

**2024 Candidate endorsement questionnaire : Entry #
1547**

Page

Candidate endorsement questionnaire - Southwest Metro office

Candidate name

Anquam Mahamoud

Election district

62B

Party endorsement

DFL

Email

contact@anquam62b.com

Phone

6124154027

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?

Competitive compensation packages are a key ingredient in how we attract and retain educators to Minnesota. The state must give the TRA the funds required to make significant improvements to the pension plans offered to our educators. This could take a

**2024 Candidate endorsement questionnaire : Entry #
1547**

number of forms, and a critical place to look is the tier 1/tier 2 distinction. Ideally, all educators are receiving the flexibility afforded by the tier 1 system. Educators in tier 2 receive overly-harsh penalties for retiring early, locking them into a path that may not be ideal for every educator. I would also like to see a lower Normal Retirement Age. I will be a vocal advocate of these policies at the Capitol.

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

**2024 Candidate endorsement questionnaire : Entry #
1547**

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

2024 Candidate endorsement questionnaire : Entry # 1547

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

There are several things that the MN legislature needs to do to help with the extremely high costs of higher education. I will protect and expand the Northstar Promise Act which removes financial barriers and improves equity in our education system by offering tuition free higher education. I will leverage the Pathways program to assist students with vocational and technical programs. I will support student loan forgiveness for loans held by the state of MN. We can also address costs related to higher education by supporting our institutions in developing open educational resources or even Z-degrees, and tackle our housing crisis that leaves students unable to afford rent.

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?

The North Star Promise is a really exciting program for Minnesota, and we need to be sure we are giving the students who utilize it the best possible chance at success. One way to provide them assistance is to improve the ratio of counselors to students at MN education institutions - not just counselors for social/emotional support, but counselors who assist with job placement and career pathway advice to close that gap in institutional understanding. We should also ensure that our institutions provide a variety of cultural spaces and programs that allow students to benefit from both the diversity available on campus but also the chance to interact with others with familiar experiences. We need to recruit and retain more teachers of color and educators with diverse language skills to ensure we are connecting personally with students of all backgrounds.

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?

The most important thing we can do to recruit and retain high-quality educators is to pay them more. I want to see teachers paid a living salary, and I support the Education Support Professionals Bill of Rights to increase the starting wages for all ESPs in Minnesota Public Schools to \$25 an hour, provides them with health insurance, and ensures that all ESPs have access to twelve hours of professional development each year. I support changes to our teacher pensions that make them more competitive and flexible. I will advocate for increased wages for student teachers, as many educators list this as one of the biggest barriers to them getting licensed, and expanded teacher apprenticeships. Finally, I support the Increase Teachers of Color Act (sponsored by my predecessor, Rep. Hodan Hassan) to specifically bring in more Teachers of Color and help close the education gap in MN.

Standardized testing

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

Generally, I am concerned that standardized testing captures relatively narrow snapshots of the quality of education provided and can be prone to racial bias. I prefer more formative, holistic assessments of students. While, with significant context, standardized test scores may be used to evaluate institutions over time, I am not convinced that they are useful in evaluating individual educators or students. This is an area in which I am still developing my understanding, and would welcome the input of EdMN.

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

2024 Candidate endorsement questionnaire : Entry # 1547

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?

First, I am happy we are following Illinois' example by banning book bans. This is a good start toward ensuring our students have access to relatable, age appropriate books. We should continue this work by investing in our libraries and our librarians.

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

2024 Candidate endorsement questionnaire : Entry # 1547

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 will support any policies that make it easier to form a new union, join an existing union, or bargain collectively. I will oppose any legislation that weakens collective bargaining rights. I will be a vocal and visible supporter of unions. One specific policy I am interested in that I have heard some labor groups discussing this year is allowing striking union employees to claim their unemployment benefits. This is something I am interested in exploring and learning more about.

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?

Recently, Janette Corcelius from MFT 59 ESP arranged for me to have an interview with a student from Camden High School on the topic of "Health disparities in BIPOC communities and health careers" for a politics class. I really enjoyed this experience, and was inspired by the engagement of the student as well as the relevance of the topic/coursework. However, I have not yet had the opportunity for a full visit and tour of any of the schools since becoming a political candidate. I would welcome EdMN assisting in arranging such a visit.

What have you done to become informed on issues relating to public education? What organizations and individuals do you go to for your information?

Since beginning my campaign I have seen that strong support for public education and public educators is one of the critical issues for my district. This is a relatively new area for me, as my background in healthcare is mostly unrelated, but I have been doing what I can to educate myself on the topic so I can do right by my district. To this end I have taken several meetings with constituent educators to learn their perspectives. I also reach out to my various endorsers, which right now include two members of the Congressional Ed Finance Committee and the current MFT President (and School board candidate) Greta Callahan. I hope to form a similar relationship with EdMN.

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?

**2024 Candidate endorsement questionnaire : Entry #
1547**

As education is a newer issue to me, I will need to rely on the expertise and experience offered by EdMN. I hope to work with you in partnership on all the education related issues I work on at the House. If there is anything I disagree on, I plan to be direct and forthcoming. I believe this is the best way to maintain a positive working relationship.

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

Of course, there are always many interests and perspectives to balance, and I plan to give everyone fair consideration. But as stated previously, my district strongly supports public education and public educators. I want to work closely with EdMN to ensure that support translates into state-level policy.