

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 No **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 No **Yes**

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

Yes No **Yes**

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

Yes No **Yes**

Full-service community schools:

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

Yes No **Yes**



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

Yes No **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 No **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 No **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 **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 No **Yes**

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

Yes No **Yes**

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

Yes No **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 No **Yes**

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

Yes No **Yes**

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

Yes No **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 No **Maybe. I would need more details on this.**

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 No **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 No **Yes**

5. Education Minnes

ota 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?

I think progressive taxation should be the first step

Higher education

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

Yes No **Yes**

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

Yes No **Yes**

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

This massive student debt problem seems to have developed over the same period that public higher education and technical education was increasingly privatized, along with the privatization of student loans. When I was in college, state schools were more robust and less expensive. Grants, public loans, work study scholarships and summer jobs were usually enough to graduate nearly debt free. Affordable or free public education, whether academic or technical, should be available to everyone. Privatization of necessary public services will always lead to increased cost and debt shifted to those who can least afford it.

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 No **Yes**

High-quality professional educators

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

Pay them better and quit trying to tell them how to do their jobs. They are professionals, which means they should be self directed and not subject to the whims of individual parents or politicians. School Boards should buffer them from outside interference and hold them to practicing within the standards of their profession

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 No **Yes**

Teacher licensure

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

Yes No **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 No **Yes**

Standardized testing

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

Few, if any, decisions should be made on the basis of standardized tests alone.

Honesty in Education

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

De-politicize school boards, and education in general

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, whitewashing history to perpetuate the white christian nationalist agenda is immoral, just as slavery and limiting the rights of any human being always has, and always will be immoral.

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 No **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 No **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 No **Yes**

Union Rights

20. Do you support collective bargaining rights?

Yes No **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 No **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 No **Yes**

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

By respecting the need for unions and opposing any legislation intended to undermine 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 No **Yes**

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

Yes No **Yes**

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

Yes No **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 No **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 strongly support single payer health insurance and universal access.

Privatization

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

Yes No **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 No **Yes**

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

Yes No **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 No **Yes, I think so. The question is oddly worded. It appears to be asking if I oppose providing equal access to public schools for all students. I do support equal access.**

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 No **strongly, 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?

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?

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?

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

33. I have a 9 year old in Clearview Elementary in the Spanish Immersion program, so I visit often. I have five other children so I've been in schools a lot over the years.

34. I have many teacher friends who are well informed and keep me up to date.

35. I expect you have a legislative ombudsman. Otherwise, I will communicate with you by whatever means you prefer. There are few issues more important than educating our children, and adults for that matter.

36. That would depend on the group. These phony grassroots front groups funded by dark money who are trying to inject their fundamentalist fanaticism into all levels of government have no place at the table as far as I'm concerned.