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Candidate endorsement questionnaire - Southwest Metro office

Candidate name

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Election district

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Party endorsement

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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 do not have enough knowledge presently to know how to support this. However, I am happy to learn what the issues are and how we can expand options. There is rarely an instance where one size fits all, so having more options is usually always a better

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outcome.

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

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.

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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

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

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We need to increase the level of funding to higher education. Students money should be going to cover the actual teaching, room/board, and maybe some of the administration cost. With that, there also needs to be some reform in how money is being distributed at colleges and universities. As someone outside of education, it seems that more money is being spent on overhead, administration, and sports then on academics and students. If I am proven wrong on this I will certainly change my views. The focus of higher education should be learning, teaching, and researching. All else should be secondary.

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?

One of the most beneficial classes I took early on in college was on how to study and learn. We should ensure that there are courses to help students know how to learn at the college level and assistance for those that need help. This is not contradictory to my previous answer on helping with the cost of higher education because I believe this would be part of helping students learn and professors teach. So, by both increasing funding and reforming where funding goes we would be helping first-generation students. I also believe we should be funding state-wide support for pre-college prep for students. This would help ease the transition from high school to college and help students hit the ground running.

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?

By reforming education funding we can increase the benefits going to educators. Benefits such as pay, health insurance, retirement, smaller classroom sizes, more budget for supplies, and money set aside for training. Also, we need to make sure our educators are protected from retaliation because of differing opinions by parents or others. While parents should have a part in their child's learning, the teacher should not be targeted for having opinions or views different then the parents. Knowing that the school district and state has the teachers back in disputes where the teacher has followed the law and instructions would help to bring teachers in from places where they do not have that protection.

Standardized testing

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

The only decisions that should be made off of test scores is figuring out how to help those students that score low or high. Standardized tests should be just a check in point of the student and the teacher to see if they are falling behind or well ahead. If an individual student scored low while the rest of the class didn't, then that would show the student is in need of additional help. Same for if the student scored exceptionally high, the student is in need of possibly an advanced learning path. While from the teacher standpoint, if all students of a class scored low there should be assistance given to that teacher in helping develop them or see what support they are missing. If all students score high then we should look at what that teacher is doing and see if it can be replicated with others.

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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As long as a book is age-appropriate it should be available in school libraries. If we remove all topics we don't agree with, like, or enjoy we will continue to repeat the mistakes of the past. If there is truly a question of if a book is age-appropriate there should be a process in place to review that, but just being of a certain topic does not make a book not age-appropriate. The ones deciding on that review process should be the educators and librarians. If a parent has concern with their child reading a specific book, then that is up to them to enforce, not for the schools to remove the book for everyone.

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?

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Yes

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?

Unions give a backbone of support to everyone in them. We need to enshrine in law the ability for unions to operate in Minnesota and make sure we are not undermining their ability to work for their membs.

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?

I have not really other then attending events for friends kids. I would love help to arrange a visit and see things firsthand.

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 have been reading through the current laws on education funding to get a grasp on how and where money is going and where it is coming from. I have made sure to listen to friends and people I know who work in public education on what they see and think.

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 lean on Education Minnesota to help me understand what is important in our education system. I only know what I see on the outside and on paper, while y'all have the inside knowledge as workers in the industry. I see it working much the same as how my job works. Someone above me is the one making the final decisions on direction and plan, but they come to me for my expertise on IT networks and security and what I would recommend they do in those areas.

I do not doubt there will be portions where we disagree on specifics of an issue. If we do, I would want to clearly explain why I disagree and the reason I think whatever the other choice/choices are better at that time. I would always be open potentially changing my view in light of new information that I did not have in my original stance. I believe as a representative I have to be

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willing to shift my view as new information comes to light and judge each bill/decision on it's own merits and not just vote based on the party or on the stance of a single group.

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

If other education groups have competing priorities, I would try and understand why and make a judgement on which priority should be focused on currently. So far, I have not seen any other groups priorities that I think would compete with Education Minnesota's priorities in my eyes, but as said, I would weigh them if that did happen.