Education, from early childhood through college, is the single best investment we can make in our future. Sadly, many parents are priced-out of high-quality preschool and child care. No child should be denied a good start just because of their family's economic circumstances, and no parent should have to be faced with the burden of not being able to afford the very best for their kids. The Child Care for Working Families Act will finally give families access to high-quality child care and preschool." ([Source](#))
- "We must provide free full-day preschool and kindergarten for our children and our economy to truly thrive. I believe that we can provide universal preschool for every family much in the same way that the state already does for thousands of low-income students. This is good for parents, too."



By allowing them the confidence of free preschool for their child, we can allow parents who choose to do so the opportunity to go back to work to support their family. And I agree with the bipartisan members of the General Assembly who have grappled with funding full-day kindergarten. I believe through a wise use of existing funds, social impact bonds/public-private partnerships, gradual implementation, and going to the ballot box to fill in any funding gaps, we will get full-day kindergarten for every Colorado kid accomplished within two years of my election." ([Source](#))

- "Education, from early childhood through college, is the single best investment we can make in our future – and every child deserves a top-notch teacher. That's why I introduced the Child Care for Working Families Act, which would finally give families access to high-quality child care and preschool, while also investing in the nation's child care workforce by significantly improving wages and training for teachers and caregivers." ([Source](#))
- Governor-elect Polis pledges to "work out how to partner with philanthropy to create more early childhood education for all income levels." ([Source](#))

### **Relevant Information**

- Governor-elect Polis served on the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. He was also the top Democrat on the Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education Subcommittee and a member of the Higher Education and Workforce Development Subcommittee. ([Source](#))
- Governor-elect Polis believes quality early childhood education is critical for children's cognitive and emotional development, educational achievement, and preventing negative outcomes such as criminal and unhealthy behavior, lower productivity and earnings, and remedial services. His website states, "Despite the large and ever-expanding body of research confirming the multiple benefits of quality early childhood education, federal policy and budget undervalues it." ([Source](#))
- Governor-elect Polis is the former chair of the Colorado State Board of Education. He founded and is the former superintendent of The New America School, a network of charter schools in several states serving new immigrants and English-language learners, as well as the Academy for Urban Learning for homeless and at-risk youth. ([Source](#))

## Connecticut Governor Ned Lamont (D)



### Overview

Governor-elect Lamont made ECE funding a significant component of his campaign platform.

### Policy Positions

- Supports significant education investment and reform to expand access to child care and early childhood education. ([Source](#))
- Committed to prioritize fully funding the Care4Kids program, which helps low- to moderate-income families pay for child care. ([Source](#))
- Pledged to prioritize expanding nurse-family partnerships, child care, and early education programs. ([Source](#))

### Quotes

- "Early childhood may be considered the most important years of a child's life and we sort of value the early childhood teachers as if they're babysitters or something and they are underrated thus." ([Source](#))
- "Studies show that investing in early education is a good investment for the economic future of Connecticut. At All Our Kin, a non-profit supporter of sustainable family child care programs, I learned that every dollar they spent returned \$15 or more to the regional economy. Given this fact, and increasingly strong research on brain development, we can no longer afford to view child care as a convenience, but an educational and economic necessity, especially for low-income families. In [addition] to the developmental and educational benefits for children and increased income for child care providers, having quality and consistent child care means parents can reenter the workforce or better retain their jobs." ([Source](#))

### Relevant Information

- Governor-elect Lamont's website cites that "Nobel Prize-winning social science research has shown that each dollar invested in early childhood education results in \$15 of future benefits." ([Source](#))

## Florida Governor Andrew Gillum (D)

### Overview

Governor-elect Gillum is an enthusiastic ECE advocate who has called for increased investment in ECE programs.

### Policy Positions

- Supports a \$250 million investment in Florida's ECE programs. ([Source](#))
- Proposed a \$1 billion investment in public schools, students, and teachers to, among other priorities, boost early childhood education and raise teachers' starting salaries. ([Source](#))
- Authored an op-ed in 2015 in the *Tallahassee Democrat* applauding the benefits of, and calling for more investment in, ECE in his capacity as mayor of Tallahassee. ([Source](#))
- Committed to "[fighting every day to make sure that all families and their children have access to quality early childhood education no matter their job title or the amount in their bank account." ([Source](#))
- Worked with more than 100 businesses to launch the Family Friendly Workplaces program that prioritizes policies like safe and clean breastfeeding rooms and quality, affordable child care. As governor, he pledges to expand this program. ([Source](#))



### Quotes

- "As research shows, the best way to achieve that success is access to quality early learning. In fact, a strong majority of voters in Florida agree on the importance of high-quality early childhood education in a child's life." ([Source](#))
- "I take particular pride in the emphasis I put on early learning in Tallahassee." ([Source](#))
- "Early childhood education can be a driver for change and success before children even enter school." ([Source](#))
- "Investing in early childhood education improves the educational attainment of students in the long term, and will lead them to better and brighter economic futures. That's why when I'm Governor, I will fight every day to make sure that all families and their children have access to quality early childhood education no matter what." ([Source](#))



- "Right now, we begin most of our public education at five years old -- but research tells us that 90% of a child's brain development happens from ages zero to five... When I'm Governor, I'll work to provide education earlier for Florida kids, so that we can take advantage of this crucial time in their lives, and ensure that every student is kindergarten ready in Florida."  
([Source](#))

## Florida Governor Ron DeSantis (R)

### Overview

Governor-elect DeSantis has not publicly supported early childhood education programs or investments.

### Policy Positions

- None.

### Quotes

- None.





## Georgia Governor Brian Kemp (R)

### Overview

Governor-elect Kemp is a vocal advocate for funding certain ECE programs. He highlights his wife's experience as a Pre-K teacher in his advocacy for ECE investments.



### Policy Positions

- Committed to supporting "policies and incentives that are now in place to dramatically grow the number of quality-rated childcare centers in Georgia. To support [former Georgia Governor Nathan] Deal's goal to have all childcare centers rated by 2020, we will continue the incentive program that provides increased Childcare and Parent Services (CAPS) funding for qualified facilities." ([Source](#))
- Criticizes universal Pre-K, saying it will eliminate private Pre-K centers and restrict parental choice. Emphasizes that child care centers must be quality rated. ([Source](#))
- Advocates for parental choice in early childhood education, as well as support for licensed childcare providers. ([Source](#))

### Quotes

- "As the father of three teenage girls and husband to a former pre-K teacher, I know the value of early learning and the impact it has on a child's trajectory... To enhance educational outcomes in Georgia, we must invest in programs that improve childhood literacy rates and prepare students for a lifetime of learning." ([Source](#))
- "We will protect funding for early childhood education and give local schools the resources they need to keep our classrooms safe." ([Source](#))
- "I will allow parents to decide what's best for their children and will protect funding for Pre-K and childcare facilities – public and private - that are quality rated." ([Source](#))

## **Georgia Governor Stacey Abrams (D)**

### **Overview**

Governor-elect Abrams is a strong proponent of ECE investments and has made these programs a cornerstone of her campaign.



### **Policy Positions**

- Introduced the Bold Action For A Brighter Future Plan, which states, "As Governor, I will extend access to high-quality child care programs, ensure affordable options for children ages 0-3, increase access to pre-K, improve the livelihoods of teachers and expand statewide access to afterschool programs." ([Source](#))
- Proposed a \$300 million investment to expand early childhood education as part of her gubernatorial platform. ([Source](#))
- Proposed a scholarship program for early childhood education in 2017 in her capacity as a member of the Georgia House of Representatives. The centerpiece of her pitch is a Bold Start Scholarship Program that would be available to families who trigger an "affordability standard" by spending as much as 7 percent to 10 percent of their income on child care. Families could use the scholarships, estimated to cost about \$300 million a year, for home-based care, child care centers or preschool. ([Source](#))
- Pledged to expand the supply of child care options by partnering with community development agencies and offering new grants for early child care providers who work with children with disabilities, rural communities and kids whose parents are shift workers. A separate tax credit would offer up to \$1,000 for child care workers who seek more professional development at a cost of about \$50 million a year. ([Source](#))

### **Quotes**

- "To foster school readiness for Georgia's children, we must increase our supply of quality, affordable childcare and protect our pre-K program. I will continue to be a staunch advocate and protector of both private and public early childhood education in Georgia. When universal pre-K was on the chopping block, I fought side-by-side with early education leaders to



ensure that our 4-year-olds could get the strongest start possible."  
([Source](#))

- "Georgia's fundamental responsibility is to guarantee access to public education for our children—from cradle to career." ([Source](#))
- "Regardless of the family, taking care of our children from cradle to career stands as a clear and foundational goal. Quality child care and early learning are critical to fostering school readiness, graduation rates, reading proficiency and college-going rates." ([Source](#))
- "Employees who have peace of mind about child care arrangements are more stable and productive workers, which in turn makes our state more competitive when attracting business. Workers also benefit by staying employed longer and earning more income." ([Source](#))
- "Quality educational care grows resilient children, provides stability for employers whose employees know their children are in good hands, and invests in the future workforce, beginning in early childhood. As governor, I will be committed to educating bold and ambitious children who believe their future is limitless, regardless of who they are or where they live."  
([Source](#))

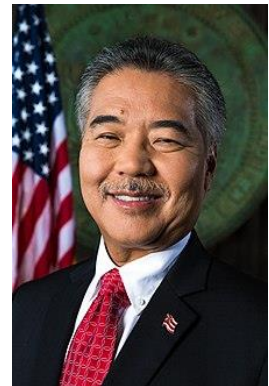
## Hawaii Governor David Ige (D)

### Overview

Gov. Ige rarely weighed in on ECE during his first term, but has supported state funding for ECE programs.

### Policy Positions

- While Ige served in the Hawaii state legislature, voters defeated a constitutional amendment called "Hawaii State Funding for Private Early Childhood Education Programs," which would have allowed the state to spend public funds on private early childhood education programs. Gov. Ige was in favor of including the issue on the ballot, but was personally against the measure because he preferred tax dollars be used to improve public ECE programs.



### Quotes

- "I support early childhood education but I am opposed to the proposed constitutional amendment to allow public funds to be spent in private preschools. We should first successfully implement early education programs in our public schools before considering spreading our limited tax dollars to private preschools. The amendment asks voters to approve a preschool program with no details on how much it will cost and how the program will work." ([Source](#))
- "There are families out there that continue to struggle despite the overall state of our economy. I know there are those who are concerned about health care, child care and rent payments. That's why we need to press on with the progress we've made over the last two years: Transforming our schools; re-shaping our economy; addressing homelessness and building more affordable homes; and making government more efficient so that it can continue to work for the people. All of these goals are inextricably linked to each other. To transform our economy, we need to transform our schools, so our children can provide the brain power and fill the jobs required in a knowledge-based industry." ([Source](#))

## Idaho Governor Brad Little (R)

### Overview

Governor-elect Little has become a vocal proponent of increasing Idaho's ECE investments.

### Policy Positions

- Pledges to increase funding for kindergarten and early childhood reading programs and, in districts that want it, for pre-kindergarten programs. He said the state would fund it with increased revenue from economic growth, and without raising taxes. ([Source](#))
- Believes that in order to have all of Idaho's third-graders reading at grade level, the state has to look at early education, including pre-K, all-day kindergarten, increased parental involvement, and reduced class sizes. Little has proposed a line item in the state budget that gives school districts a block of money to address early education, as they see fit. ([Source](#))



### Quotes

- Little on early childhood education: "The future — both of our quality of life and our economic success — is dependent on this issue." ([Source](#))
- Little on early childhood education: "The longer goals of graduation rates, go-on rates, and, most importantly, lifetime outcomes all hinged to this issue." ([Source](#))
- "I believe the best solutions to educating our children come from the individual communities that each child is raised in, giving those teachers, parents and students local control. This is especially important as we consider early childhood education and ways to improve reading proficiency for our students at the end of the third grade. If the Legislature does choose to pursue early childhood education options, I strongly believe it should be up to local school districts and parents to decide the form it takes in their communities and schools." ([Source](#))
- In a push to pass legislation to advance the state's goal of 60 percent of people 25 to 34-years-old going on to earn a college education or a certificate, Little said, "we can't do it without talking about early learning." ([Source](#))



- "The evidence is compelling...It's a no-brainer that with a robust pre-K program, we're going to have more kids prepared for kindergarten, and that reading proficiency at the end of 3rd grade is going to go up...Lifetime outcomes all hinge to this issue." ([Source](#))

## Illinois Governor J.B. Pritzker (D)

### Overview

Governor-elect Pritzker is one of the country's leading early education philanthropists and was a vocal advocate for ECE investments on the campaign trail.



### Policy Positions

- Advocates for free full-day kindergarten in public schools across Illinois. ([Source](#))
- Presented an early childhood plan that would pave a path to universal 3- and 4-year-old preschool. ([Source](#))
- Funds early childhood education efforts nationally and in Illinois, backing the Early Childhood Innovation Accelerator as well as Ounce of Prevention and the First Five Years Fund. ([Source](#))

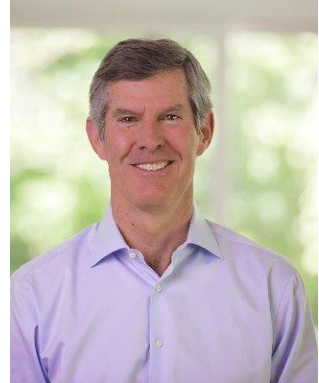
### Quotes

- "[Full-day kindergarten] should be provided free...It's almost embarrassing for the state that we don't recognize kindergarten as a grade that should be funded in public education. Kindergarten is vitally important, and so is preschool." ([Source](#))
- "We have all the science," Pritzker said. "[Early childhood education is] not just a 'nice' to have; it's a 'need' to have." ([Source](#))
- "Over the course of a kid's education, they are way more likely to graduate from high school, way more likely to graduate from college, to get a job, and less likely to get incarcerated when they get quality preschool and child care. Let's not cut off our nose to spite our face." ([Source](#))

## Iowa Governor Fred Hubbell (D)

### Overview

Governor-elect Hubbell is a strong advocate for funding ECE programs. He highlights his background in child care throughout his advocacy for ECE investments.



### Policy Positions

- Made the full funding of Pre-K and K-12 public education a key piece of his campaign platform. ([Source](#))

### Quotes

- "The first bill I would do is to fully fund pre-K and K-12 public education." ([Source](#))
- "As governor, I would re-prioritize our budget to end these wasteful tax giveaways to ensure education is fully funded, including pre-K for all 4-year-olds." ([Source](#))
- "Earlier in my life, I worked at a childcare center, where I saw firsthand how formative a full day education can be on the development of young people. As governor I will work to fully fund universal pre-K and K-12 education, so every lowan can have a full learning environment to better prepare our students for lifelong success." ([Source](#))
- "Under Iowa's current system, working parents can be blocked out of child care benefits due to eligibility cliffs. We need to reform Iowa's benefit structure so parents don't have to choose between accepting a raise or higher paying job, and being able to afford quality child care for their children. As Governor, I will also fully fund all-day pre-K for all 4-year-olds, that provides additional childcare support for working families. Considerations should also be given to increasing the child tax credit." ([Source](#))



## Iowa Governor Kim Reynolds (R)

### Overview

Gov. Reynolds has not prioritized ECE in office, but she advocated for early literacy and Trump's child care plan.

### Policy Positions

- Advocates for policies to expand Iowa's early literacy initiative and efforts to help teachers improve their reading instruction quality. ([Source](#))
- Praised President Trump's plan to make child care expenses tax deductible for families earning less than \$500,000 and establish tax-free accounts for child care and child enrichment activities. Another provision would guarantee six weeks of paid maternity leave by extending unemployment insurance benefits to working mothers whose employers do not offer that benefit. Reynolds said child care is the greatest cost holding back working families. ([Source](#))



### Quotes

- "I know how tough it is to make ends meet, while also raising a family. My husband and I lived it for many years of our life. That's why I support programs that help Iowa's parents who need childcare assistance, receive it. In SFY17, the state invested an additional \$8 million in state funds for child care and in the 2018 HHS appropriations bill includes an additional \$5 million to increase the reimbursement rate for child care providers." ([Source](#))
- "I'm proud that Iowa schools are seeing steady progress in their efforts to catch and address reading problems in children as early as kindergarten," Reynolds said. "Reading proficiently changes lives. It determines whether students will graduate from high school truly ready for college or career-training, which we hope leads to a great job right here in the state of Iowa." ([Source](#))
- "You know, when we talk about helping communities grow and thrive, this is a key component. A lot of times it comes down to jobs and housing, but really fundamental things like a daycare and preschool." ([Source](#))

## **Kansas Governor Kris Kobach (R)**

### **Overview**

Governor-elect Kobach has not publicly supported early childhood education programs or investments.

### **Policy Positions**

- None.

### **Quotes**

- None.



## Kansas Governor Laura Kelly (D)

### Overview

Governor-elect Kelly is a strong proponent of ECE investments. She made these programs a cornerstone of her campaign.



### Policy Positions

- Pushed for the creation and funding of the Early Childhood Block Grants in 2009 to ensure that more children enter kindergarten ready to learn. ([Source](#))
- Demanded additional funding be added to the budget in 2018 to support early childhood programs across the state. ([Source](#))
- Calls herself "the education governor." She made schools a leading campaign issue, including "a 20-paragraph platform supporting early childhood education, increased funding for schools, vocational training, higher education, and student mental health. She has served in the state Senate since 2005 and been endorsed by the state's teachers union and former Republican governor Bill Graves and former Republican U.S. Senator from Kansas Nancy Kassebaum." ([Source](#))

### Quotes

- "During my time in the state Senate, I've worked to make sure every Kansas child has the support they need to succeed. That means access to good public schools, but it also means strong early childhood programs, an accountable child welfare system to protect kids, and affordable, safe child care." ([Source](#))
- "My proudest accomplishment was securing critical support for early childhood education programs. In 2009, I pushed for the creation and funding of early childhood block grants to ensure that more kids enter kindergarten ready to learn. It's really not rocket science: Put kids on the right path at an early age — and keep them there. It's how they succeed; it's how their families succeed and it's how Kansas succeeds." ([Source](#))
- "I want to restore funding to our public schools and make them the best in the nation again, I want to really focus on early childhood education, we need to restore our roads and we need to build our broadband network if we're ever going to attract businesses in the state." ([Source](#))



- "Instead of focusing on doing the minimum, we will plan and innovate. We will expand pre-K programs, fully fund our K-12 schools and add a cost of living index to keep us out of court." ([Source](#))

#### **Relevant Information**

- Received the 2018 Distinguished Service to Children Award and the Friend of Education Award. ([Source](#))
- Was appointed by the governor to serve on the Kansas Children's Cabinet. ([Source](#))

## Maine Governor Janet Mills (D)

### Overview

Governor-elect Mills has spoken briefly about ECE, but not made it a priority issue in her campaign.

### Policy Positions

- Believes improvements must be made in education from kindergarten through grade 12, including early childhood education. ([Source](#))
- Stated that Maine should "more aggressively" fund Pre-K education. ([Source](#))



### Quotes

- "The Educare program here in Waterville is an incredible program. I wish we could replicate that all across the state of Maine." (The program prepares Pre-K-aged children for school and incorporates parent involvement.) ([Source](#))

### Relevant Information

- A Better Maine, an independent organization backed by the Democratic Governors Association released an advertisement in support of Mills, saying, "As governor she'll invest in public schools, from pre-K through college." ([Source](#))

## Maryland Governor Larry Hogan (R)



### Overview

Governor Hogan has not engaged extensively on ECE policies, but believes early learning programs are important.

### Policy Positions

- Expanded eligibility for Maryland's Child Care Subsidy Program to "allow more children across the state to access quality child care and educational programs due to historic changes to the program...This increase and additional programmatic changes to the CCS Program this year will result in more Maryland children arriving at elementary school with the educational foundation needed for success during their school years, and in life." ([Source](#))
- Describes education as a top priority. ([Source](#))
- Announced \$19 Million in education funding, including \$4.5 million for before- and after-school academic programs, \$2.5 million for an early literacy program, and \$2 million for career and technical education. ([Source](#))

### Quotes

- "Early learning programs are critically important to the development of our youth and provide a foundation of educational support for children from economically disadvantaged households." ([Source](#))
- "This program is critically important to expanding educational opportunities for Maryland's low-income working families who depend on this assistance... Doubling this funding allows us to provide more families with much-needed relief and ensure that more of our kids have access to quality child care and educational programs, providing the foundation for success in the classroom." ([Source](#))

## Massachusetts Governor Charlie Baker (R)



### Overview

Governor Baker has been a vocal proponent of ECE investments in office, but not made it a campaign priority.

### Policy Positions

- Has not made any specific commitments to early childhood education on the campaign trail, but his tenure in office suggests he will continue to make investing in early childhood education a priority.
- In August 2018, the Baker administration announced \$4 million in grants for facility improvements at early education and care programs serving children from low income families. ([Source](#))
- In August 2017, Baker's administration announced \$46 million in funding awards to initiatives that support the quality and availability of early education and care programs across the state. ([Source](#))
- In July 2016, Baker's administration awarded \$42 million in grants to eight (8) early education grant programs: Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Networks, Head Start Supplemental Funding, Inclusive Preschool Learning Environments, Universal Pre-Kindergarten Classroom Quality, Educator and Provider Supports, Early Childhood Mental Health, Screening and Assessment, and Program Quality Rating Tools. ([Source](#))

### Quotes

- "I support an increase in targeted investment in early childhood education...we have to make sure when we make that investment we have kids going into schools where they continue to benefit from the gain that they received as a result of being in that program." ([Source](#))
- "As part of our commitment to early education, we are proud to announce more than \$46 million to help strengthen early education services and programs for young children and their families in cities and towns across Massachusetts. Today's grants, coupled with an already announced 6% rate increase for early education providers, ensure programs will continue to improve for their students and retain quality staff." ([Source](#))



- "In awarding these grants, we are proud to support important initiatives that advance the quality of the early education and care system in the Commonwealth. High-quality early education and care programs provide children with a strong foundation for learning, academic success, and positive outcomes overall." ([Source](#))
- "With these grants, we will improve the learning environments of our youngest children, boost the capacity of programs to serve more children and create new jobs. Renovating and repairing facilities helps achieve our goal of improving the quality of early education and care." ([Source](#))
- "To help the next generation of students get off to a good start, we delivered, with your support, one of the largest increases in funding for early childhood education in over a decade in our 2018 budget. All in, we've increased state spending on early education rates, delivering a \$45 million wage increase for teachers." ([Source](#))



## Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer (D)



### Overview

Governor-elect Whitmer is a strong proponent of ECE investments. She made these programs a cornerstone of her campaign.

### Policy Positions

- Advocates for universal preschool and has suggested ways to better leverage the state's education budget to pay for it. ([Source](#))
- Whitmer calls for: phasing in quality, full-day preschool; raising Michigan's child care eligibility and reimbursement rates; establishing a reliable state funding source for Early On services, and promoting classroom and teaching innovations to promote high-quality learning environments. ([Source](#))

### Quotes

- "My plan focuses on the first 1,000 days of a child's life. We will prioritize early childhood education funding and get Michigan on a path to universal preschool to ensure that when kids enter kindergarten, they are ready to learn." ([Source](#))
- "Educating children from kindergarten through the 12th grade is no longer good enough. It is time for our public education system to begin teaching Michiganders earlier in their formative years and throughout a lifetime of learning." ([Source](#))
- "[We will] raise Michigan's child care eligibility and reimbursement rates from one of the lowest in the country to a competitive level that will remain year after year so parents can make long-term plans for their children. High quality, affordable, safe, clean and reliable child care starting from birth will improve the readiness of Michigan three-year-olds about to enter preschool. It will also give parents the time and peace of mind they need to get a job, pursue a promotion or go back to school themselves." ([Source](#))
- "Prioritizing early education services from birth to five years does more to bolster lifetime literacy outcomes than any punitive measure, like retaining



students in third grade. Research shows a 13 percent return on investment for every dollar spent on high-quality early childhood education. This is why universal preschool is the first step to ensure Michigan becomes a fully literate state." ([Source](#))

- In response to a question on whether Michigan schools have the necessary resources to succeed, Whitmer said, "No and no. We've got to do better by our children and that means not punishing third graders who aren't literate. It means tripling the number of literacy coaches. Having universal early childhood education so every child coming into kindergarten is ready to learn." ([Source](#))
- In response to a question on what Michigan can do about the high cost of child care and lack of preschool options for young children, Whitmer replied, "One of the things that we have proposed in my jobs and the economy plan is drawing down more resources from the federal government. Right now we could be giving tax breaks to families for childcare and we're not. We could expand early childhood education, which starting our kids off as four-year-olds would help alleviate some of that." ([Source](#))
- "Studies have shown that investing in quality early childhood education is one of the best ways to encourage lifetime literacy. My "Better Schools Now" education plan will move Michigan to universal preschool, triple the number of literacy coaches in Michigan and give students the in-school wraparound support they need – like counselors, social workers, school nurses, school security, healthy meals and safe transportation. We're going to reimagine public education and provide quality classroom learning and education that starts at birth." ([Source](#))

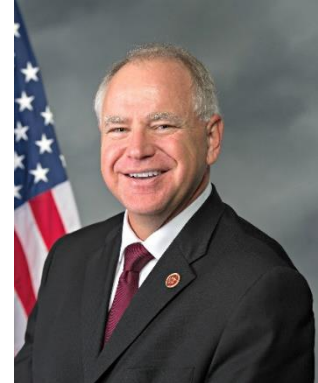
### **Relevant Information**

- In June, Whitmer published an op-ed, "Grow workforce by improving education," which highlighted her plan to increase investment in early childhood education. ([Source](#))

## Minnesota Governor Tim Walz (D)

### Overview

Governor-elect Walz is a strong proponent of ECE/child care funding, programs, and improvements. His campaign platform delved deeply into ECE policy proposals.



### Policy Positions

- Supports universal Pre-K. His website states: "All students deserve learning opportunities at an early age. We need to pursue a two-generation strategy so that we are supporting kids and their families together. Early learning should also be better integrated with Minnesota's child care assistance programs. We know opportunity gaps begin early. By addressing education equity early we will provide all of our kids a chance to succeed." ([Source](#))
- Vows to fully fund existing state child care programs for income-eligible families, as well as increase statewide access to quality child care programs for all families. ([Source](#))
- Pledged that a "Walz-Flanagan administration would take significant steps to ensure that we address child care needs across the state, from North Mankato to the North Shore to North Minneapolis. This means the following: Increasing the child and dependent care tax credit, and the income limit for this tax credit so that more families can benefit from it; Fully fund and forecast the Child Care Assistance Program, so that all income eligible families can obtain funding to pay for early care and education for their children; Increase access to quality child care programs for children receiving child care assistance by supporting the growth of the Parent Aware quality rating and improvement system and ensuring that it is culturally responsive and culturally competent; Invest in the Community Solutions Fund for Healthy Child Development, a proposal from Voices and Choices for Children. This fund would provide flexible funding streams to disburse funds of varying sizes that communities can use to build upon what they see working; acknowledging that communities of color and indigenous communities have invaluable knowledge, and must be active and valued participants within the creation of solutions for themselves; Partner with organizations like WomenVenture to develop cooperatively-owned child care businesses in low-income areas and in greater Minnesota." ([Source](#))

## Quotes

- "I believe that early education is important because a child's development begins long before he or she arrives in elementary school. Head Start programs provide early childhood education, social services, and parental involvement programs to over 18 million low income children." ([Source](#))
- "The Head Start program developed an early learning program that has been instrumental in educational success for the past 45 years. Likewise, this program is vital in creating a whole-family approach and establishing a pathway to lifelong success. Studies show that every dollar invested in Head Start returns \$7-\$9 to our future economic growth, so the program more than pays for itself. Students who go through this program increase their social and academic skills and have a reduced high school dropout rate." ([Source](#))
- "America's health care system must be improved; roundtable participants ranked health care a top priority; mental health has to be part of the health care discussion; the high costs of prescription drugs have to be addressed; affordable, high-quality child care and early childhood education are critical parts of a vibrant rural economy." ([Source](#))
- "I am proud to introduce the Small Town and Regional Vitality Investment Act to empower our local elected officials to overcome major barriers to future vitality in a flexible, strategic way – but make no mistake, it was truly written by the people of southern Minnesota over the course of two years. By investing in our shared public goods, such as human capital, public infrastructure, community amenities, and early childhood development, the bill will help our small towns achieve their full potential and thrive for decades to come. It will help draw folks who pursued educational and economic opportunities elsewhere back to rural areas, help attract young folks who are ready to settle down and start a family, and help recruit highly skilled workers to fill job vacancies." ([Source](#))
- "As my running mate Peggy Flanagan often says, children don't come in pieces, and when it comes to education, that is abundantly clear. This fact makes early childhood care essential to our education system in Minnesota, which would be the top priority for me as Governor. Minnesota's history of investing in education is one of the most significant components of our historic economic success, and something that we are consistently identified as a leader. Closing these opportunity gaps isn't just a moral imperative; it's an economic necessity as our workforce demands are ever increasing. And whenever we make decisions, Peggy and I will return to our North Star: Bringing people directly affected by those policy to the table." ([Source](#))



- "Peggy and I support high-quality, public, universal pre-k for all Minnesota 4 year olds. In order to achieve this goal, we would advocate for securing the additional funding needed to expand this program across the state. We would need to implement universal pre-k with great care and intention, ensuring that child care providers don't suffer financial hardship through the loss of 4-year-olds in their care." ([Source](#))
- "I also understand the need to review and build more coordination among the many revenue streams and programs funded by the state and so we would charge our administration to work to ensure we're spending dollars effectively to expand high quality early learning opportunities across the state." ([Source](#))
- "Minnesota reimburses child care providers at significantly low rates. Consequently, child care capacity, especially in rural Minnesota, has declined over the last decade or more. Much has been discussed about child care regulations, and I'm willing to explore common sense regulatory reforms that help providers. However, we will direct our administration to determine how we can draw down additional federal child care funds, along with adding state funds in order to improve child care reimbursement rates. We strongly support securing the necessary funding to ensure that quality child care programs are accessible and affordable for all Minnesota families. However, we would like to draw the distinction between child care and early education programs (such as universal, public pre-K). While both are critically important for closing the opportunity gap, they are not always one in the same. Many children and families need access to both preschool AND high-quality child care to meet both the educational needs of children and provide economic stability for their families, especially for families with parents who work the second or third shift. As stated above, we need to address child care reimbursement rates to ensure quality care, as well as funding universal, public pre-K programs. In addition, we should explore many more of the items in MinneMinds policy agenda from expanding state grants for retaining and increasing the number of providers, to programs like TEACH and RETAIN and more. We appreciate these programs and want to work together to support them." ([Source](#))
- "Fully funding the biennial increase into the state's budget to meet the needs of Minnesota's children and families will be very challenging. But it is a challenge we believe we can achieve. For far too long we have bought into a narrative of scarcity of resources instead of looking at our spending priorities. As we work to get there, my first focus would be on ensuring low income and other high-needs kids and families (for example, kids in child protection or foster care) would be a priority. However, we still



believe universal access to high-quality, public pre-K would benefit all families and it is achievable." ([Source](#))

- "Home visiting programs have never been adequately funded. A Walz-Flanagan Administration would invest in programs that are currently successfully implementing home visits, work to increase flexibility and access to these programs, then ensure sufficient funding through a home visiting grant program." ([Source](#))
- "Minnesota has left federal child care funding on the table by not conforming to federal program requirements. We're interested in exploring our options in the child care assistance program. The net result is that Minnesota may in fact have a 'complex' system, but that doesn't mean it's ineffective. Minnesota is a large and diverse state and we will work toward pragmatic solutions to create access and opportunities for all." ([Source](#))

## **Nevada Governor Adam Laxalt (R)**

### **Overview**

Laxalt has largely not engaged on ECE, though his campaign website advocates for early literacy programs.

### **Policy Positions**

- Champions early literacy programs on his campaign website: "One of the biggest challenges facing our education system is the need to improve literacy among our young students. Research consistently shows that achieving literacy early in life is crucial to future academic success. Fortunately, a series of reforms and programs have been implemented in recent years with the goal of enhancing early-age literacy, including Read by 3rd Grade, Zoom Schools, Victory Schools, and Weighted Student Funding. I will continue to champion these new programs." ([Source](#))



### **Quotes**

- None.

## **Nevada Governor Steve Sisolak (D)**

### **Overview**

Governor-elect Sisolak has not publicly supported early childhood education programs or investments.

### **Policy Positions**

- None.

### **Quotes**

- None.





## **Nebraska Governor Pete Ricketts (R)**

### **Overview**

Governor Ricketts is unsupportive of public investments in ECE.

### **Policy Positions**

- Downplays the role of the state in providing early childhood education.

### **Quotes**

- "The education of the child really belongs with the parent. There are some things we can do at the state to help with that if it comes to reading programs and so forth. But ultimately, if we have other civic organizations that would like to get involved in doing that, that's something that I think will be more effective." ([Source](#))



## **New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu (R)**

### **Overview**

Governor Sununu has vocally supported ECE investments, but he did not make it a campaign priority nor has he advocated for specific policies.

### **Policy Positions**

- Advocates for full-day kindergarten. ([Source](#))

### **Quotes**

- "The investments made in early childhood education will give all New Hampshire children a strong foundation for tomorrow's future." ([Source](#))
- "I'm very proud that this administration has made bigger investments and provided more opportunities in early childhood education and early childhood development than ever before." ([Source](#))
- "Today in New Hampshire, a family's educational opportunities are growing. Whether its access to a full-day kindergarten program or whether a family is seeking an alternative education for their kids, a family's zip-code no longer limits their opportunity to succeed." ([Source](#))
- "Full-day kindergarten is good for children and families and a critical tool in retaining our future workforce." ([Source](#))



## **New Mexico Governor Michelle Lujan Grisham (D)**



### **Overview**

Governor-elect Lujan Grisham is a strong proponent of ECE investments; she committed to making them a hallmark of her administration.

### **Policy Positions**

- Calls on New Mexico to fund full-day early education for every child in the state. Her website states that this policy "is the smartest investment we can make in our future, and will prepare the next generation of kids for better careers and healthier lives." ([Source](#))
- Advocates for making "universal access to high-quality Pre-K a reality for every New Mexico Family. Quality Pre-K is one of the best investments we can make in our future. By increasing distributions from our Permanent School Fund and bringing Pre-K in line with the school funding formula, we can make universal Pre-K a reality and secure its funding for the future. We also need to ensure that our early education is held to a high standard. Michelle will support training and recruitment of skilled educators with professional wages and make full-day instruction the norm so we can give every child the start they deserve." ([Source](#))

### **Quotes**

- "Early childhood education would be a hallmark of the administration. We want every child to have universal access. We do not create cooperative leveraging between the Children Youth and Families Department's [CYFD] early childhood and Head Start. So we've got fewer Head Start dollars in the state... You determine that getting to kids, particularly in at-risk families, happens immediately. You do statewide home visiting. You do a much better job of identifying at-risk families, assigning them to personnel in CYFD." ([Source](#))

## **New York Governor Andrew Cuomo (D)**

### **Overview**

Governor Cuomo has been a vocal proponent of ECE investments in office, but not made it a campaign priority.

### **Policy Positions**

- Advocates for increased Pre-K funding. ([Source](#))
- Proposed relief to families struggling to afford child care with a Middle Class Child Care Tax Credit. ([Source](#))

### **Quotes**

- "We'll invest another \$365 million this year in Pre-K for four-year-olds but we also want to take the next step and start designing programs – not for four-year-olds – but for three-year-olds. All of the studies say that the earlier you get them in, the better. Let New York be ahead of the curve by enrolling three-year-olds who are now making some of the largest cognitive and behavioral gains. We are going to start this with a \$25 million offering for Pre-K for three-year-olds." ([Source](#))
- "This year I propose we provide additional relief with a Middle Class Child Care Tax Credit. The average cost to send a child to day care is \$25,000. This year we will double the credit to help reduce child care costs to more than 200,000 working class families. That will make a difference." ([Source](#))
- "Student achievement at all grade levels often rests on the quality of early learning and this challenge proposal demonstrates New York State's commitment to making sure our early childhood education programs are among the best in the nation." ([Source](#))
- "Early learning opportunities can have a tremendous impact on a child's achievements in life — both during the formative years and over the long run. By funding pre-K for 3-year-olds in high-need communities, we can begin to shrink the achievement gap and set those students on the path to success from an even younger age...There's no doubt the benefits are just amazing." ([Source](#))



## Ohio Governor Mike DeWine (R)

### Overview

Governor-elect DeWine is a strong proponent of ECE investments and has highlighted plans to invest in these programs during his campaign.



### Policy Positions

- Pledged to "Improve access and increase the quality of early childhood education services." He plans to do this by raising the eligibility level for publicly funded early childhood programs for working families from 130% of the federal poverty level to 150% of the federal poverty level, which will expand access to at least 20,000 more children. He also stresses the importance of ensuring all early childhood education centers are high quality. ([Source](#))
- Wants to increase home visiting services for at-risk, first time mothers "to give them the tools they need to promote child development and school readiness." ([Source](#))
- Committed to making state investments to triple the number of families served through home-visiting programs. ([Source](#))
- Cites that evidence-based home visiting services in Ohio "are grossly underfunded, reaching less than 4 percent of eligible families." ([Source](#))

### Quotes

- "When you look at the challenges that the state faces ... a lot of it comes back to early childhood development." ([Source](#))
- "You cannot separate education from nutrition from healthcare. All of these impact on how well that child is going to develop." ([Source](#))
- "When we present our budget in early next year, the budget will balance and it's a question of priorities. Kids are important. And what we wanted to signal today was how important we think they are." ([Source](#))
- "We are not going to have a prosperous and competitive Ohio by trying to fix major social problems after they develop. We can only do it by preventing these problems in the first place." ([Source](#))
- "Ninety percent of brain development occurs, we're told, during a child's first five years of life yet educational supports for most children really don't begin until kindergarten. We must start early when the mother is



expecting her baby and through that child's first through years of life."  
([Source](#))

## Ohio Governor Richard Cordray (D)

### Overview

Governor-elect Cordray is a strong proponent of ECE investments and has highlighted plans to invest in these programs during his campaign.



### Policy Positions

- Vows to "expand access to quality child care, support and improve early education programs, and build on Ohio's home visiting programs." ([Source](#))
- Pledges to make it easier for families to qualify for publicly-funded child care. He commits to expand access to quality child care by raising the eligibility limit to at least 150% of the federal poverty level. ([Source](#))
- Commits to ensuring that child care programs across the state are adequately supported. His campaign websites says, "We will work to ensure that all providers have access to the resources to provide supportive and quality care to their charges. Finally, we will push for state tax credits to offset the high costs of child care and provide direct relief to more working families." ([Source](#))
- Seeks to utilize "the existing Child Care Resource and Referral System as regional hubs, providing help and support to connect families and early childhood care and educators, building more comprehensive early education programs. We will look for ways to spread best practices and evidence-based programs to those working in this space. From Cincinnati's passage of Issue 44 in 2016, to Montgomery County's Pre-School Promise initiative, to Cuyahoga County's PRE4CLE program, communities across the state are getting smart about this critical need." ([Source](#))
- Will establish a single office dedicated to connecting the state's early education efforts to assure children are receiving the best education and care possible. "The office will support teachers; share nationally developed curricula, research, and cutting-edge methods; coordinate funding streams; advocate for public policy; and review existing programs." ([Source](#))
- Commits to developing "a comprehensive funding plan that supports high-quality early education programs." ([Source](#))

### Quotes



- "Betty Sutton and I will enhance the quality of our home visiting services by improving the way we train staff, collect data, and evaluate existing programs. We will also integrate these existing home-visiting programs into a more comprehensive early childhood service system, coordinating with state agencies and hospitals that also serve young children. By building on practices that have already proven to get results, we will expand the reach of our home-visiting programs and ensure many more families get this essential support during those crucial first years of childhood." ([Source](#))
- "It's support for parents, it's support for juggling childcare with working which is true of single parent families definitely and of many two parent families in this day and age. It is making sure that that program for three- and four- year olds is quality programming that it is actually helping develop kids educationally, those are all pieces of the puzzle." ([Source](#))
- "Our goal is for every child to graduate from high school and be truly, truly college-ready, or have a pathway to a career in front of them. To achieve that, they need to be reading by third grade. To be reading by third grade, they need to start kindergarten and not be very far behind other kids in their class. This is why Jon Husted and I are putting a lot of emphasis on early childhood development. We are really going to focus on that after we take office." ([Source](#))
- Cordray says early childhood education is imperative to the future of Ohio, explaining that "If we don't [invest in early childhood education], we will fall behind. We will not compete with the rest of the country. We will not compete with the rest of the world. And we will pay the price in a lot of young people's lives that will go in wrong directions and their lives will become wasted." ([Source](#))
- "We're going to repurpose money into things like universal pre-K and free community college, and that's part of how we're going to pay for this stuff." ([Source](#))

### **Relevant Information**

- Cordray's campaign website states: "Early childhood services help the entire family: they give children the start they need to succeed and enable parents to focus on getting and keeping good-paying jobs that can support their families. Because 90% of a child's brain develops even before his or her 5th birthday, an investment in our children is an investment in Ohio's future. The investments made from the State of Ohio, however, have too often come a day late and a dollar short. We spend \$1.1 billion each year on child care programs, but less than one-third of eligible young children in Ohio receive publicly-funded child care. Meanwhile, only one-sixteenth





of the state's investment in education is spent on children between the ages of 0 and 5. Play is serious business for young children, and investing in early childhood services pays direct dividends later. Children with access to high-quality early childhood experiences during their first five years of life are significantly more likely to graduate from high school, earn higher wages, and report better health. Children who start behind, however, usually stay behind. They are more likely to fall behind in school, rely on public assistance programs, and end up violating the law." ([Source](#))

- Cordray's campaign website states: "We can't forget that for our parents who work for hourly wages, flexibility is key. Those working irregular hours, late shifts, or weekends should have the same access to quality child care as those working traditional 9-5 jobs. We need to bridge the gaps for Ohio's most vulnerable children as they start out on the road of life, keeping them with their families and supporting parents and caregivers. By providing truly accessible and quality early childhood services, we will not only position our youngest Ohioans for lifelong success but also yield the greatest return on our investment for Ohio taxpayers." ([Source](#))

## Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt (R)

### Overview

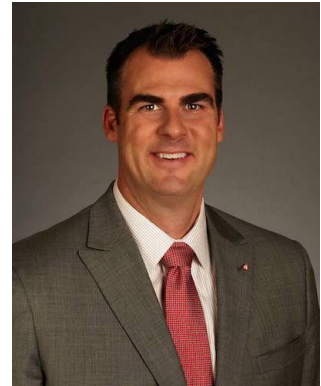
Governor-elect Stitt has largely not engaged on ECE programs or investments, though he has commented on the important role a child's early home environment plays in his or her long-term success.

### Policy Positions

- None.

### Quotes

- "Many scientific studies show that a child's success starts with a safe and stable home environment. There are many ways the governor can help families succeed, from recruiting more competition in the job market to improve household wages to ensuring our state's safety nets are fiscally sound, operating efficiently and available to those who need it the most. I also believe education is a corner stone [sic] to helping better the lives of Oklahoma's children. Everyone recognizes we need to do better in this category. I am ready to bring all stakeholders together and lead us in problem-solving and pursuing new methods that are showing successful outcomes in other states." ([Source](#))



## **Oregon Governor Knute Buehler (R)**

### **Overview**

Governor-elect Buehler has largely not engaged on ECE, though he has committed to rejuvenating innovation, including with a focus on early learning.

### **Policy Positions**

- None.

### **Quotes**

- Buehler plans to "rejuvenate innovation" in the classroom, with a focus on "early learning, third-grade reading, having a personalized education plan, breaking down the silos between K through 12 and higher education, emphasizing career and technical training." ([Source](#))



## Oregon Governor Kate Brown (D)

### Overview

Governor Brown is a strong, vocal advocate for funding and expanding ECE programs.

### Policy Positions

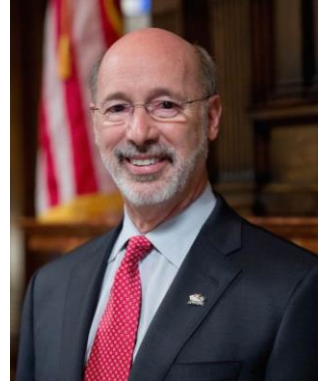
- Funded all-day kindergarten statewide for the first time ever in her capacity as governor. ([Source](#))
- "Kate Brown is proud of her record on education during the 3½ years she's served as Oregon's governor. Spending is up 22 percent, 1,300 more low-income children have access to free preschool each year, and the graduation rate rose 3 percentage points in two years, a faster rate than in prior years." ([Source](#))
- Believes "allocating money to early childhood education and to programs that connect families of color and those living in poverty may take a while to pay off, but it is an investment with long-term dividends." ([Source](#))
- Wants "to focus her efforts on helping 'kids who face the most barriers.' Her plan outlines steps to make preschool and child care more affordable and available to all families, especially families living in poverty. She says Oregon is among the least affordable states for infant and toddler child care in the country. She plans to expand on existing services to add an additional 10,000 children from low-income families or those with disabilities in the next biennium, with the goal of serving 40,000 children by 2025." ([Source](#))



### Quotes

- "We've been able to expand access to pre-K and sustain funding for it despite opposition in the Legislature." ([Source](#))
- "We want all of our children to show up to kindergarten ready to learn." ([Source](#))

## **Pennsylvania Governor Tom Wolf (D)**



### **Overview**

Governor Wolf is highly supportive of ECE investments and program expansions.

### **Policy Positions**

- Increased the number of children able to attend pre-kindergarten by 64% and increased the number of students enrolled in full-day kindergarten to 93,800, citing the need for students to start early to get a head start in life. ([Source](#))
- Created the "Ready to Start" task force focused on informing the strategy to address health, human services, and education policy for infants and toddlers ages zero to three. ([Source](#))
- Made education the cornerstone of his first run for governor. In his 2018-19 budget proposal, he called for a \$40 million increase for pre-K programs. ([Source](#))

### **Quotes**

- "Along with my administration's efforts in Pennsylvania over the past four years, we have increased our investments in pre-K by \$115 million to serve an additional 11,000 children, and in-home visiting by more than \$14 million to serve 7,200 more children, and we have invested \$16.8 million to move thousands of children from the Child Care Works waiting list. The accomplished business leaders on the commission are well suited to continue this bi-partisan work. Together, we can ensure that every child in the commonwealth has access to high-quality early childhood care and education." ([Source](#))
- "The environment in which babies live and learn in their first three years has an enormous impact on their cognitive, social, and emotional development. The task force's goal is to identify programs and policies to help infants and children age zero to three get a strong, focused beginning toward a healthy, happy, fulfilling life here in the commonwealth." ([Source](#))

## Rhode Island Governor Gina Raimondo (D)

### Overview

Governor Raimondo is a strong advocate for the long-term benefits of ECE investments; she has pledged greater investments next term.



### Policy Positions

- Believes "all families deserve access to excellent childcare." She has sought "to ease the financial burden and give peace of mind to low-income working families." These efforts led to "the largest increase in Child Care Assistance funding in a decade." ([Source](#))
- Calls for additional investments in improving child care quality in her latest budget. ([Source](#))
- Announced she will pursue an initiative to fund universal state pre-K if she wins re-election. ([Source](#))

### Quotes

- "When we invest in proven supports like early childhood education, it pays dividends down the road, and I'm grateful to all of the educators and policymakers whose support continues to position our state as a national leader." ([Source](#))
- "Investing in early childhood education is an investment in the future success of all students, and that investment is starting to pay off. Now, we must stay the course and continue these critical investments. We have high-quality programs in place, and I remain committed to expanding access to more students and families across Rhode Island." ([Source](#))
- "Every child deserves a shot at a bright future, and nothing prepares a child for their future better than high-quality preschool... We're going to guarantee that every parent who wants to send their four-year-old to Pre-K will be able to." ([Source](#))
- "I don't think that you should have to be wealthy in order to have a chance to have a good, high-quality pre-K." ([Source](#))



- "Investing in pre-K is about improving K-12 education in Rhode Island. Pre-K is the most cost-effective way to make significant improvements in K-12 outcomes." ([Source](#))

## **South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster (R)**

### **Overview**

Governor McMaster has not extensively engaged on ECE, but has stated that early education has to be excellent, and that it is the way out of poverty.

### **Policy Positions**

- None.

### **Quotes**

- "We agreed early education was not minimally adequate. It ought to be excellent. It's got to be better. We've got to educate the children. That's the way out of poverty." ([Source](#))





## **South Dakota Governor Kristi Noem (R)**

### **Overview**

Other than Governor-elect Noem's efforts to have the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit maintained in Congress, she has not publicly engaged on ECE.

### **Policy Positions**

- Worked to ensure the Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit was maintained in the Tax Cuts & Jobs Act. ([Source](#))

### **Quotes**

- None.



## Tennessee Governor Bill Lee (R)

### Overview

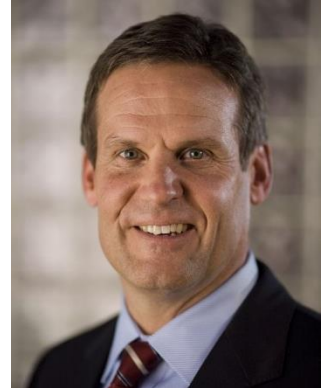
Governor-elect Lee believes ECE is critically important for ensuring children read at grade-level, but he has expressed skepticism in government-funded ECE.

### Policy Positions

- Expressed skepticism about the effectiveness of early childhood education. ([Source](#))

### Quotes

- Asked why so many children are not reading at grade level, Lee said early childhood education is "critically important." ([Source](#))



## Texas Governor Greg Abbott (R)

### Overview

Governor Abbott has been a vocal proponent of ECE investments in office, but not made it a campaign priority.



### Policy Positions

- Designated early childhood education an "emergency item" In his 2015 State of the State speech. (Emergency items receive expedited consideration by the Texas Legislature.) To address the situation, he called for "improving teacher skills and student learning in critical years; having every child doing math or reading at grade level by the third grade; providing funding to districts that opt to implement a high quality, accountable gold standard program; developing research based professional development for pre-kindergarten teachers." ([Source](#))
- Committed to spend state aid helping school districts develop quality pre-kindergarten classes. A House bill did this, authorizing more money to go to districts providing quality pre-k classes. Gov. Abbott also signed a state budget into law which awarded \$118 million in such grant funding through 2016-17. ([Source](#))
- Calls for providing "funding to districts that opt to implement a gold standard, high quality, accountable prekindergarten program with the goal of the demonstrating long-term prekindergarten success." ([Source](#))
- Commits to "[Requiring] prekindergarten providers that receive state funding to set benchmarks and evaluate improvement, and to report this data to TEA." ([Source](#))
- Seeks to develop "research-based professional development for prekindergarten teachers that incorporate the Texas Prekindergarten Guidelines and standards to promote classroom best practices." ([Source](#))
- Gov. Abbott's education platform states, "Given the established deficiencies in the Head Start Program, develop a strategic plan to encourage parents of eligible four-year-old children to enroll their children in state-based prekindergarten programs, rather than Head Start." ([Source](#))



- Introduced a “gold standard” grant program which awarded school districts \$118 million in pre-K funding in exchange for meeting certain standards of high quality, such as certified teachers and parental engagement, in 2015. That program was not implemented universally. In 2016, over 20 districts had turned down funds because they weren’t sure they could meet the governor’s ambitious standards with such limited money. ([Source](#))

### **Quotes**

- "The literacy and mathematics skills children learn in pre-kindergarten through third grade form the foundation for their futures, both in school and in life." ([Source](#))
- "A child’s early learning years lay the foundation for all that is to come. Prekindergarten (pre-k) and elementary grades K-3 play a critical role in a child’s educational development; this is the period during which gaps that develop prior to a child starting kindergarten are either solidified or eliminated. Education policy and practices must strengthen the emphasis placed on this pivotal stage of a child’s development in a way that recognizes needs in order to optimize academic learning." ([Source](#))
- "Family background has the most decisive effect on student achievement, contributing to a large performance gap between children from economically disadvantaged families and those from middle-class homes. Pre-K programs that target at-risk children have increasingly been looked to as a means of closing this gap. While there is some evidence to suggest that high quality pre-k increases a child's chances of succeeding, the general understanding concerning what constitutes 'high-quality' is far from universal. Studies argue that children who attend high quality programs are less likely to be held back or require special education and are more likely to graduate. Many of the studies promoting the long-term benefits of pre-k are either outdated or suffer from low internal or external validity. Others focus on small programs, which are difficult, if not impossible, to scale to a large population of children. Here in Texas, the quality of state-funded pre-k programs is largely unknown, as information regarding pre-k is seldom collected. If Texas is serious about implementing high quality pre-k, there is a need for greater transparency of pre-k programs. This will increase districts' ability to share information and facilitate the diffusion of classroom best practices. Transparency will also enable policymakers to assess the return on taxpayers' investment in state-funded pre-k by providing the necessary information to hold school districts and private providers accountable for the quality of their pre-k programs. This type of transparency and accountability is sorely lacking under the current model. Rather than thinking of pre-k and elementary



education as discrete elements of the educational continuum, pre-k through third grade must be considered as an integrated and comprehensive educational program. At a policy level, this means that, until improvements are made in grades K-3, any returns on the state's investment in prekindergarten will fail to realize its potential impact. Accordingly, the state must also invest in professional development for teachers in grades K-3 in order to ensure that children are building strong foundational skills in literacy and mathematics." ([Source](#))

- "[If Texas can] double down [on early childhood education], we are going to start setting some outstanding records." ([Source](#))
- "We must provide our children with the tools they need to succeed. We do that through education. James Madison emphasized the importance of education to our liberty. He said "a well-instructed people...can be a permanently free people." That's precisely our goal in educating our children: Ensuring their perpetual freedom. That education begins with early education including high-quality Pre-K. Don't take my word for the importance of this. Eighty percent of all voters agree: Texas should fund optional high-quality Pre-K education. They want our children on the path to reading and doing math at grade level by the time they finish third grade. Rep. Huberty and Sen. Campbell, you were right to champion that proposal last session. You brought high quality standards to a Pre-K system that desperately needed meaningful improvement. So, I'm perplexed by the budgets submitted by the House and Senate. They nod in the direction of Pre-K, but they turn a blind eye to the goal of achieving high-quality Pre-K. Do your constituents know that each session you vote to spend about \$1.5 billion on unaccountable Pre-K? The purpose of high-quality Pre-K is to set high standards, evaluate them and eliminate what doesn't work. It's to ensure that Pre-K works rather than wastes taxpayer money. Let's do this right. Or don't do it at all." ([Source](#))

## Vermont Governor Phil Scott (R)

### Overview

Governor Scott is a strong proponent of ECE investments and has highlighted plans to invest in these programs during his campaign.



### Policy Positions

- Proposed to use \$7 million generated from a new tax on internet sales to boost the state's spending on child care subsidies for Vermont families. ([Source](#))
- Proposes a five-year plan on his official website which mentions early childhood education, but lacks specifics. A more detailed breakdown of the plan says it "Generates almost \$300 million in net savings in 5 years that can be reinvested in early care & learning, K-12 education, technical education, higher education and lower tax rates." ([Source](#))
- Proposed an additional \$9.6 million for early care and learning programs in Vermont as part of his budget in 2017. ([Source](#))
- Vermont Public Radio segment on last year's budget proposal: "Child care subsidies aren't the only programs slated for significant increases in Scott's budget. He wants \$6.5 million in new money for higher education, \$1 million for pre-K services, and \$1.6 million to fund classroom innovations. Just because Scott has proposed the expenditures, however, does not make them any closer to becoming reality." ([Source](#))
- Burlington Free Press (2016): "Scott has said early childhood issues are a priority, but instead of raising new taxes he would reallocate existing funds, ask communities to rent out empty school rooms to child care providers, and encourage businesses to create infant child care on-site. The Republican governor-elect often cites a report that identified opportunities for about \$164 million in savings in Vermont's public school system. Scott has suggested using some of that money for child care." ([Source](#))
- Vermont Public Radio (2016): "Lt. Gov. Phil Scott said the state needs to improve access to childcare, and improve education quality. But he said the state can't begin to tackle those problems until it 'makes Vermont affordable again.' Delivering that affordability, according to Scott, requires



revenue and regulatory reforms he says would make the state more hospitable to the private sector." ([Source](#))

- Said investment in early childhood education would be an effective approach at cutting special education costs. ([Source](#))

### **Quotes**

- "As Governor, my focus is to grow the economy, make Vermont more affordable and protect the most vulnerable. Early care and learning spans all three goals. An investment in our kids is an investment in our future. With greater focus on early care, I am confident Vermont can offer the best cradle-to-career education system in the country, which is the greatest economic development tool we could have." ([Source](#))
- "Many Vermont families cannot afford comprehensive child care yet we know these services are the most impactful for children. In my first term, I proposed increasing Vermont's funding in early care and learning, including: adding \$7.5 million to the Child Care Financial Assistance Program, which provides essential support to families and providers; using \$1 million to provide full-day pre-K programs for high-poverty kids; and creating a \$600,000 grant for the development of a child care shared services model. And, I proposed a voluntary home visit program for pregnant women and babies." ([Source](#))
- "Over the last 3 years I've heard from parents that access to high-quality child care is limited. Our providers do amazing things for our kids, but with limited investment, wages are low in many settings and staff turnover is high. We must transform our early care system and that means better supporting the hard work of child care professionals and early educators. If we don't, our children and their parents will continue to miss out on quality care. Many families will have to choose between careers and child care. No parent should have to make that choice and that is why I will continue to focus on investments in this area." ([Source](#))

## Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker (R)



### Overview

Governor Walker has largely not engaged on ECE programs or investments, though he has advocated for policies that would ease the burden of child care costs.

### Policy Positions

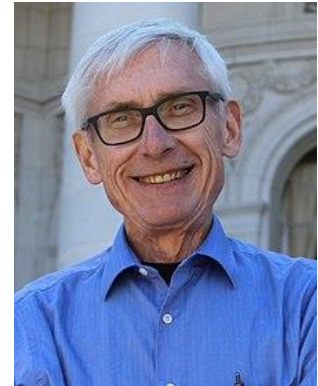
- Approved a \$1.4 million-per-year request for a grant program the Department of Public Instruction administers to help districts start new 4-year-old kindergarten programs. ([Source](#))
- Proposes a state tax credit for child and dependent care expenses equivalent to the federal credit. Walker intends for the credit to cover 20-35 percent of child care expenses, depending on income of parents/guardians. Up to \$3,000 of expenses per child may be claimed. ([Source](#))
- Included an additional \$3.9 million in funds to augment federally-backed home visiting programs. Walker's proposed funds would serve 400-500 more families over a two-year period. ([Source](#))

### Quotes

- "Finally, we will provide a tax credit for working families to reduce a barrier to enter the workforce and ease the burden of child care costs." ([Source](#))
- "For a time when child care costs have been something that people talked about as being a barrier to going back into the workforce, this is one more tool to get people either to enter or re-enter the workforce going forward." ([Source](#))



## **Wisconsin Governor Tony Evers (D)**



### **Overview**

Governor-elect Evers is a strong proponent of ECE investments and has highlighted plans to invest in these programs during his campaign.

### **Policy Positions**

- Proposes to increase funding to school districts that offer kindergarten to four-year-olds by allowing these districts to count these students as full-time, rather than part-time. ([Source](#))
- Seeks to formally establish a state early childhood education program. ([Source](#))
- Pledges to "increase investments in early childhood education and quality childcare, which includes helping Wisconsin families with skyrocketing childcare costs." ([Source](#))

### **Quotes**

- Evers pledged to make "the largest investment in early childhood education that our state has ever seen." ([Source](#))
- "We're sending a message that early childhood education is important ... clearly, the research shows that." ([Source](#))
- "We will also focus on the availability and quality of early childhood development with pre-K programs." ([Source](#))
- "What's best for our kids is best for our state. As governor, I will; increase investments in early childhood education and quality childcare providers." ([Source](#))

## **Wyoming Governor Mark Gordon (R)**

### **Overview**

Governor-elect Gordon has highlighted the importance of ECE programs, but believes they are a local matter.

### **Policy Positions**

- In a gubernatorial debate, Gordon "said it was important to provide early education, but how it would be provided should depend on local decisions." ([Source](#))

### **Quotes**

- None.

