

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 *

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Candidate Name

Justin Boneau

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)

We've met the legally required minimum, but there's a lot more we need to do. Recent teachers' strikes show that we're not paying teachers enough, and when teachers are underpaid, good people choose other careers. The end result is that dispassionate people are responsible for our children and our shared future, which sets us all up for failure.

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: I support a state income tax
-

(Additional comments for question 3)

Relying so heavily on sales tax has given us the most regressive tax system in the nation. We ask poor and working people to pay huge portions of their incomes on tax while two of the richest people in the world live mere miles away from each other. We clearly need a change.

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)

We need to ensure steady and equitable funding for schools.

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)

Wealth should not determine the quality of a child's education, especially with modern attempts at redlining which push people of color into effectively segregated, often lower income, communities. I will fight for greater funding for underfunded schools and move to a more equitable funding structure.

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)

Our students are our future, and they deserve quality, well-rounded education. Without essential support staff, non-classroom issues can impede learning and have a lasting impact for the worse.

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)

Absolutely. All students deserve the best we can give them.

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)

Segregation in schools is largely due to the combination of housing discrimination and funding schools by property taxes. Communities that can afford higher taxes (which tend to be more homogeneous) can afford better for their students. I support changing the funding structure to pool all taxes and levies that go toward education at the state level, which then distributes them equitably and consciously of previous funding discrepancies.

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

- Yes
- No
- Maybe (explain below)

(Additional comments for question 9)

In a democracy, we should respect the will of the people, especially when it means providing for our children.

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)

Economists talk about targeted vouchers and use a few examples to say that charter schools can have a huge impact, but most charter schools are essentially open only to the wealthiest, and that just serves to reinforce class and racial disparities. For this reason I believe that all state money going toward education should go through public schools.

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)

We should be working to strengthen public schools and the educators whom we trust with our future, not attempting to undermine them.

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

As a father, this issue is especially important to me. My daughter, like every child in Washington, deserves to have a fulfilling career in the field she chooses. Bad school districts and an absurd funding scheme weaken her chances and the chances of millions of students who are unluckily poor or have the wrong color of skin. We need to increase funding for schools and we need to fight for equitable funding.

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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