

Katie Malchow

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.

X Yes No

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.

X Yes No

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

X Yes No

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

X Yes No

Full-service community schools: Expand access to full-service community schools across the state. X Yes No

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

X Yes No

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.

X Yes No

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

X Yes No

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.

X Yes No

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

X Yes No

ESP living wage: Ensure all education support professionals earn a living wage of at least \$25 an hour. X Yes No

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

X Yes No

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.

X Yes No

Education debt relief: Provide debt relief to retain teachers so they can afford to stay in the classroom. X Yes No

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

X Yes No

Education Support Professionals

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

X Yes No

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?

X Yes No

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?

X Yes No

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?

The state of Minnesota is recognized as a progressive, industrial, and innovative state. We have a wide variety of industries here, but the taxes generated by those industries are shared unequally. If the taxes generated by large corporations such as 3M, General Mills, Cargill, Target, etc. were shared universally rather than only with the region in which they are physically located, I believe that all Minnesota students would benefit.

Higher education

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

X Yes No

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

X Yes No

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

By this question I'm not certain if you are referencing overall education for the students and school districts in Minnesota or if you're referring to the educational debt incurred by teachers entering the field.

As for the overall debt of the Minnesota educational system, I believe that the dedication of more than the standard 2% on the formula is necessary for schools to maintain the standards they have built and depend upon. That will require legislators who are willing to fight to allocate more money on a regular and relentless basis towards public education.

As for the debt that educators incur upon going into the field, I believe that we need to make higher education more attainable to people everywhere. I had the opportunity to tour and learn a bit about the building trades in 2020 by visiting the carpenters union training facility in St. Paul. I was astounded to learn that students entering the building trades were partnered with a company, earned a wage, benefits, and pension throughout their years in training. It really struck me how backwards our higher education system is in some areas. What the carpenters union seems to have figured out, is that if they are going to entice workers to their field, they need to provide more than just the skills to do the job. I was inspired by this model and think it would be a great example to follow for other career fields.

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?

X Yes No

High-quality professional educators

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

I really believe that the first step toward attracting new educators is to help heal the

wounds that have been created in recent years. Educators have always been expected to do a lot of good work with little resources. However, in the past few years, they have had those same overwhelming expectations, but also had to restructure the ways in which they teach, they had to battle community efforts to circumvent public health, they had to deliver the same high quality education but from home (or their cars) with inconsistent broadband internet... the list goes on. I believe that until those who are considering teaching can see that we treat our educators well, we will continue to have a recruitment issue.

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?

X Yes No

Teacher licensure

12. Do you support changes to state law to allow Tier 1

teachers to join the teacher bargaining unit? X Yes No

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?

X Yes No

Standardized testing

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

I'd like to learn more about this from you. Based on my experience as a mom and active parent in our school system, I'm not really sure what role standardized tests play. I hear from teachers that they are disruptive and authoritative. Students are put under tremendous pressure to perform, but the tests are not actually indicative of learning, potential, or knowledge. I

also understand that the tests provide metrics that inform larger scale decisions, but I'm not certain what those decisions are.

Honesty in Education

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

One step that I think would have immediate results is a ban on cellphones in the classroom. Generations have learned without smartphones, yet today's students believe them to be necessary, and are entitled to believe that it's their right to possess them and use them however they like. Our middle school suffered through unnecessary drama because students were taking photos of one another without permission. Teachers are often enforcing cell phone rules rather than delivering content, and the devices themselves have been proven to contribute to a whole host of problems, not least of which is mental health. This isn't an easy change to facilitate, but I do believe it would go a long way to giving teachers back a freedom that up until the last decade, was never even considered.

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?

I absolutely agree that students today need a deeper understanding of our history. Historically what has been taught is based on a singular perspective. I think it's critical for our development as a nation that we recognize the varying perspectives of our ancestors so we can move forward in a more equitable, compassionate, and open-minded way.

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?

X Yes No

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?

X Yes No

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

X Yes No

Union Rights

20. Do you support collective bargaining rights?

X Yes No

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?

X Yes No

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?

X Yes No

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

Unions are in place because they want to be able to govern their own organizations and advocate for the best interests of their members. Supporting unions in that mission would be an honor. I don't presume to know the ins and outs of each union. What I do know is that they are fully capable of providing for their members when allowed to do so. Partnership and understanding is what's needed between unions and lawmakers. I aim to be a partner and supporter in the varying needs of unions throughout Minnesota.

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 No I'm not sure what this means

25. Will you support continuing defined-benefits retirement systems for public employees? Yes No

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

Yes No

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 No

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 believe that universal healthcare is necessary for a civilized society. I believe that anyone who needs to see a doctor, receive treatment, or undergo a procedure ought to have access regardless of their financial status. Few things fire me up more than the cost of healthcare in our country. However, I struggle to articulate a solution. I know that's not an eloquent answer, but it's the truth. Our healthcare system is so desperately broken and I'm simply not sure where to begin the repairs.

Privatization

29. Do you oppose state tax credits for private

K-12 education tuition and expenses? Yes

No

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 No

31. Will you support a moratorium on new charter

schools until such changes are made? X Yes

No

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?

X Yes No

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

X Yes No

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 am a proud supporter of our local schools. My children attend Chisago Lakes Schools (ISD2144). My observations have changed over the last couple of years. Staff seems to have a higher turnover rate, the staff seem more frayed, and the end of the year elation has seemed even more profound in the last couple of years. I attribute that to the perpetual hurdles that educators have faced with combating COVID-19. I also see that as a result of a lack of substitutes and adequate staffing. Combined with the reliance on social media, I see that educators today have a tougher job than ever before.

All public servants need to spend time in public schools. Where else can you find such a clear and definitive “education” on societal norms. I believe so wholeheartedly in the power of a strong public school system. Today we require higher education (almost exclusively) to earn a livable wage, yet we make higher education cost prohibitive. Legislators need to invest in education because it's one of two (the environment is the other) sure bets that we have. If we invest in the future of our kids, we cannot lose.

and As my kids have gotten older, my opportunities to volunteer and contribute in their classrooms have changed. That said, I have always made myself available to the needs of our schools. Whether it's in collaboration with community events, chaperoning a trip to the Northwoods, or being a sounding board to teachers, administrators, or staff members looking to gain a "parents perspective," I'm a call they will all make and my opinions are trusted.

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 have spent many days over the past few years lobbying with Schools for Equity in Education at the capitol. This is where I learned about the need for legislators who believe in funding education. I have had regular meetings with our school Superintendent over the past few years to offer my support to our schools during the pandemic and social outrage. I have attended local school board meetings and I am a friend to educators throughout my school district. So much so that when the opportunity arose to run for school board in a special election, I had 12 staff members approach me privately and ask me to run. I love public school. I am a product of it myself and I believe in the power of our public school system. That said, if we don't have legislators in office who are willing to protect what has been built and grow it to where it needs to be, I fear for the future of our kids.

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 feel so strongly that when I'm elected, Education Minnesota will have renewed faith in District 28B! It's been a long time since Education Minnesota has had support from my district and I look forward to the partnership. As issues come up and questions arise, I look to Education Minnesota as a partner and a team. I anticipate collaborations, opportunities for deeper understanding and hopefully even friendships to come out of this.

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

I'd like to talk more about what this might look like. (That's not a brush off response, I genuinely believe in the work that Education Minnesota is doing and I'm not sure what a "competing priority" could be.