

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 *

votejamiesmith@gmail.com

Candidate Name

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)

While the legislature has made large strides in fully funding schools there are still gaps that need to be addressed. Levy dollars have lessened, but districts still rely on them to meet the basic needs for students and one down vote by the local area can mean significant cuts to student education. Another issue is that the state's tax system is incredibly regressive and trade dependent. A dip in the economy or lowered trade from tariffs means significant unreliability within educational funding. We must find more stable means and work to fix the tax system. Another issue is that special education allotments do not cover the full cost for the districts making them fill in the holes with funds that had been allocated for other areas. Finally the new formula for teacher pay can actually hurt districts with more experienced teachers and has caused serious issues in funding equity as seen this year.

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)

.....

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)

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)

I do not have a strong background in the types of incentives that would be offered, but always support reducing segregation in our schools.

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)

I don't believe in giving money to institutions that try to make money off our kids education, these options end up gutting funding from public schools, often lead to more segregation (racial, economic, and mental), and charter schools have been known to close their doors during the year, leaving the public schools to take in the students without the funding.

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)

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

- Yes
- No
- Maybe (explain below)

(Additional comments for question 12)

I believe in alternative school systems, but believe they should be within the current public school system where they are held accountable to the same standards.

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

As a high school teacher in the Puyallup area I have watched as class sizes have grown faster than funding. I have taught classes of 42 and 22, and can tell you the 22 student class got more done, had higher scores, and became much more of a community than the larger class. We have too many students falling through the cracks and dealing with growing mental health issues and we must have the resources to take care of all of our children.

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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