

Mike DeWine, Nan Whaley discuss their plans as Ohio Governor to improve the lives of children

Child advocate listen to gubernatorial candidates at forum on issues affecting children October 6, 2022 [Jo Ingles / Statehouse News Bureau]

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The two candidates for Ohio governor said they will focus on making life better for the state's kids if they win in November.

Gov. Mike DeWine, the Republican incumbent running for re-election, and Nan Whaley, the Democratic candidate for Ohio Governor, made their comments separately during a forum for Groundwork Ohio Thursday in Columbus.

DeWine told the crowd he wants the state to be number one in research and access to quality health care. He said his goal for this next term is to make sure all kids in Ohio are able to pursue a career or job training after high school. "The worst thing that could happen is for a child to graduate from high school and have no pathway," DeWine said.

DeWine talked about how he has allocated \$1.2 billion in budget spending for things like wellness clinics and counseling in schools to deal with behavioral health needs of students. DeWine said he's put wraparound services in

schools? through his OhioSTART program. Those services are designed to meet multiple physical, mental, and behavioral health needs of patients and families affected by drug abuse.

He said focusing on keeping kids healthy also requires a focus on their families so he wants to make more treatment and care available in community settings.

"Our goal should be to make sure there is access to every Ohioan who needs help, to every family who needs help, that there is access within the community," DeWine said.

DeWine said the state has expanded assistance for foster kids. He also said the state has spent more than \$1 billion for children's initiatives



and will increase spending in that area.

DeWine said every child needs the opportunity to succeed and said government and communities have an

obligation to make that a reality by addressing disparities of children whose families lack necessary resources.

DeWine left immediately after he spoke and did not answer questions from reporters.

Later, it was Whaley's turn to talk about her plans for improving the lives of children.

She said she'd continue many of investments that have been made in physical and mental health care for children and their parents. And she said she would work to break down stigmas.

Whaley also said she'd focus on making

schools and kids safer by implementing part of a gun reform plan DeWine initially proposed that would keep guns out of the hands of people who could pose a danger to themselves or others.

Whaley, who took questions from reporters after the event, said she'd stand up to the members of the Ohio Legislature who oppose plans that make life better for kids and would go up against special interest groups that interfere.

"We have a weak governor that folds every single time with the state legislature," Whaley said.

Whaley said child care workers need to be paid more. But she said the costs of increasing their pay could not be passed on to families. She said the state must help pay for it instead of providing tax cuts for the wealthiest Ohioans.

"Instead of giving tax cuts to the wealthy, give it to our kids and people who provide for our kids," Whaley said.

The forum on Thursday was not a debate. Whaley and DeWine were not on the forum stage together at the same time. At this point, there are no debates scheduled before the November election.

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Ohio Governor Mike DeWine Week in Review

For the week ending October 7, 2022

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH



On Monday, Governor Mike DeWine announced that he is awarding \$6.7 million to support the work of the Ohio Domestic Violence Network (ODVN) to offer mobile and health advocacy services and temporary residential services for domestic violence survivors across the state. The announcement comes during National Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

"Convenient access to health services and a safe place to stay are vital for domestic violence survivors because they directly impact quality of life," said Governor DeWine. "It's important that we ensure easy access to these necessities so that survivors can worry less about housing and medical care and focus more on the process toward healing and recovery."

Also on Monday, Governor DeWine announced that 10 local law enforcement agencies will receive a total of \$12.3 million to help prevent and investigate incidents of violent crime in their communities.

The grants represent the ninth round of the Ohio Violent Crime Reduction Grant Program. To date, Governor DeWine has awarded \$58.3 million to 129 Ohio law enforcement agencies as part of this program. Approximately \$100 million will be awarded to local law enforcement agencies as part of the grant program in total.

"Ohio continues to take proactive steps to support our local law enforcement and make sure they have what they need to combat the spike in crime that's plaguing communities nationwide," said Governor DeWine. "With this funding, our police officers, deputies, and prosecutors will have more resources to hold offenders accountable for their crimes and prevent additional crime in the future."



First Lady DeWine and Director Mertz open the 20th Storybook Trail.

Also on Monday, First Lady Fran DeWine and Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Director Mary Mertz officially opened the 20th Storybook Trail in the Ohio State Park

System at Salt Fork State Park in Guernsey County on Monday in partnership with Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Ohio. The trail creates a unique opportunity to improve childhood literacy, develop an appreciation for nature, and encourage healthy living.



Also on Monday, Governor DeWine toured the Medina County Career Center to learn more about their precision machining and automotive technology programs.

Lastly on Monday, Lt. Governor Jon Husted, Director of the Governor's Office of Workforce Transformation, announced the third round of the Industry Sector Partnership (ISP) Grant opportunity. This program supports partnerships that help bring Ohioans into the workforce pipeline while meeting the needs of job creators and the local economy.

Just over \$2.45 million is available for new and existing industry sector partnerships, as funded through the current state operating budget. ISPs can be located in any region of Ohio, as long as the focus is on an in-demand sector, such as manufacturing or technology.

"Bridging the gap between educators and businesses is vital to supporting a thriving workforce in Ohio," said Lt. Governor Husted. "Industry Sector Partnerships are a collaboration between the public and private sectors that prepare more Ohioans for the growing number of in-demand, high-paying jobs that exist in their communities."



On Tuesday, Lt. Governor Husted traveled to Midmark Corporation in Darke County to tour their facility and highlight their regular use of TechCred.

Governor DeWine and the First Lady



breaking ground on the Mahoning Valley Campus of Care's Commercial Greenhouse.

On Wednesday, Governor DeWine toured



the Mahoning Valley Campus of Care and participated in a groundbreaking for the Commercial Greenhouse.

Also on Wednesday, Lt. Governor Husted joined representatives from Forbes, the City of Cleveland and the Northeast Ohio business com-



munity to announce Ohio as the location for Forbes' Under30 Summit through the year 2025, recognizing and expanding the state's community of entrepreneurs and innovators.

Lastly on Wednesday, Lt. Governor Husted joined Ohio 4-H and Google at The Ohio State University for a coding event with local youth to highlight the importance of increasing access to computer science (CS) education. Attendees saw OSU Extension's Mobile Design Lab, a 35-foot



bus that helps deliver on-site educational programming across the state in areas where CS education resources are limited.

The First Lady reading to kids during a book reading while promoting Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Ohio.

On Thursday, the First Lady made stops in Hardin County and Wood County to promote Dolly Parton's Imagination Library of Ohio.



On Friday, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine announced today that 13 local first responder agencies will receive a total of nearly \$1.7 million to help support the wellness needs of law enforcement officers, dispatchers, firefighters, paramedics, and emergency medical technicians (EMTs).

The grants represent the third round of the new Ohio First Responder Recruitment, Retention, and Resilience Program. To date, Governor DeWine has awarded \$11 million to 58 Ohio agencies as part of this program.

"First responders see tragedies on a daily basis, so it's essential that wellness support is easily accessible," said Governor DeWine. "This funding will help our local agencies ensure that our first responders can get the emotional support they need any time they need it."



Governor DeWine visiting with a skilled worker of Pentaflex.

Also on Friday, Governor DeWine and Lt. Governor Husted visited several manufacturing facilities across Ohio to meet with skilled workers and discuss the importance of the manufacturing industry in Ohio.