



## **Instructions: Parent Advocacy in the Senate**

This three page document is designed to help early education providers to engage parents in advocacy around state funding for early care and education in the 2010-2011 budget.

The early care and education community – advocates, providers, parents and everyone who cares about the future of Ohio’s youngest citizens - must make their presence known in order to restore the \$244 million in funding cuts that are poised to take effect later this year.

Although we know your days are quite busy and demanding, we are asking you to work with your parents and staff during this critical period. The work we do now will have an impact on how the early care and education programs in Ohio are funded *for the next two years!* It is worth the time now to make sure programs have the resources they need to serve working families and that staff can continue to receive the professional development and support they deserve.

### **Instructions:**

1. This page is for your use only. Pages 2 and 3 are to share with parents at your center or home.
2. The second page provides background information on the programs that have been affected by cuts already in the Governor’s and/or House budgets. Page 2 can be posted somewhere near the flyers (page 3) or photocopied onto the back of the flyer. Please review it with your staff so they can answer any questions parents might have.
3. On page three, before you photocopy, circle the name of the Senator that represents your area. Go to [www.senate.state.oh.us/senators](http://www.senate.state.oh.us/senators) to look up your Senator if you do not know it. In most areas of the state, the same Senator that represents the area of the center, will represent the area in which your families live. Your parents may also know who represents them.
4. The names that are already circled on the flyer are the members of the Senate leadership who also need to hear from parents, even if they are not their Senator. So, we are asking everyone to make 3 or 4 phone calls.
5. It is important that parents take the flyer with them so they have all the phone numbers as well as the talking points for the calls.
6. Photocopy the flyer and make sure parents get it THIS WEEK and make the calls THIS WEEK.
7. As appropriate, ask your staff to make calls too – and anyone else you can think of!
8. As you are able, it will be helpful to groundWork if you can track the calls made by your staff and parents. Actually making the calls is the first priority, though.
9. Contact Jennifer Prather, [jprather@groundworkohio.org](mailto:jprather@groundworkohio.org) or 216-781-2944, if you have any questions.

For more information on the state budget visit [www.groundworkohio.org](http://www.groundworkohio.org).

*The groundWork campaign is a coalition of advocates throughout the state committed to promoting state investments and policies that will address the needs of Ohio’s youngest children and support a whole-child early care and education system that enhances a young child’s social, emotional, and physical well-being.*



## Parents: Ask Senate to Restore Early Childhood Funds

The groundWork campaign is a coalition of advocates throughout the state committed to promoting state investments and policies that will address the needs of Ohio's youngest children and support a whole-child early care and education system that enhances a young child's social, emotional, and physical well-being.

As part of our work, groundWork staff is asking the Senate to restore \$244 million to the early education system to bring all of these programs back to the level of funding they received in the 2009 budget. We need everyone who is concerned about the education, safety and well-being of Ohio's youngest children to call their Senator and Senate leadership to show that this is an issue of importance to all Ohioans.

Programs that have received funding cuts in either the Governor's or House version of the budget include:

- **Subsidized Child Care:** Providers will be required to have a child in attendance for 32.5 hours vs. the current 25 hours per week before being reimbursed for care at the "Full-Time" rate. This change will have a dramatic impact on the resources a child care provider has available to provide a high-quality educational experience for the children in their care. It also has the potential to reduce the number of providers who accept children who receive state subsidized child care.
- **Early Learning Initiative (ELI):** The number of children served by ELI will be reduced by 1/3. Children currently served by the program will not be "grandfathered" in to the program.
- **Help Me Grow:** One time home visits will be eliminated and only families with incomes at or below 200 percent of federal poverty will be eligible to participate. Part C of Help Me Grow is not affected by these changes.
- **Early Childhood Education (Public Preschool):** The number of children served by Public Preschool will be reduced by 1/3.
- **Early Childhood Behavioral Health (ECMH):** ECMH provides services to children and families as well as training to early childhood providers to identify and address behavioral problems in young children. Providers are given tools to help identify potential problem behaviors early. Actual evaluation and treatment is provided by highly-skilled professionals. This program has allowed over 90 percent of the children who participate to remain in their early childhood setting – i.e., prevents their expulsion from preschool.
- **Quality and Professional Development:** Programs that allow early education providers to continue their learning and provide better quality care for children have been cut by 20 percent.

**Ask your child's caregiver how these and other changes might affect their center and your child.**

Please find 10-15 minutes TODAY to call your Senator and Senate leadership and ask them to fully fund Ohio's early care and education system at 2009 levels. This week at groundWork, we will be meeting privately with Senators, organizing testimony at hearings, conducting a media briefing, conducting a legislative briefing and writing letters to the editor of several newspapers. Your calls are a vital part of an advocacy strategy to show widespread support for early education and also to demonstrate that quality early education is a critical support for Ohio's struggling workforce.



## Parents: Ask Senate to Restore Early Childhood Funding

The current version of the 2010-2011 state **budget cuts \$244 million** from early childhood, health and behavioral health programs, which will potentially **eliminate access** to care for **130,000** of Ohio's youngest **children**.

Call your Senator TODAY and ask them to fully fund Ohio's early care and education system. It is a smart investment for your, your child's and Ohio's future.

### How You Can Help

Call the Senators who are circled in the list to the right and ask them to fully fund the early care and education system. The list includes your Senator and members of the Senate leadership.

#### Talking Points:

- I am calling on behalf of my child (name) and groundWork .
- In the last budget, the Senate invested \$270 million in Ohio's early childhood system to begin to build the quality system that Ohio's children need.
- Instead of maintaining that commitment, the Governor and the House cut the early childhood system by \$244 million, serving approximately 130,000 less children in our early childhood system than in fiscal year 2009.
- Cutting out that investment now will reverse the gains we have made in this crucial part of our education system and support system for working families.
- Please restore the \$244 million cut to our early childhood system to bring us back to the fiscal year 2009 level of funding for early childhood education, health, and mental health.
- Talk about what these cuts will mean for your family!

#### Tips for making phone calls:

- Clearly state your name and where you live.
- Be prepared to make your point in several sentences.
- Ask for a response that includes the elected official's position but realize that the staff member answering phones may have been instructed not to make detailed comments about the issues.
- Follow up with a letter if possible. Write your own or go to [www.groundworkohio.org/getinvolved](http://www.groundworkohio.org/getinvolved)

#### Senators

- Dist. 1 Steve Bueher 614-466-8150
- Dist. 2 Mark Wagoner 614-466-8060
- Dist. 3 David Goodman 614-466-8064
- Dist. 4 Gary Cates 614-466-8072
- Dist. 5 Fred Strahorn 614-466-6247
- Dist. 6 Jon Husted 614-466-4538
- Dist. 7 Robert Schuler 614-466-9737
- Dist. 8 Bill Seitz 614-466-8068
- Dist. 9 Eric Kearney 614-466-5980
- Dist. 10 Chris Widener 614-466-3780
- Dist. 11 Teresa Fedor 614-466-5204
- Dist. 12 Keith Faber 614-466-7584
- Dist. 13 Sue Morano 614-644-7613
- Dist. 14 Tom Niehaus 614-466-8082
- Dist. 15 Ray Miller 614-466-5131
- Dist. 16 Jim Hughes 614-466-5981
- Dist. 17 John Carey 614-466-8156
- Dist. 18 Tim Grendell 614-644-7718
- Dist. 19 Bill Harris 614-466-8086
- Dist. 20 Jimmy Stewart 614-466-8076
- Dist. 21 Shirley Smith 614-466-4587
- Dist. 22 Bob Gibbs 614-466-7505
- Dist. 23 Dale Miller 614-466-5123
- Dist. 24 Tom Patton 614-466-8056
- Dist. 25 Nina Turner 614-466-4583
- Dist. 26 Karen Gillmor 614-466-8049
- Dist. 27 Kevin Coughlin 614-466-4823
- Dist. 28 Tom Sawyer 614-466-7041
- Dist. 29 Kirk Schuring 614-466-0626
- Dist. 30 Jason Wilson 614-466-6508
- Dist. 31 Tim Schaffer 614-466-5838
- Dist. 32 Capri Cafaro 614-466-7182
- Dist. 33 Joe Schiavoni 614-466-8285