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1527**

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Candidate endorsement questionnaire - Bemidji office

**Candidate name**

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**Election district**

1A

**Party endorsement**

DFL

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**Educator Pay**

**1. 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

**2. 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

**Pensions**

**3. Will you support increasing state funding to ensure the financial sustainability of public pension funds?**

Yes

**4. Will you support exploring the necessary benefit improvements in order to provide educators with a secure retirement, including reducing early retirement penalties, lowering the normal age of retirement and a career threshold that will help recruit and retain educators?**

Yes

**5. How will you support efforts to lower inequitable penalties in the Teachers Retirement Association in order to expand retirement options?**

I will admit that I do not know enough about this issues to give a solid answer. From what I'm understanding with my research its that there are multi tiered systems depending on when you started in your career with better ones reserved solely for those that

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were there first. If this is correct it can cause resentment between those that have the better deal and those forced to take less because of sub optimal bargaining. I have seen striking at a lumber mill in Grand Rapids over this exact thing.

Again I would have to get more information on what would be possible to do legislatively to get everyone a fair deal and would love to talk and learn about this more.

**Health care**

**6. Do you support educators having access to a mandatory statewide health insurance pool, just like other state workers?**

Yes

**7. 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

**8. All Minnesotans deserve access to affordable health care and publicly managed plans like MN Care and Medicare are some of the most efficient plans out there. The legislature is currently seeking a federal waiver to expand MN Care to more residents. Do you support expanding all public health care programs to include more working people?**

Yes

**Education funding**

**9a. Reverse Minnesota's perpetual underfunding of education by significantly increasing the per-pupil funding formula.**

Yes

**9b. SPED cross subsidy: The state must fully fund special education costs instead of relying on school districts to pay for them.**

Yes

**9c. EL cross subsidy: Fully fund the costs districts pay to provide quality English learner programs and instruction.**

Yes

**9d. Lower class sizes: Lower class sizes so teachers can give students more of the individual attention they need and deserve.**

Yes

**9e. Full-service community schools: Expand access to full-service community schools across the state.**

Yes

**9f. 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

**9g. Student support: Continue providing additional resources for school districts to hire more student support staff, including counselors, social workers, psychologists, nurses and other job classifications.**

Yes

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**9h. 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

**9i. Professional development: Provide professional development to all staff around cultural competency and trauma-responsive classrooms with aims of closing the discipline disparity gap.**

Yes

**9j. Education debt relief: Provide debt relief to retain teachers so they can afford to stay in the classroom.**

Yes

**Taxes/revenue**

**10. 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

**11. 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?**

Yes

**12. 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

**13. A balanced tax code draws revenue from a mix of income, sales, and property taxes. Will you support policies that maintain both adequate funding and a sustainable balance between revenue sources?**

Yes

**Higher education**

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

Yes

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

Yes

**16. Do you support DEI efforts on our college campuses and universities?**

Yes

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**17. What would you do, as a state legislator, to help with the cost of higher education?**

I think the new programs of free college for people meeting certain income requirements is a great start. We can expand upon this to help more people be able to get into higher education. Encourage more college to offer online classes at reduced price. Help expand AP classes in high schools to help get pre-req classes out of the way to reduce paid classes needed.

There are more things that I'm sure could be done and would need to talk with experts on this to see what could be done legislatively.

**18. The North Star Promise is expected to result in an increase in enrollment on our campuses. Many of these students are projected to be disproportionately first-generation students and students from historically underserved communities. As a legislator, what would you do to ensure these students had the support they needed to be successful?**

There should definitely be what to expect in college classes offered for people in the summer so they could have an idea of what expectations they will have of them. We can encourage the schools and students to form support groups to help each other out with problems that might arise from culture clash to just being overwhelmed.

I will admit that I went to trade school and not traditional college so I do not know exactly what would be the best here and would rely on talking to current and former students and admiration.

**19. There are efforts to expand the North Star Promise to Minnesota's private colleges and universities. This would dramatically increase the amount of public money going to private institutions. Do you support the expansion of the North Star Promise to include private colleges and universities?**

No

**High-quality professional educators**

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

I will help pass bills to fund our schools properly to give an environment that teachers would want to work for.  
I would help support any bills that give equitable funding for all schools so teachers would be willing to go throughout the state.  
Encourage and support bills that would help pay student loans back to encourage more new teachers to come to the state.  
Encourage and support bills that would help give retention bonus and ways to support teachers that have been working for a while to keep them in state.

**Standardized testing**

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

I believe that funding based on test scores is a good thing but its implementation has been wrong. In many places that have poor test scores are severely underfunded and would do much better if they got the support they need rather than have it taken away for doing poorly. We should use these test scores as a very loose base of overall education health and then look into more detail from there. If we notice statewide or area specific trends it can help up figure out what might be going on if say an entire area has very poor reading skills and give us something to look at more.

**Honesty in Education**

**22. 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?**

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Freedom of speech also means freedom to read those speeches done. Censoring, altering, removing, and rewriting things we do not agree with should be considered fundamentally un-American. Every parent could and should monitor their children's habits be it from TV shows, Youtube, social media, and even books and have a talk with them about anything they deem inappropriate. The only role the state should have on this is a ban on bans so people are able to choose what they want to read.

**23. Education Minnesota believes all students should have the freedom to feel safe and welcome in their public school, no matter what they look like, where they're from, how they pray, transgender or not. Do you agree?**

Yes

**24. Students bring many needs into their public schools, but our union believes they all deserve the freedom to grow with the help of support for their mental health and with lessons in how to recognize and control their emotions, which is sometimes called social-emotional learning. Do you support increasing support for students' mental and emotional health in public schools?**

Yes

**Time to Teach**

**MoveDuplicate Settings Delete 25. 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

**26. 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

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

Yes

**School safety**

**28. Creating incentives for school administrators to enforce districts' codes of conduct without bias and/or creating accountability measures for those who don't?**

Yes

**29. Increase reporting and transparency in worksite safety when reporting physical injuries and emotional trauma in the workplace?**

Yes

**Union Rights**

**30. The ability of workers to come together in 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

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**31. 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

**32. How will you support unions as a state legislator?**

I would not support any bills that put workers rights below corporations. I would support bills that help protect workers right and help expand collective bargaining and encourage more groups to organize. I would be more than happy to use my voice and position to help those trying to organize.

**Privatization**

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

Yes

**34. 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

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

Yes

**Your role as a legislator**

**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?**

Yes I am fairly involved with my childrens school, Challenger Elementary School in Thief River Falls. I help with the schools robotics team and try and attend as many school events as possible. We have had a lot of issues when it comes to funding in this district as our school funding did not pass so they have been cutting teaching positions and activities. There has been a fund raiser to try and raise 70k to keep a third grade teacher and keep our class sizes in that grade from going to low 20s into the 30's. Watching how much our staff here cares about kids and are willing to do so much to be able to keep them in the best learning environment and how much the kids have participated to keep their schools running constantly inspires me to try and do the best I can to help.

**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 attend as many school board meetings as possible and am on mailing lists for school news. Our local paper also does a great job of covering the meetings so I can keep informed if I miss one. I am friends with a few board members and administrative staff at the three schools in town to try and keep up with anything going on at the schools.

**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?**

I would hope that EM would be a great resource for finding out what things are going on in schools that might not be obvious and could help us determine workable solutions for any problems. Disagreements do happen and can be talked through to see if we

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are actually against each other on a topic or if there is a misunderstanding. Sometimes when things are not eye to eye we can still find a compromise and get to a solution that is beneficial to all involved.

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

Priorities start with what is going to be best for keeping the Minnesota education system running the best to keep our children learning and growing. Many education groups should have similar goals and we can start with the ones that everyone agrees with and find balance from there.