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Page 2: Contact Information

Q1

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Page 3: Question 1: Early Learning

Q2

Virginia is known to have a 'non-system' of early learning where programs operate under different departments and sets of rules. What would you do to better link programs and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Virginia's early learning programs?

Early care and early learning is a vital part of a child's education, and it's something Virginia needs to work on.

My first daughter, Evelyn, was born this July 3rd, 2017, and the first thing we did was do research into early care and education opportunities for her. We are lucky that we are able to afford its services, but our lower income families in Virginia don't have the same access to resources we do.

One solution we can do is to set a statewide standard for pre-k funding and early care education. As Virginia delegate, I will fight for pre-k funding statewide, and fight for implementing mechanisms to ensure we get equal access for pre-k.

Children are the commonwealth's most precious resource, and a child's income bracket shouldn't determine their fate. We need all children to have equal access to early learning.

Page 4: Question 2: Foster Care

Q3

Most children entering foster care are returned to their families. In most cases, these families do not receive additional support and services from the child welfare system, which can lead to poor health and education outcomes for children. How do you think the Commonwealth can better support children once they are returned to their families?

I believe the Commonwealth can better support children once they are returned by providing families with the proper tools and support to transition their child back home.

Returning to your family is tough, especially for children who are older, or children with mental and physical disabilities. The Commonwealth's work and responsibility should not end the day the child is brought back home. They need to provide the families with guidance and ease the transition to ensure the child is welcomed into a loving home and has great health and education opportunities.

Page 5: Question 3: School to Prison Pipeline

Q4

The US Department of Education data analyzed by the Center for Public Integrity shows that Virginia schools, in a single year, referred students to law enforcement agencies at three times the national rate. Numerous studies show that these school discipline policies increase the chances of these students becoming involved with the adult criminal justice system. If elected, how would you address these issues?

We need to end the school to prison pipeline.

Children make mistakes, it's a part of growing up. We should not be locking children into their mistakes, and putting them down a path where their only option is to lash out.

Student resource officers shouldn't just punish, but they should be there to educate, build relationships, and build good will with school students.

Page 6: Question 4: Health Insurance

Q5

Virginia's Children's Health Insurance Program (known as FAMIS in Virginia) and Medicaid provide low-income children with health insurance that their families would otherwise be unable to afford. If the federal government cuts payments to the states for Medicaid and/or FAMIS, how would you support the health needs of low-income children?

More than 700,000 children in VA have health insurance through Medicaid or CHIP, so my first action would be towards expanding medicaid for Virginia families. We must prevent benefits to children from being rolled back by the current administration in Washington.

Page 7: Question 5: Opioid Epidemic

Q6

Substance abuse by parents affects both the parents and their children. Brain research shows that positive attachment between a parent and child in the first few years of life is critical to the child's healthy brain development. Substance abuse can significantly impact those early bonds between parents and children. If elected, what policy solutions would you promote to address the needs of the whole family?

We are seeing an addiction crisis across the country, and it's having an impact in Virginia too.

Addiction is something we need to treat from a whole perspective. There may be only one addict in some situations, but the whole family is impacted, especially children.

Instead of punishing addicts, we need to provide them with proper resources for rehabilitation.

Page 8: Question 6: Cross-Systems

Q7

A child can interact with many systems (schools, health and mental health, courts, etc.) as they grow up. A Virginia Children's Cabinet has been established to facilitate cross-agency collaborations at the highest levels of state government. If elected, how would you facilitate this type of cross-agency collaboration for children?

The creation of a Children's Cabinet is great, because it allows for that collaboration and open communication between agencies.

I am not entirely familiar with how it's structured, but as a small business owner and former air force captain, I am a very metrics driven manager.

What's the difference between a dream and a goal? A deadline. The cabinet should have a clearly state mission and purpose, and underneath that umbrella there should specific actions and goals, and deadlines.

Page 9: Question 7: Mental Health

Q8

In 2016, Virginia ranked 49th in the nation for the rate of youth with major depression who did not receive any mental health treatment. There are many barriers to quality mental health treatment for children, including: type of insurance, place of residence, lack of access and stigma. What do you view as the most significant barrier to effective mental health care for children and adolescents in Virginia, and how would you propose addressing this barrier?

Stigma is a very big barrier, and it's something we can solve through public information campaigns throughout Virginia.

It's no secret that most people don't come forward with mental illnesses because of stigma. Our children shouldn't feel shame about suffering from depression, and they should be provided opportunities at their schools for counseling.

Page 10: Question 8: Education

Q9

The achievement gap between lower income students and their higher income peers and between white students and students of color has been a persistent problem in Virginia that has recently worsened. How would you address the achievement gap in Pre-K to 12 education?

A study recently came out that revealed that students of color performed better in school when they were taught by teachers of color.

One big step we can take is working towards diversifying our teacher workforce in Virginia. The more teachers of color we have, the more opportunities students of color have to build bonds and have somebody to look up to in an education role, which is important to a student's educational development.

Another way to address the achievement gap is to stop increasing our class sizes and start attracting the best teachers and talents for our schools.