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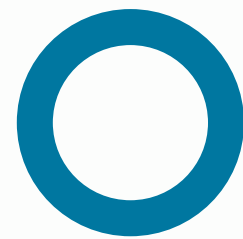
Virginia Association for the
Education of Young Children

An Affiliate of **naeyc**
SECA



Virginia for Early Ed

An Electoral Toolkit





Find Your Candidates

Candidates & Referendums November 5, 2024 General and Special Elections

On the ballot for November 2024 are U.S. Senate and House of Representative Candidates and Local Office Candidates. To find what candidates are running in your districts, see the full list by County and district in the link below.

[Virginia Department of Elections Website](#)

[Unsure who your legislators are or what district you are in? Search here using your address.](#)

[NOTE: Some districts changed in 2024.](#)

How to Engage With Candidates



Internet Search: Find if your candidate has a webpage, social media, etc. You can often learn information about them and ways to contact them.



Town Halls/Debates: Often candidates will hold town halls or participate in debates to share their points of view and answer constituent questions.



At Your Door: Many candidates take to the streets and go door-to-door to share their candidacy and platforms.



Community Events: The fall in Virginia often brings fairs, parades, festivals, etc. Check local events and you will often find candidates in attendance.

You Are Invited

Create an Invite: Invite candidates to your child care program, a meeting of groups you belong to, etc. Candidates are typically eager to know constituent concerns.

What to Share

Early childhood education impacts every person and every community. That's why it's important that **EVERY** candidate knows the vital role that early learning programs play in their district and state. You can use this Helping Hand Guide to craft the story you wish to share.



Who am I?

Share your name and town you live in so they know you are a voter in their area.

Who do I represent?

Are you a business owner? Do you work in an early childhood setting? Are you a parent or family member with young children? Etc?

What's my concern?

What are some challenges around early childhood education that you personally experience?

Why does it matter?

What effect do these challenges have on you or others in your community?

What can they do?

How would you want them to support or vote to support early childhood education?

"The global health crisis has emphasized again and again how important child care is for children, working families, and the economy."

Let's Talk about Facts

Sharing your personal experiences is a powerful advocacy and educational tool to engage candidates. It's also great to educate candidates with data. Here are some data sheets and informational websites which can be shared with your potential elected officials.

[America for Early Ed Virginia State Fact Sheet](#)

["We Are NOT OK" - February 2024](#)

[The Annie E. Casey Foundation - 2024 Kids Count Data Book Info](#)

[Kids Count Data Center](#)

[Childcare Supply Data Search Tool](#)

[First Five Years Fund 2024 Fact Sheets](#)

[America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2023](#)

Do you value public investments in early childhood education?

Ask Questions

What are your plans to invest in affordable, high-quality early learning programs?



Register to Vote

Do you know across the country and through the years that there have been candidates elected by 1 VOTE? You never know when that could be your vote. Be sure to check on your voter registration status now, especially if you moved recently.

Registration Deadline: The deadline to register for the November elections is **October 15, 2024**. But you can continue to register and vote using a provisional ballot, and be ready for the next election cycle!

[Click HERE to get started!](#)

Get Out to Vote

**Election Day is
Tuesday, November 5**

**Find your polling
location or check on your
Registration Status
VOTER INFORMATION
LOOKUP**

**In Virginia you can
also vote via
ABSENTEE BALLOT**

**Early Voting Starts
September 20**

SO YOU HAVE AN EARLY LEARNING PROGRAM?

Help Your Staff and Families Vote on #ElectionDay

The children you care for can't vote, but the staff and families you work with can! Our votes impact our children's futures—and on November 5, we all have an opportunity to make our voices heard. Here are **3 ways** you can support your staff and families to vote:

1. MAKE IT KNOWN

Everyone is busy. We can take care to remind the people in our lives that Tuesday is the day! You can post on Facebook, email a newsletter, send home a note in backpacks, or hang up a flyer.

Sample language: Our votes impact our children's futures. No matter who you are voting for, Election Day is a day to make our voices heard. If you need to know where to vote and what to bring, check out www.vote411.org

2. MAKE IT PERSONAL

Drop-off and pick-up can be hectic, but in-person conversations are one of the best ways to get out the vote! If you can't do it then, you can always make a special phone call the night before or the morning of Election Day!

Sample language: I know we don't talk politics at pick-up, but this isn't about politics. This is about using our votes to impact our children's futures, so I want to remind you about the elections happening on November 5. Have you decided when you will go out and vote? Do you know where your polling place is? Is there anything I can do to help you prepare for Election Day?

3. MAKE IT POSSIBLE

It's not always easy to make it to the polls. There are really important things that early learning programs can do to help make it that much more possible.

- Extend your hours so parents can vote before or after work
- Plan for coverage to maintain regulation-required ratios so staff can vote
- Offer rides to the polls (or connect them to the ride-sharing apps that are providing free rides on Election Day!)

BONUS: Take a look at these [Election Day Activities](#) resource for more ideas, and remember: "Our Votes. Their Futures." is a nonpartisan campaign to elevate early childhood education and educators in elections. You can encourage the people in your world to vote by focusing on the process, not on the politics. That means you shouldn't tell people who or what party to vote for, but you should remind them that early childhood education is important, that their voice matters and that they should remember to vote, period.