



2017 Mayoral Candidate Questions

A voter information initiative of the United Way of Southeast Louisiana
and the New Orleans Campaign for Grade-Level Reading
Contact: Jeremy Crucetti, E-mail: JeremyC@unitedwaysela.org

Candidate Profile:

Candidate Name: _____

Campaign Address: _____

Campaign Phone: _____ Campaign E-mail: _____

Party Affiliation: _____ Current Job: _____

Professional Experience:

Political Experience:

Education:

Professional and/or Community Affiliations (Limit to 5):

Questions:

The answers to these questions will be published in local media. Please limit your answer to each question to 200 words or less.

1. 43% of New Orleans children under the age of 6 live in poverty. The National Center for Children in Poverty has said that "poverty is the single greatest threat to children's well-being." The risks are greatest for children who experience poverty when they are young because 80% of brain development occurs between birth and age three, when the very foundation of the brain is being built. What is your plan to address poverty for young children in New Orleans?
2. Providing economic opportunities for families has been shown to create important protective factors that increase the likelihood of success for children living in poverty. Yet, many families in New Orleans can't attend workforce training or pursue full-time employment because they lack access to quality child care, which costs almost as much as public college tuition. In fact, over 4,800 children under age 6 in New Orleans live in families in which no parent is in the labor force. Of these children, the vast majority (4,000) live in households headed by a single mother. How will you provide economic opportunity for families while ensuring regular access to quality developmental experiences for young children?

3. Every child needs effective early childhood development to be successful, but children in poverty are least likely to get it. Nobel Prize winning economist James Heckman has proven that investing in the early childhood development of low-income children will produce great long-term returns to individuals and society in better educational, health, economic and social outcomes—not only saving taxpayers money but increasing lifelong economic productivity. His research demonstrates that investments in early learning programs for children in low-income families yields a 7 to 10% annual return, making it a better bet than the stock market. Despite this body of research, the City of New Orleans does not provide any municipal funding for early care and education and less than 16% of at-risk New Orleans children under age four have access to any publicly-funded child care seat. Will you create dedicated municipal funding for high-quality early care and education? Please elaborate on your plans.
4. Half of third graders in New Orleans public schools are not proficient readers because of a lack of support during their early years. National research reveals that children who do not read proficiently by the end of third grade are four times more likely to drop out of school than proficient readers. Children who drop out of school are 3½ times more likely to be incarcerated than their peers who complete high school. What is your plan to ensure every child born in New Orleans reaches this milestone of becoming a proficient reader by third grade and is on track to graduate high school?
5. New Orleans has invested heavily in improving its public school system, yet there are still huge inequities in educational outcomes by race and income. High-quality summer programming can prevent two months of loss in reading achievement, which in turn reduces the achievement gap for low-income students by two years between kindergarten and fourth grade. However, more than 2,000 New Orleans children between the ages of 4 and 8 who are living in poverty do not have access to a publicly-funded summer program. What is your plan to increase access to high-quality summer programming for low-income children during these critical early grades when they are still learning to read?
6. The New Orleans Campaign for Grade-Level Reading and its partners have developed a plan to improve school readiness, prevent summer learning loss, and increase school attendance in order to increase the number of New Orleans children who reach the critical milestone of reading proficiency by the end of the third grade. How will your administration support this plan?

Staff Signature: _____

Candidate Signature: _____

Date: _____

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DEADLINE: FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22nd