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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 No I don't know much about this and would like to learn more.

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?

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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?

Support legislation to increase state funding for higher institutions and decrease tuition.

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?

Tuition support for those going into education, tuition reimbursement for those going to areas with teacher shortages, emphasize professional development, support pay raises.

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?

Need more information about this.

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?

If we close this, there needs to be another way to get more BIPOC teachers in the classroom.

Standardized testing

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

I don't think any educational decisions should be made based on these scores - they have been normalized for a certain pupil population that does not represent the entirety of the student population in MN.

Honesty in Education

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

We need to trust our teachers and support legislation that does not limit what can be taught.

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 - we cannot heal and move forward without examining 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 always supported unions by supporting legislation that strengthens them,

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?

universal healthcare legislation.

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?

No - charter schools have a large proportion of BIPOC kids and kids with disabilities. Many have been pushed out of the traditional public school system. We need places for these children as well.

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?

I would oppose the language that we did not have to provide access to public schools, but would consider language changes regarding the use of using taxation to fund public education.

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?

Yes - my 3 children attend public school.

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 worked with EdMn in the past and get a lot of information and education from them.

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?

Disagreements are a part of politics. All sides must be listened to and heard. Open and respectful communication is a must when crafting legislation and solving problems.

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

Everyone will be invited to the table, all sides heard.