



**The Coconino Coalition for Children and Youth exists to provide leadership in developing community-wide strategies that enhance the well-being of children and youth in Coconino County.**

CCC&Y is non-partisan. Visit [www.coconinokids.org](http://www.coconinokids.org) to view candidate responses.

## CCC&Y 2018 Candidate Questionnaire

Candidate Name: Kiana Maria Sears

Office: Corporation Commission

1. What do you think the two most pressing issues are for youth and their families?

A lack of attention regarding economic and environmental injustice; economic injustice filled with the lack of capitol and impoverished families, environmental justice deals with the high asthma rate and even higher asthma rates who live in poverty because of dirty water and a lack of clean air.

2. What do you believe the role of elected officials is in their communities when it comes to serving and advocating for children and youth?

The role of an elected official is to be an advocate; because elected officials are and should be public servants that advocate for all communities. One of the most vulnerable populations in our communities are children. Elected officials have a responsibility to ensure a brighter future and a brighter future begins with looking after the interests and the well being of children.

3. Within the duties of your elected office, how can you support the children and families of our community? If elected, how will this be expressed in your agenda?

When elected, I will continue to advocate for the health and wellbeing of Arizona's children by promoting clean air, clean water, and a brighter future with clean sustainable energy. Lowering the utility bills of all families in all communities especially in august and september . These are the months that K-12 students begin school, the high energy bills are a barrier for hard working families with children when it comes to getting adequate food, clothing, and supplies needed to successfully begin the school year. Awareness and access in the summer months to cost saving energy lowering programs.

4. How would you, as an elected official, support an equitable school system for ALL students, cradle to career? As 90% of human brain development happens by age 5, please additionally share your thoughts on early childhood education and its role in the educational system.

As an elected official of the Mesa Public Schools governing board; I am proud that our district and our school board members are making major investments in early childhood programs. Educational disparities exist based on lack of access to quality preschool educational programs. I am and have always been a vocal advocate for all communities and all children; and the education of all children of ALL communities. I continue to educate others as well as educate myself through the national school board association, and council of urban board educators; regarding equity for all students and how to address these challenges to create and equitable education system for all.

5. As childhood abuse, neglect and foster care continue to be major issues in Arizona, what prevention and trauma response strategies do you support for our child welfare system, the Department of Child Safety and/or our local communities? How would you propose using local, state and federal funds to improve outcomes for youth experiencing foster care or additionally, work toward prevention of child abuse in our communities?

I believe the department of child safety should be focused on the social and emotional competency of the families, and the children who are exposed to certain situations that deal with trauma in the home place. We must address the needs of the whole child because children cannot learn if their social and physical needs are not addressed in this society. We must address economic barriers which are causing distress in communities. One of the underlying issues that are causing abuse are caused by economic barriers in our communities. It's time to address the issues that have been on the table since the civil rights movement. Communities of color and impoverished communities are most affected.

6. Lastly, please feel free to share any further information with voters.

My career started with an emphasis on child welfare, working at the children's action alliance, I continue to hold the wellbeing of our children. I Moved on to public administration and worked on the local Arizona State Senate Family Services Committee. I served as the only minority that has ever served in the capacity for the Mesa Governing Board. I represent all students and families in Arizona's largest school district, Mesa Public Schools. Which is also the largest minority/majority school district in Arizona.