

Ginny Klevorn, HD 42B

Education Minnesota candidate questionnaire

Education funding

1. Education Minnesota believes the solution to closing the state's racial opportunity gaps must include fully and equitably funding public education, from preschool to postsecondary institutions. There's widespread agreement the full-funding agenda will require several billion dollars in new education investments. Please indicate your support or opposition to the following components of our full-funding agenda.

Inflation: Reverse Minnesota's perpetual underfunding of education by significantly increasing the per-pupil funding formula and tying it to inflation.

Yes

SPED cross subsidy: The state must also fully fund its portion of special education costs instead of relying on school districts to pay for them.

Yes

EL cross subsidy: Fully fund the costs districts pay to provide quality English learner programs and instruction.

Yes

Lower class sizes: Lower class sizes so teachers can give students more of the individual attention they need and deserve.

Yes

Full-service community schools: Expand access to full-service community schools across the state.

Yes

Universal pre-K: Provide universal pre-K taught by licensed teachers, so all children are ready for kindergarten.

Yes



Teachers of color: Fund programs to increase the number of teachers of color significantly so teachers providing instruction better reflect the students in our classrooms.

Yes

Student support: Provide additional resources for school districts to hire more student support staff, including counselors, social workers, psychologists, nurses and other job classifications.

Yes

TDE/Q Comp: Fully fund the 2011 Teacher Development and Evaluation law, an unfunded state mandate, to ensure teacher quality and lift the cap on the Q Comp program.

Yes

Professional development: Provide professional development to all staff around cultural competency and trauma-responsive classrooms with aims of closing the discipline disparity gap.

Yes

ESP living wage: Ensure all education support professionals earn a living wage of at least \$25 an hour.

Yes

Teacher compensation and benefits: Increase teacher compensation to provide competitive salaries and benefits to recruit and retain teachers.

Yes

Health care for all school employees: Make health insurance more affordable, fair and predictable for educators and school employees so they stay in the profession.

Yes

Education debt relief: Provide debt relief to retain teachers so they can afford to stay in the classroom.

Yes

Higher education: Renew Minnesota's commitment to invest in the state's future by fully funding public higher education in Minnesota.

Yes

Education Support Professionals

2. Do you support ESPs being able to access unemployment insurance in the summers, when they are not guaranteed work?

Yes

3. Will you support dedicated, paid training each year for education support professionals to get the training they need that is specific to their work and students' needs?

Yes

Taxes/revenue

4. Would you commit to raising revenue to ensure the wealthiest corporations and richest households pay what they truly owe in taxes so every student, no matter what they look like or where they live, can attend a fully funded public school that prepares them to pursue their dreams?

Yes

5. Education Minnesota believes in restoring fairness to the state tax code by raising revenue from the very wealthiest corporations and richest households and reducing the reliance on local levies to fund schools. Considering your own experience and expertise, are there other progressive, equitable ways to raise state revenue that you would recommend the union consider supporting?

Our state tax structure needs to be fair, tax expenditures (credits) need to be reviewed to make sure that they are serving their designated purpose and that they meet the needs of our state. It should not be that they are passed once and remain forever.

Higher education

6. Do you support increasing the state's direct investment in public higher education to significantly reduce institutions' reliance on tuition?

Yes

7. Will you support investments in capital bonding projects that preserve buildings, remodel classrooms and keep our technology assets current?

Yes

8. What would you do, as a state legislator, to help with education debt?

The entire cost of attendance needs to be factored into the cost equation. It starts with the state upholding its statutory obligation of 2/3 cost paid by the state to our public institutions.

9. Some college campuses have no counselors, while others have a ratio of 1:11,000 students. Will you support each Minnesota State campus having at least one counselor so students have access to mental health and academic support services?

Yes

High-quality professional educators

10. What will you do to help recruit and retain high-quality educators in our classrooms?

There are many issues involved in recruiting and retention. We need to ensure that teachers represent the populations they are teaching in every region of our state. There are many levers the state can use to assist in this process. However, we must remember the core function of a teacher is to teach - not police, medical professional, or social work. I mean this in that we are asking more and more without providing time and resources for our teachers to breathe.

11. Do you support changes to current law to include our fully-licensed Early Childhood Family Education (ECFE) and Adult Basic Education (ABE) teachers in the continuing contract law?

Yes

Teacher licensure

12. Do you support changes to state law to allow Tier 1 teachers to join the teacher bargaining unit?

Yes

13. Do you support deleting the option in Tier 3 that allows a person to receive a full professional license without completing a teacher preparation program?

Yes

Standardized testing

14. What individual or system-level decisions in education do you believe are appropriate to make based on standardized test scores?

I am not an educator. I will rely on the guidance of our professional educators to help me navigate this question. Test scores are a snapshot of one day. It is more important to ensure that students learn and retain the information brought forward in the classroom.

Honesty in Education

15. What can you do to protect teachers in the classroom and ensure that they have the freedom to teach?

This is a hard question for me as a legislator to answer. I believe that the decisions of what to teach in the classroom should be made through the Department of Education and the school boards. There need to be workplace protections for teachers so they are not harassed for doing their jobs.

16. Do you agree that Minnesotan students deserve an honest and accurate education about race that enables them to learn from the mistakes of our past so they can create a better future for all Minnesotans? Why or why not?

Yes. I believe education is a pathway for self development and improvement. Teaching students correct and accurate information allows them to become educated citizens, improving our society. We can only move forward if we understand our past.

Time to Teach

17. The planning and differentiating that teachers do daily needs more time. Most after school “prep” is filled with meetings. The current statute falls short of the time needed for preparing lessons. Will you support adjusting this statute to increase prep time?

Yes

18. Will you support legislation that protects an educator’s prep time so it can’t be used for meetings or having to sub for colleagues?

Yes

19. Do you support paid, dedicated time outside of student contact time for special education teachers to complete their paperwork and required meetings?

Yes

Union Rights

20. Do you support collective bargaining rights?

Yes

21. Will you oppose any legislation or constitutional amendments that would weaken collective bargaining rights, the right to organize, the right to strike, automatic payment of union dues, union access and activities at worksites or other anti-union policies backed by anti-worker groups?

Yes

22. Do you support teacher tenure and due process rights so the experts who work the most with students have the support to stand up for them?

Yes

23. How will you support unions as a state legislator?

I have been and will continue to support the rights of collective bargaining. As a professional mediator, I have a unique insight into the balance of power that is held in place by collective bargaining.

Working families

24. Do you support the current language that allows educator locals to unilaterally seek a bid and join the Public Employee Insurance Program (PEIP) as the insurance provider for local bargaining units?

Yes

25. Will you support continuing defined-benefits retirement systems for public employees?

Yes

26. Will you support providing the necessary state funding to ensure financial sustainability of public pension funds?

Yes

27. Will you support exploring new systems for providing educators with a secure retirement, including exploring early retirement options that might help recruit and retain educators?

Yes

28. What legislation could you introduce or support that would reduce the cost of health insurance to school districts? Where do you stand on health care for all?

I do support a state sponsored health plan.

Privatization

29. Do you oppose state tax credits for private K-12 education tuition and expenses?

Yes

30. Will you support policy changes that will ensure a stronger accountability system with necessary oversight and reporting to ensure quality management and instructional practices in charter schools?

Yes

31. Will you support a moratorium on new charter schools until such changes are made?

Yes

32. Minnesota students, from different places and of different races, deserve well-resourced, welcoming schools. These needs are urgent and can't wait decades for lawyers and courts to force it to happen.

Do you oppose efforts that would delete constitutional mandates for using taxation to fund public education funding and for providing equal access to public schools to all students?

Yes

Do you also oppose these same efforts that would enshrine standardized testing – with all its racial, cultural and economic biases – into the Minnesota Constitution?

Yes

Your role as a legislator

33. Have you visited a public school in your district in the past year? If so, which one? What were your observations from your visit? How will that experience inform your work as a legislator? If not, when did you last visit a school? Would you like us to help arrange a visit?

I have visited with Wayzata and Robbinsdale Schools. I am in contact with Osseo school board members, I have not been in their buildings.

34. What have you done to become informed on issues relating to public education? What organizations and individuals do you go to for your information?

I regularly attend the Wayzata, Robbinsdale and Osseo LAC meetings and correspond with teachers and administrators of all three districts. In addition to these conversations, I have parents from each district who contact me with their issues and concerns which I bring forward to the Districts, always with the permission of the individual experiencing the issue.

35. How do you envision working with Education Minnesota if you are elected/re-elected? If you disagree with us on an issue, how will you communicate that?

I regularly reach out if I have questions and concerns. It is a standard practice for me to seek your view on policy in order to understand the impact a vote I may take will have on the profession of teaching and recruiting/retention.

36. If elected/re-elected, how will you balance competing priorities that might exist between Education Minnesota and other education groups?

The goal is to ensure that we have a strong and sustainable system of public education. There may be different approaches, but our citizens want and demand a free, reliable and high quality public education system. I will always prioritize public education.