

**2024 Candidate endorsement questionnaire : Entry #
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Candidate endorsement questionnaire - Anoka office

Candidate name

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Election district

32A

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?

To support efforts to lower inequitable penalties in the Teachers Retirement Association and expand retirement options, I would advocate for eliminating early retirement penalties, ensuring teachers aren't unfairly penalized for retiring before the standard age.

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Additionally, I would work to secure sustainable funding for the TRA to guarantee that all promised benefits are fully funded, protecting the financial future of our educators. I would also collaborate closely with educators and unions like Education Minnesota to craft policies that accurately reflect the needs and realities of teachers' careers, ensuring fair and just retirement benefits.

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?

As a state legislator, I would work to make higher education more affordable by advocating for increased state funding to public colleges and universities, which would help reduce tuition costs for students. I would also support expanding scholarship programs and financial aid options, especially for low- and middle-income families, to ensure that cost is not a barrier to accessing higher education. Additionally, I would push for policies that address the rising cost of textbooks and other educational materials, as well as support initiatives that encourage debt-free college pathways, such as work-study programs and public service loan forgiveness.

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?

As a legislator, I would work to ensure that first-generation students and those from historically underserved communities receive the support they need to succeed by advocating for comprehensive student services on campuses. This includes increasing funding for academic advising, tutoring, and mentorship programs specifically designed to address the unique challenges these students face. I would also push for the expansion of mental health resources and financial counseling to help students navigate both academic pressures and financial challenges. Additionally, I would support the development of programs that foster a sense of community and belonging, such as cultural centers and student organizations, which are crucial for the retention and success of these students. By prioritizing these initiatives, we can help ensure that all students have the tools and support they need to thrive in higher education.

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?

To recruit and retain high-quality educators in our classrooms, I would advocate for competitive salaries and benefits that reflect the critical role educators play in our society. This includes supporting efforts to raise teacher pay and provide comprehensive health and retirement benefits, making the profession more attractive and sustainable. I would also push for investments in professional development programs, ensuring that educators have ongoing opportunities to grow and advance in their careers. Additionally, I would work to improve working conditions by reducing class sizes, increasing classroom resources, and addressing the causes of teacher burnout, such as high workloads and administrative burdens. By focusing on these areas, we can create an environment where educators feel valued, supported, and motivated to remain in the profession.

Standardized testing

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

Standardized test scores can be a useful tool for identifying broad trends and areas of need within the education system, but they should not be the sole basis for making significant decisions. At the system level, test scores can help inform curriculum adjustments, resource allocation, and targeted interventions in schools or districts where students are underperforming. For individual students, standardized test scores can be one of several factors used to identify those who might benefit from additional support, such as tutoring or specialized programs, but they should not determine a student's academic future, such as grade promotion or graduation. It's important that decisions based on standardized test scores are made in conjunction with other assessments, teacher evaluations, and a holistic understanding of each student's unique strengths and challenges.

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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?

Minnesota should protect students' freedom to read by enacting policies that safeguard access to a diverse range of age-appropriate books in school libraries, ensuring that all students can see themselves reflected in the stories they read. As a legislator, I would support laws that prevent the arbitrary removal of books, particularly those featuring LGBTQ+ characters or addressing critical social issues like racism. I would also advocate for establishing clear, transparent guidelines for book selection and review processes that involve educators, librarians, parents, and students, rather than yielding to the influence of political agendas or outside groups. Additionally, I would champion the importance of local control over educational content, empowering communities to make decisions that best reflect their values and the needs of their students while upholding the fundamental right to access diverse perspectives and narratives.

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

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

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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

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?

As a state legislator, I will support unions by advocating for policies that protect workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively. I will work to strengthen labor laws that ensure fair wages, safe working conditions, and job security for all employees. Additionally, I will stand against any efforts to weaken unions or undermine collective bargaining rights, recognizing that unions play a crucial role in promoting economic justice and protecting workers' interests. I will also collaborate with unions to address issues such as wage inequality, workplace discrimination, and access to affordable healthcare, ensuring that workers across Minnesota have a strong voice in shaping their working conditions and benefits. By supporting unions, we can build a more equitable and prosperous economy for everyone.

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 visited Spring Lake Park Highschool back in 2022/2023 and one of the biggest observations that I made was the increase in students and the same amount of teachers. I graduated from SLP in 2019 and our class size was around 500, but now the class sizes are around 800-900. This experience shows our need to make sure that we have more teachers to help accommodate for the increase in students. I would like to make a visit to blaine high school and would love your support to visit.

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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 would go to my old English teacher and social studies teachers, Mrs. Mary Mohr Scinocca and Mr. Scott Kranz. I also get my information from EDMN when it comes to anything union related with teachers.

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 envision working closely with EDMN to help solve the issues that we are facing in our schools today. If we disagree I would love to sit down with the board to discuss and find a solution that works for both of us.

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

Education Minnesota will be my primary source of information for working on education policy. I would put EDMN first.