

Education Minnesota Voter Information: House District 36A

Dear educator,

Those elected this November will make decisions that directly impact your students, pocketbook, profession and union. Because of this, we wanted to provide some information on where the candidates for Minnesota House in your district stand on the issues educators have said they care about the most.

A candidate's position is sometimes more complicated than a "yes" or "no" answer. We have done our best to represent each candidate in a fair and reasonable way. Unless noted otherwise, the statements were taken from Education Minnesota's candidate questionnaire.

For educators seeking more specific information on their local candidate's positions on Education Minnesota's top priorities of pay, pensions and health care, the questionnaires are available at www.edmnvotes.org.

<p>Do you believe in fully and equitably funding public education, from preschool to postsecondary institutions, with several billion dollars in new education investments?</p>	
<p>Janelle Calhoun Will reverse perpetual underfunding of Minnesota education. Supports lowering class sizes to allow students more individual attention. Will work towards funding special education and English language learner programs. Will support increasing mental health support at schools. Firmly believes all students, regardless of who they are, deserve equal access, safety and support. Will work to reduce tuition and make college accessible.</p>	<p>Elliott Engen Voted "No" on a measure to appropriate funding for free college tuition and automatic admission.¹ Voted "No" on a bill to fund Minnesota schools through 2027, in an attempt to deny more money per student and reduce district costs for special education.² Voted "No" on a funding bill for libraries, school facilities, and educational resources.³</p> <p><small>¹ Vote Smart HF 2073. ² Vote Smart HF 2497. ³ Vote Smart HF 5237.</small></p>
<p>How would you support unions and the issues addressed in a collectively bargained contract?</p>	
<p>Janelle Calhoun Strongly supports unions and wants to ensure that "there is no erosion of collective bargaining rights." and will "speak out for the benefit of unions and support them in policy, legislation research."</p>	<p>Elliott Engen Strongly opposed the educators' union strike for fair wages and affordable health care in St. Paul Public Schools.⁴</p> <p><small>⁴ Elliott Engen Twitter, 3/8/22</small></p>
<p>Will you support school choice and voucher programs?</p>	
<p>Janelle Calhoun Opposes using tax dollars to fund private schools. Will put a stop to the North Star Promise's expansion to funnel public money to private colleges. Is a staunch defender of the public education system.</p>	<p>Elliott Engen Supports voucher programs, which redirect taxpayer dollars from public schools to private schools, making budgets even tighter for public education.⁵</p> <p><small>⁵ LWV Candidate Forum, 9/21/20</small></p>
<p>Do you support guaranteeing universal school meals at no cost to Minnesota parents?</p>	
<p>Janelle Calhoun Yes.</p>	<p>Elliott Engen Compared universal school meals to Soviet bread lines: "I mean, if we're talking about students today, that means that in the future, we will be talking about adults. And bread lines didn't work so well in Soviet Russia, last time I checked. I'm not sure that I want the government to be the one that's always providing for me."⁶</p> <p><small>⁶ Minnesota Legislature, 3/3/2023; Jack Tomczak Show, 2/11/23</small></p>
<p>How will you support and stand with the students and educators of Minnesota?</p>	
<p>Janelle Calhoun Vows to work to remove predatory student loan lending rates, allocate funds to create tutoring and career mentoring for students, and work to fund university and K-12 facilities fully.</p>	<p>Elliott Engen Voted "No" on HF3947, a bill that will increase the minimum wage to better support school district staff.⁷</p> <p><small>⁷ MN House Journal 3852house.mn.gov/cc/journals/2023-24/10515116</small></p>