MIKE DEWINE
GOVERNOR
STATE OF OHIO

Executive Order 2019-02D

Creating the Governor's Children's Initiative

WHEREAS, Ohio's future depends on its children, yet nearly 1,000 Ohio babies did not live to see their first birthday in 2017; and

WHEREAS, more than half of all Ohio children are born into economically disadvantaged homes, and just 41 percent of children arrive at kindergarten with the essential language, social, and mathematical skills to be successful in school; and

WHEREAS, on the National Assessment of Educational Progress, just 24 percent of Ohio's economically disadvantaged fourth graders read at grade level, which research has shown to be a strong predictor of timely high school graduation and post-graduate success; and

WHEREAS, educational gaps can persist and grow over time, impacting a child's ability to live up to his or her God-given potential; and

WHEREAS, research conducted by the National Forum on Early Childhood Policy and Programs has shown that every dollar invested in high-quality early childhood programming yields up to nine dollars in future return; and

WHEREAS, Ohio's programming impacting children is split across multiple state agencies and lacks coordination and a clear point of accountability; and

WHEREAS, the Opportunity for Every Ohio Kid plan calls for a special position, reporting to the Governor, who works daily to improve the lives of Ohio's children;

NOW THEREFORE, I, Mike DeWine, Governor of the State of Ohio, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of this State do hereby order and direct that:

1. The Governor's Children's Initiative ("Initiative") is created in order to elevate the importance of children's programming in Ohio and drive improvements within the many state programs that serve children. The Initiative is charged to:

    a. Improve communication and coordination across all state agencies that provide services to Ohio's children.

b. Engage local, federal, and private sector partners to align efforts and investments, in order to have the largest possible impact on improving outcomes for all of Ohio's children.
c. Advance policy related to home visiting, early intervention services, early childhood education, foster care, and child physical and mental health.
d. Initiate and guide enhancements to the early childhood, home visiting, foster care, education, and pediatric health systems.

2. In order to carry out these responsibilities, I have appointed a Director of the Governor's Children's Initiative to oversee and implement all activities described above. In order to carry out these responsibilities the Director shall have the authority and discretion to employ and fix the compensation of Initiative personnel, who shall be in the unclassified civil service. The Initiative Director will be the appointing authority for the Initiative and will be responsible for making all employment decisions relating to the Initiative including, but not limited to, hiring, firing, disciplining, and promoting employees. In addition, the Initiative Director shall have the authority and discretion to establish the organizational structure of the Initiative.

3. All Cabinet Agencies, Boards, and Commissions shall comply with any requests or directives issued by the Initiative Director or the Initiative Director's designee, subject to the supervision of their respective agency directors. This requirement extends, but is not limited to, the cabinet directors and employees of the following agencies and departments:

a. Ohio Department of Education
b. Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities
c. Ohio Department of Job and Family Services
d. Ohio Department of Health
e. Ohio Department of Higher Education
f. Ohio Department of Medicaid
g. Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services
h. Ohio Department of Public Safety
i. Ohio Department of Youth Services
j. Office of Budget and Management

4. The Initiative shall have the ability to convene the Early Childhood Advisory Council, Cross Agency Leadership Team, the Family and Children First Cabinet Council as needed to accomplish the directives included above.

I signed this Executive Order on January 14, 2019 in Cedarville, Ohio and it will not expire unless it is rescinded.

Mike DeWine, Governor

ATTEST:

Frank LaRose, Secretary of State

Filed on 01/15/2019
Per
In the Office of the Secretary of State at Columbus, OH
FRANK LaROSE
Secretary of State