

Candidate for Minnesota Senate District 61

Jun 15, 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?

No

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?

Armatage. I saw how amazingly creative the teachers are in creating wonderful classrooms and learning environments. I was impressed with how vital all of the professionals in the building are to delivering education. All of the adults were very active in understanding and meeting the needs of the students and their families.

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 support examining additional ways to ensure that the wealthiest individuals and largest multinational corporations pay taxes based on their true economic activity and ability to pay. That includes a fifth tier income tier closing tax loopholes, reducing opportunities for tax avoidance, strengthening corporate tax fairness, and reforms that better include wealth that has largely escaped taxation while protecting middle-class families, homeowners, renters, and small businesses.

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

I do not believe high-stakes decisions about individual students, educators, or schools should be based solely—or even primarily—on standardized test scores. At the individual student level, test results can help identify areas where a student may need additional support, intervention, or enrichment. They can provide one data point among many—including classroom performance, teacher observations, coursework, attendance, student growth, and social-emotional factors—to inform instruction and resource allocation. They should not be used as the sole determinant of a student's advancement, graduation, placement, or educational opportunities. I believe standardized test results should be used primarily as diagnostic and accountability tools to guide improvement and investment—not as punitive measures against students, educators, or schools.

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?

Public education should prepare young people to live, work, and thrive in a diverse society, and that requires access to a broad range of age-appropriate literature representing different experiences, cultures, identities, and perspectives. I am deeply concerned by efforts to remove books for political or ideological reasons, particularly when those efforts disproportionately target books featuring LGBTQ+ characters, people of color, or honest discussions of our nation's history. Decisions about library collections should be guided by educators, librarians, and age-appropriate professional standards—not by political pressure campaigns or outside interest groups seeking to restrict what students can read. Minnesota has taken important steps to protect the freedom to read, and I support maintaining and strengthening those protections. Students, parents, educators, and librarians should all have a voice in the process, but any challenges to library materials should be handled through transparent, educationally grounded review procedures rather than blanket bans or censorship. As one of Minnesota's openly LGBTQ+ legislators, I know firsthand how powerful it can be for young people to encounter stories that help them understand themselves and others.

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?

I would begin by naming clearly what happened: Operation Metro Surge created fear, instability, and trauma in communities that were already too often targeted, surveilled, and under-resourced. Students cannot learn when they are afraid for themselves, their parents, their neighbors, or their future. I would support schools by pushing for trauma-informed resources, multilingual family outreach, culturally responsive mental health supports, and funding for counselors, social workers, cultural liaisons, and community-based partners trusted by BIPOC and immigrant communities. Educators should not be left alone to absorb the emotional impact of this crisis or to fill gaps created by state or federal actions. As we did this year in the Senate, I would also support direct financial relief and stabilization for affected families, including emergency assistance, housing supports, food security, legal navigation, and protections that help students stay connected to school. When a family loses income, housing, or safety, the educational impact is immediate. Also, as we did in the Senate, I will continue to oppose enforcement actions that terrorize communities and undermine public trust. Minnesota should protect student privacy, ensure schools remain safe and welcoming places, and prevent school resources from being used to facilitate immigration enforcement or discriminatory policing. Recovery also requires listening to students, families, educators, and community organizations closest to the harm. My role is to help direct resources where they are needed, insist on accountability, and make clear that every child in Minnesota deserves safety, belonging, and the freedom to learn.