

Candidate for Minnesota Senate District 65

Jul 7, 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?

Yes, I did a work a day visit with teacher Quentin Watham-Ocama at Maxfield Elementary. I had a wonderful visit and was impressed with the skill and sensitivity that teachers have to bring to their role in dealing with life-events happening to students outside the classroom. Students are dealing with so much in their families and their communities. I was reminded how much is needed for our education system to be successful how families need wrap around services and living wage jobs and affordable housing and safe communities- all of these things. Doing my visit during Operation Metro Surge was also a reminder of how important and trusted our teachers are. The teachers in Maxfield and in my kids own school in West St. Paul were invaluable in helping our neighbors and community with mutual aid and support! I look forward to supporting our teachers and students in the totality of their lives as a legislator and will be a strong partner with the teachers in my district in finding opportunities to make change.

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 many progressive changes to state tax system, including adding taxes on services, adding a 5th tier, etc. I can't imagine a proposal for progressive taxation, advocated by Ed. MN that I would not support.

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

I'm not a big believer in standardized test scores and am more concerned with their skewing teaching goals and practices. I am open to discussing decisions about testing and test scores with Ed. MN. before making any decisions on public policy that affects teachers or students.

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 don't support book bans and never will. I am a strong believer in academic freedom and access to great, diverse books. I have exhibited this on the UMN Board of Regents and believe that we should forgo any federal money that ties the hands of our school librarians.

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 love to learn from ED MN what is needed in this regard. I am very concerned about some districts being short changed on funding due to students missing school during the occupation and would support efforts to make up for any losses to such districts. I also support additional mental health counselors in general for our schools and believe that more counselors are needed to deal with the increased needs of our students due to the occupation and our modern times in general. Some schools may also benefit from a surge of tutors or ESPs to help students who missed significant school this year catch up to grade level and our whole state should support closing the gap in this area.

I also want to applaud the teachers, ESPs, PTAs and our school professionals in general for the incredible support that they provided to our neighbors and families during the occupation. I will always be available to discuss the ideas of ED. MN. members and leaders when I get to the state senate.