



**THE SUCCESS EQUATION**  
**2021 POLICY AGENDA**

The Success Equation, an initiative of Children First/Communities In Schools, promotes a community where all children thrive. We advocate for policies that expand opportunities for child and family resiliency, stability, and health, and span across three key areas:

**Early childhood.** *Getting off to a healthy, nurturing start leads to school readiness and long-term success.*

**Family economic stability.** *When parents can access good paying jobs, afford safe housing, and begin building savings for their future and their child's education, family stress goes down as health and opportunity increase.*

**Family supports.** *When families have opportunities to improve parenting skills, reduce their stress, and connect to community events and networks, they develop resiliency that fosters children's success.*

Our 2021 Policy Agenda balances advocating for pragmatic, visionary goals alongside defending rollbacks to important existing policies. Due to the health and economic crisis caused by COVID-19, we are continually updating our strategies to respond to the greatest needs facing families and our communities during this time.

#### **Early Childhood Agenda**

- Improve the Child Care Subsidy program so more children are served and providers can hire and retain quality teachers and deliver high-quality programs\*
- Expand COVID-related child care supports necessary to keep providers open, increase pay, support parent affordability, and keep child care staff and children healthy/safe
- Advocate for strategic investments of the County funding for early childhood, including delivery of services, local resourcing/funding, and workforce issues necessary to increase access and affordability in Buncombe\*
- Increase and sustain funding for Child Care Vouchers, NC PreK, and Smart Start\*
- Support Federal funding for food programs that assist young children: WIC, SNAP and school meals

#### **Family Economic Stability Agenda**

- Increase the supply and accessibility of housing affordable for families with children in Asheville and Buncombe County to rent or purchase; prevent evictions & foreclosures (especially during COVID); and remove barriers to housing\*
- Increase funding for bus frequency, route expansion, and travel times; support COVID-related changes that maintain access and routes and promote safety\*
- Increase NC minimum wage to \$15/hour, phased in over several years
- Adopt paid family and medical leave for employees
- Protect consumers from predatory lending in NC
- Ensure implementation funding for Raise the Age

#### **Family Supports Agenda**

- Expand health insurance access and affordability for low-income children, pregnant women, and parents with children (Medicaid, Health Choice, and ACA); help disseminate information on Medicaid transformation in 2021
- Improve health services for pregnant women to reduce the racial disparity in infant mortality and health; add Doula services as qualifying Medicaid reimbursement service in NC; extend post-partum Medicaid coverage from 6 weeks to one year for mothers\*
- Support policies that keep immigrant parents and children together and minimize isolation of immigrant communities

*\*= significant staff/organizational resources committed*

**Make your voice count for kids! Get involved & stay up to date with the Success Equation:**

Online: [childrenfirstcisbc.org/successequation](https://childrenfirstcisbc.org/successequation) · Facebook.com/[childrenfirstcisbc](https://www.facebook.com/childrenfirstcisbc) · Twitter: [@CFCISAdvocacy](https://twitter.com/CFCISAdvocacy)