

Candidate for Minnesota Senate District 11

Jun 24, 2026

Yes/No questions

1. Have you visited a public school in your district in the past year?

Yes

Q2. ESP living wage: Will you support legislation to ensure that all education support professionals earn a living wage of at least \$25 an hour?

Yes

Q3. Due to significantly below-market compensation for teachers, most school districts in Minnesota are having difficulty filling teaching jobs, and state colleges report a continued decline in the number of graduates from teacher preparation programs. Would you support creating a minimum salary for all licensed Minnesota teachers of \$60,000 a year and an \$80,000 minimum salary for licensed teachers with 10 years of experience and a master's degree?

Yes

Q4. Will you support increasing state funding to ensure the financial sustainability of educator public pension funds, so the cost doesn't come out of workers' pockets?

Yes

Q5. Will you support improving teacher pensions, including an unreduced career rule, lowering penalties, and increasing cost of living adjustments for retirees?

Yes

Q6. Do you support the creation of and funding for the Educator Group Insurance Program (EGIP), which would give educators access to a mandatory statewide health insurance pool, just like other state workers?

Yes

Q7. Do you support dedicated funding for unemployment insurance for hourly school workers, and will you work against any efforts to repeal this benefit?

Yes

Do you support the following education funding priorities?

Q8a. Maintain the current automatic inflationary increase to the basic formula allowance, protecting funding increases from the erosion of inflation.

Yes

Q8b. SPED cross subsidy: Fully fund special education costs instead of relying on school districts to pay for them.

Yes

Q8c. EL cross subsidy: Fully fund the costs districts pay to provide quality English learner programs and instruction.

Yes

Q8d. Lower class sizes: Lower class sizes so teachers can give students more of the individual attention they need and deserve.

Yes

Q8e. Teachers of color: Fund programs to increase the number of teachers of color significantly so that teachers providing instruction better reflect the students in our classrooms.

Yes

Q8f. Student support: Defend Student Support Personnel Aid, which must be used for school nurses, social workers, counselors and psychologists.

Yes

Q8g. Defend against further cuts to school library aid, which is the only dedicated funding source for school libraries and media centers, including

Yes

Q8h. Early learning: Preserve and expand pre-Kindergarten options for all Minnesota families.

Yes

Q9. 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

Q11. Fully funded schools require adequate and stable revenues. Will you oppose tax cuts and carve outs that lower tax collections or narrow the tax base?

Yes

Q12. Efforts to address college affordability in the last two decades have resulted in 120% growth in the State Grant Program. One consequence of this high tuition/high aid model has been the chronic underfunding of the public college systems. Do you support returning to statutory funding levels for our public higher education institutions?

Yes

Q13. Another consequence of this high tuition/high aid model has been a significant amount of public money going to private colleges and universities. Do you support public dollars going solely to public higher education institutions?

Yes

Q14. Given nationwide attacks on higher education, do you support academic freedom and faculty control of curriculum?

Yes

Q17. Education Minnesota believes all students should have the freedom to feel safe, respected and welcomed in their public schools, no matter what they look like, no matter their country of origin, whether transgender or not. Do you agree?

Yes

Q18. Teachers need more time daily for planning and differentiating. 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

Q19. Do you support paid, dedicated time outside of student contact time for special education teachers to complete their paperwork and attend required meetings?

Yes

Q20. Do you support increased reporting and transparency in worksite safety when reporting physical injuries and emotional trauma in the workplace?

Yes

Q21. The ability of workers to come together in a union and bargain collectively has been vital for reducing wage gaps by gender, building the middle class, and limiting wealth inequality in Minnesota. Do you support expanding and strengthening workers' rights to join a union and bargain collectively?

Yes

Q22. 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

Q23. Do you oppose state tax credits for private K-12 education tuition and expenses?

Yes

Q24. Will you support a moratorium on new charter schools until policy changes are made to ensure a stronger accountability system that will eliminate fraud and improve instructional and employment practices?

Yes

Q25. Will you reject all efforts to carve out, delay or rollback any aspects or benefits of the 2023 paid family medical leave law?

Yes

Q26. Do you support clarifying and strengthening workers' rights and protections in the paid family medical leave program?

Yes

Q1a. If yes: Which one? What were your observations from your visit? How will this experience inform your work as a legislator?

I am the school board chair of Wrenshall Public Schools, which is set to consolidate with Carlton Public Schools on July 1st, 2026. I've been in many schools over the last year. Wrenshall, South Terrace Elementary, Carlton High School, Barnum High School, Moose Lake Community School and Lowell Elementary. My five and eight year old attend Wrenshall School and I dropped my daughter off to preschool Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week.

I could spend an entire day sharing my observations from my time on the board and in the school. Overall, I would say our schools are struggling due to the lack of financial support from the state and federal government. Despite this, our teachers and staff show up every single day and give their all to our students. Despite being chronically under paid, they keep our schools running and prepare the next generation to enter the workforce. Even when times are hard, they show up with smiles and love.

My decision to run for senate has a lot to do with my frustration over lack of funding directed at public schools. While sitting at the board table, it feels like there is a massive disconnect between the schools and those at the Minnesota Capitol. Reworking the funding formula is a key to my platform. Teachers deserve to be paid more. Staff deserve to be paid more. The state needs to stop asking our public schools to do more with less money. I intend to fight to sit on the education finance committee so that I can begin to educate my fellow legislators about school funding and how the current funding formula isn't serving students or staff effectively. Only if we can educate them can we begin to make the changes that will revitalize our public schools.

Q10. 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. What progressive, equitable ways to raise state revenue do you support?

I would like to see operational levies become a thing of the past. They expand the economic divide, creating rich districts and poor district. As someone who serves a rural, low income district, we opted for the incredibly painful choice of consolidation over seeking an operational referendum because the referendum almost certainly would fail. I fully support increasing taxes on large corporations and the richest households to increase school funding in the hopes of being able to eliminate operational referendums.

Two other ideas I have for increasing revenue for schools: First, allowing school districts to levy wage increases onto tax payers. This would help us close some of the wage gap without reducing (or eliminating) our general fund balance. For a district like Wrenshall, it would mean we could actually start handing out appropriate wage increases. I'm not convinced this is entirely equitable because wealthier districts would be able to levy more, while lower income districts would likely be more limited. The second idea I've had is a state wide sales tax increase that would be directed into a fund dedicated to education. This would in turn be split on a per pupil unit basis statewide.

Clearly these ideas need to be vetted for legality and for potential flaws, but we need to start thinking creatively in order to FULLY FUND SCHOOLS.

Q15. What individual or system-level decisions in education do you believe are appropriate to make based on standardized test scores?

I believe that test scores do not adequately reflect the whole student or what is happening in the school. Take a look at Wrenshall's test scores. They do not reflect the absolute magic that happens within that building day in and day out. They do not reflect our incredible staff or the sparkly students that have chosen this school. I think test scores drive parents to open enroll in wealthier districts and send families looking for private school options. I understand that the state wants some sort of report card from schools in order to make sure schools are preparing students for the world, but standardized testing is not an adequate judgement of school performance.

Q16. Most educators believe students should have access to a wide range of age-appropriate books that include relatable characters and situations that reflect the diversity of Minnesota families. However, certain politicians and big money groups are trying to remove books from school libraries across America, particularly books with LGBTQ+ characters or those that deal with racism in America. How should Minnesota protect its students' freedom to read?

I LOVE this question. One of the first policies we implemented when I got on policy committee was 606.2 – Library Resources. This policy was aimed at protecting the library specialist's ability to choose materials for the library. It also created a formal process if someone wanted to try to get a book banned. This policy was written by our library specialist and we were so proud to pass it on a 6-0 vote. Last year, MSBA adopted a formal policy that is very similar, so we have now moved to that policy. I was surprised to have no challenges to either policy when we brought them forward. However, even our very conservative constituents liked that there was a plan in place if they wanted to challenge a book. I'm pleased to say no challenges have been brought forward in the 3 years since we created the original policy.

I do believe in local control, but that does not mean that when you have a conservative board that books should be piled up in the parking lot and burned. We need to find balance in policy that absolutely protects students' rights to read and learn.

Q27. How would you support schools, educators and students in recovering from the trauma and financial impacts that Operation Metro Surge inflicted upon our state, especially BIPOC communities?

During ICE's invasion of Minnesota, I met with administration and we made a plan to protect our students and staff. We are a predominately white population in a rural area, but we have a high population of indigenous students that were scared. Students should never be afraid to attend school.

Our plan was simple – if any police officer or ICE agent showed up, they would be held outside the secured entrance. The administrative assistant was to call for the superintendent, the principal and myself (board chair). They would not be allowed into the building without a warrant. If they had a warrant, we planned to hold them outside as long as possible while getting our admin in place and contacting the student's family. If they did not have a warrant and were seeking a student, that student's parents would be informed that we were keeping the student safe and that they should not attempt to come to the school (we were afraid they may use students as bait for parents). We quietly secured a small network of parents that would also be called if the situation escalated. This group was willing to use their bodies to defend our beloved students and staff.

We kept these plans very quiet. We did communicate with our American Indian Cultural liaison that we had a plan in place, but we didn't want the broader public to know about this plan. We felt that was the safest way to keep our community safe.

It's unreal writing these words. To think that in 2026 we had to come up with this plan is unbelievable. I support widespread aid for recovery from Operation Metro Surge. My only question is: have we gone far enough? Because here in very rural, conservative Minnesota we had students and families that were truly terrified.