2024 Candidate endorsement questionnaire : Entry # 1552

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Candidate endorsement questionnaire - Southwest Metro office

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48B

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 would support legislation to strengthen retirement options in the TRA. The current penalties are both permanent and extreme which forces career educators to sacrifice a large portion of their benefits when retiring even a couple years early. I am a strong

supporter of teachers and would support any and all efforts to find more equitable retirement solutions for educators.

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.

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?

Commit to supporting legislation to fund out institution of higher education. The cost of education across the board and especially in higher education is growing and the current support that these institutions are receiving is inadequate. It is important that we provide these institutions the financial support they need to continue to serve the public good. That includes providing support to administrations, educators, and students as well as providing access to capital to maintain facilities and capabilities.

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?

I believe that enacting the North Star Promise is only the beginning.

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?

Yes

High-quality professional educators

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

I will work to ensure that teachers are tired and retained at a living wage. I believe that educators should be fairly compensated for their work which is not currently the case. I will work to ensure that wages keep up with inflation. I'm interested in educators being fairly compensated for advanced degrees and opening up tax credits to all graduates of educational masters programs which is not currently the case. I believe that we need to increase support for teacher pensions so that teachers know they have access to a secure and equitable retirement after a career in education.

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 test scores are one aspect in a holistic evaluation of students and teachers. I do not believe that they are particularly useful on their own to evaluate teachers without a lot of context which is unavailable. I do not believe they should be used as a metric to reduce funding, but if anything, as a tool to identify areas where more resources and support are needed.

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?

I believe that any attempt to ban age-appropriate literature in schools is inappropriate. All students should have access to such materials at school and this material should reflect the world around them. We live in a diverse, multi-cultural society and literature is used to explain the differences and similarities between people in a safe and informative way. Racism and LGBTQ+ people exist in our neighborhoods, workplaces, and schools and there should be know controversy with that also being reflected in our literature.

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

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 am adamantly pro-union. Unions are an essential part of our society that allows for more equitable negotiations between employers and employees. I am committed to working with EDMN and working with them to advance the needs of Minnesota

Teachers. I appreciate their support and guidance in crafting a legislative agenda that supports the needs of Teachers.

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 toured SW Metro District 288. I loved their staff and it was a wonderful experience. The school fills an urgent need to accommodate students that have not been successful in other school settings.

I also toured Integrated Arts Academy. They also had an amazing staff and were doing wonderful things in a well utilized small space.

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 like to continue my strong working relationship with EDMN as you are a wonderful resource when it comes to knowing what teachers and schools need. I plan to continue working with former Rep. Jim Davnie to better understand and construct solutions for chronic absenteeism and drop outs in our schools.

How do you envision working with Education Minnesota if you are elected/reelected? If you disagree with us on an issue, how will you communicate that?

I will continue my strong working relationship with EDMN and their advocates on the hill. My door is always open. If there is a disagreement with you, I will honestly communicate issues to your advocates that arise and work tirelessly towards a constructive solutions. Problems exist to be solved and I believe that by working together we can better Minnesota schools.

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

I will listen and learn. Educations groups all want the best educations for Minnesotans. I will work towards that end with EDMN and others in a fair and impartial way. I have a strong belief in the good that EDMN does for our education system and am committed to working with them to advance their goals. However, I am also committed to listening and learning from other groups and will take their advocacy into account.