

# Click or tap to insert candidate name

## Education Minnesota candidate questionnaire

### Education funding

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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

*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

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

Yes    No

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

Yes    No

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

Yes    No

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

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.*

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.*

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.*

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.*

Yes  No

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

Yes  No

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

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.*

Yes  No

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

Yes  No

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

Yes  No

## **Education Support Professionals**

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

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?

Yes    No

## Taxes/revenue

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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

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?

**Linking the formula to inflation is a good start. I also support our local school boards being able to renew/increase school district levies without having to go to the voters just like our municipalities can do. We also need to look at how our state general level is collected and either dedicate it to education or look at reforming it.**

## Higher education

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

Yes    No

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

Yes    No

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

**There are ways we can invest in secondary schools to help relieve higher education debt. Support our schools in providing more College in the Schools options (CIS), provide \$\$ for transportation to PSEO programs so that they are more accessible, support students who have traditionally not accessed AP coursework, and provide funds for school district to develop pathways/strands to careers. For example, pay for a coordinator to work with local businesses on developing the employment strands that would move students into careers with less college debt. We also need to provide access to lower interest loans for post-secondary education as well as access to two-years for post-secondary for free.**

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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

## High-quality professional educators

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

**Make sure there are systems in place to support new teachers so that they stay in the profession. Fund our schools so that salaries are more reflective of teacher's professional status. Invest in funding for tuition reimbursement. Provide funding for streams that jump start a career in education in our secondary schools similar to the Worthington and Austin programs. And, I have always supported the TOCIAT legislation.**

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

## Teacher licensure

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

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?

Yes    No

## Standardized testing

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

**We need to reduce the number of MCA questions and educate parents on why it is important to make sure our districts are teaching to our standards. But, also explain that it is not a reflection on our teachers and not meant to provide immediate feedback on student progress. Our MAAP testing is a better vehicle to help reach students where they are at. It is my understanding that there is some move to developing the MAAP tests so that, when layered together, could meet the MCA requirements.**

## Honesty in Education

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

**Make sure that there are no regressive policies passed to muzzle our teachers or restrict their academic freedom. As legislators, we also must publicly support our teachers and the important work they are doing in the classroom.**

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?

**ABSOLUTELY! Not only do we need to make sure our students have the tools to function in our diverse communities and global economy, but that they are also culturally competent. Part of that is also making sure our students see themselves in the curriculum as well as the staff.**

## Time to Teach

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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

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

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

## Union Rights

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20. Do you support collective bargaining rights?

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?

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?

Yes  No

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

**I firmly believe in our teacher's (and all school staff) right to collectively bargain for wages as well as a safe and appropriate working environment. I will oppose any legislation that attacks those rights.**

## Working families

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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

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?

**Having the ability for our school districts to buy into the state employee plan or develop their own self-insured plan for health insurance. I also support expanding MNCare to more Minnesotans as we work toward a more equitable, accessible, and affordable health care system.**

## Privatization

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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?

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?*

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?*

Yes  No

## Your role as a legislator

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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?

**During the interim, from September to January, I work in the schools as an educational support professional. I have been lucky to have the ability to do this and work in the school districts that I currently represent. I have also taken tours of school districts across the state over the last four years including Austin, Park Rapids, Ely, Bemidji, and Worthington as well as some of our metro schools.**

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 utilized experts in the field like my husband who has taught for almost 30 years, my four sister-in-laws who are current teachers, and our son who will be starting his third year of teaching. I also work closely with EdMN and other members of the Bell Group as well as our non-partisan staff to understand policy and finance issues.**

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?

**As partners in approaching finance and policy work. I have always had an open door policy and am very communicative. Especially, if there are small areas of disagreement.**

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

**That is a very interesting question as I definitely did see different approaches when I was the House Education Policy Chair. I would encourage the different organizations to work together to**

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**focus on putting together a platform where there is agreement that they can push together. Folks did a great job working together on the SPED cross-subsidy issue this year.**

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