

Washington's Paramount Duty Candidate Questionnaire - 2018

Washington's Paramount Duty is a group of parents, teachers, and community members who fight to ensure our state's public schools are fully and equitably funded. We are asking all candidates for the state legislature in 2018, regardless of party, to respond to the following questionnaire. These responses will be made public and shared with our more than 7,000 members across the state.

There are 12 short questions below. You must give an answer for the questions themselves, and following each question is space for you to expand on your yes/no/maybe answers should you wish to do so. We will publish those additional comments along with your answers to the questions themselves.

Email address *

info@davidfroct.org

Candidate Name

David Froct

1) Do you believe our public schools are amply funded right now, as is required by the state constitution? *

Yes

No

Maybe (explain below)

(Additional comments for question 1)

I think that the state has complied with the legal requirements set forth by the Court in the McCleary decision and is now out of contempt, having, at my urging, finally paid the fine that was imposed in 2015. In the next few years, the share of spending on k-12 will have gone from 42% of the budget during the Great Recession to a projected 53%. That is progress. But there is clearly more to do. The state remains underfunded vis a vis special education, administrative and classified staff salaries and in certain other areas. We have heard from numerous districts that these shortfalls combined with local levy limitations have left projected structural deficits in some areas, so we must work with those districts to assist.

2) Will you vote for new, progressive revenues to sustainably fund our public schools? *

- Yes
- No
- Maybe (explain below)

(Additional comments for question 2)

3) Will you vote for these specific revenues? *

- Capital gains tax
- Closing corporate tax loopholes
- Other:

(Additional comments for question 3)

4) Will you vote to prevent \$1.1 billion in school cuts caused by the January 1, 2019 levy cliff? *

- Yes
- No
- Maybe (explain below)

(Additional comments for question 4)

I think the legislature is likely to stick with the levies as reset on January 1 having saved the local levy until that date back in 2017. That said, the key here is additional funding in some of the areas I identified in answer #1 or with some additional local levy flexibility over time - within limits. I am mindful of the overall property tax burden that our citizens are facing, so that must be a consideration.

5) Will you vote to change the 2017 education funding deal (HB 2242) and add more funding to eliminate inequities between districts as well as ensure districts have the money they actually need to give every child a great education? *

- Yes
- No
- Maybe (explain below)

(Additional comments for question 5)

6) Will you vote to fully implement Initiative 1351, which creates smaller class sizes and increases in counselors, nurses, teaching assistants, librarians, and social workers, and in particular, with additional class-size reductions and staffing increases in high-poverty schools? More info:

<http://leg.wa.gov/House/Committees/OPRGeneral/Documents/2014/I-1351Summary.pdf> *

- Yes
- No
- Maybe (explain below)

(Additional comments for question 6)

In 2014, I voted against delaying the implementation of I-1351 but candidly given where we are today, I think we may have to revise it further going forward. Among other things, I think our emphasis should be - first - on the counselors, nurses and other support staffs that were called for in I-1351.

7) An OSPI survey of school districts found state funding for special education remains more than \$100 million short after the 2018 legislative session. Will you vote to fully fund special education? *

- Yes
- No
- Maybe (explain below)

(Additional comments for question 7)

8) Would you support financial incentives to reduce school segregation (racial and economic)? *

- Yes (explain below what incentives you would support)
- No
- Maybe (explain below)

(Additional comments for question 8)

9) Do you support a simple majority for school bonds and school levies? *

- Yes
- No
- Maybe (explain below)

(Additional comments for question 9)

10) Do you support school vouchers or other programs that allow public funding to follow a student to a private and/or charter school? *

- Yes
- No
- Maybe (explain below)

(Additional comments for question 10)

11) Will you vote against giving public money to charter schools or programs housed within charter schools? *

- Yes
- No
- Maybe (explain below)

(Additional comments for question 11)

It depends what specific proposals are under consideration.

12) Will you vote to raise the cap on allowable charter schools? *

- Yes
- No
- Maybe (explain below)

(Additional comments for question 12)

Anything else you want to add about fully funding public education in Washington State?

Since joining the legislature in the 2011 and the Senate in 2012, I have been a strong advocate for meeting our obligations under the McCleary decision, paying the court ordered fine, and finding the necessary revenue and fiscal changes to accomplish these ends. I served on the first Post-McCleary funding task force that laid out the initial targets on LAP funding, k-3 class size reduction, MSOC and other areas. I have served as the chair of the committee that served as a liaison to the Supreme Court in the case. I presided in the last session as the capital budget lead and vice chair of the Ways & Means committee that made the largest capital investment in school construction in state history - in the range of \$1 billion - and I have specifically been recognized by Seattle Public Schools for securing tens of millions of dollars in specific appropriations to build out new schools in Seattle to address our overcrowding and modernization needs over the past seven years. We have made progress, but there is more to do. I appreciate very much the grass roots advocacy of WPD and I look forward to continuing to work together to bring the rest of our school funding challenges home.

Thank you for filling out this questionnaire! Washington's Paramount Duty will let you know when we will be publishing these responses. Questions? Please email us at info@paramountduty.org.

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