From: Barbara H. Anderson
Subject: Pre-School is the Foundation to Re-Opening our Economy
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NC PreK report FINAL.pdf

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS® OF THE LOWER CAPE FEAR

Good morning to you,

As you return to Raleigh for the 2021 legislative long session please be aware that children in North Carolina need your help to prepare for Kindergarten.

Research by the League of Women Voters of the Lower Cape Fear Education Action Team found that quality early childhood education helps all children enter kindergarten with the foundational academic and social-emotional skills they need to succeed and reduces the achievement gap. Our report entitled: State-Funded Early Childhood Education in North Carolina (NC Pre-K): Position Statements and Study is attached for your review. It can also be found on our website at: https://www.lwvlcf.org/edat.html.

Research on NC Pre-K consistently shows improved kindergarten readiness and enhanced performance in key domains of learning over time including higher scores on reading and math EOG's through eighth grade, reduced placement in special education, and increased social skills. Despite these proven benefits and broad support for the program, current state funding only affords 47% of eligible 4-year-olds to be served. In addition, because the state does not pay the full cost of NC Pre-K, 44 out of 100 counties in NC in the past 3 years have not applied for expansion dollars to increase access in their counties. State spending/child for NC Pre-K has declined since 2002.

COVID-19 is exacerbating inequities already in existence in our communities. New research indicates that greater access to high-quality preschool can substantially reduce racial inequality. It has taken 12 years to make up the funding lost due to the 2008 recession. Our families and children cannot afford to lose ground again.

We ask you to ensure that our childcare centers receive the COVID-19 stimulus funding they need to reopen safely. We also ask you to oppose any cuts in funding to NC Pre-K. Access to NC Pre-K is needed now more than ever. More funding is needed, not less.

Anne Eitelman
aeitelman@ec.rr.com

Barbara Carbonaro
bcarbonaro31@gmail.com

Co-Chairs Education Action Team LWVLCF

Thank you for your support.
Respectfully,

Barbara H. Anderson
NHC-NCRSP President

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LWV-LCF-Education Action Team