

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 *

nicole@votenicole.org

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)

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:
Graduated Real Estate Excise Tax (higher rate for properties > \$1M); Carbon Fee (although this is not necessarily progressive if invested in general fund, it can be a bridge to a clean energy economy)
-

(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 support sustainable, progressive state revenue to ensure the state fulfills its responsibility to provide equitable access to education for all students. It is now clear the legislature prematurely reduced levy lids, because many school districts are facing significant shortfalls in 2019 and beyond. I will fight for ample and equitable state funding for schools. If that is not fully successful, I will support lifting the local levy lids as a temporary measure, so we are not backpedaling on progress for students.

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)

The legislature has not come to consensus on what it means to “ensure districts have the money they actually need”. Not only do we have a long legacy of inequity across districts, but districts face different struggles, making it difficult to ensure both fairness and equity in the funding approaches. We are hearing a resounding message from superintendents, teachers’ unions, and families of students that there are clear funding shortfalls in the forecasts, particularly as we look at 2019 and beyond. We must urgently address these shortfalls.

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)

While class size is an urgent issue, and voters' intent is clear, the cost of implementation is great, and difficult to do, even with an incremental approach. Starting with the assumption that funding basic education is our first obligation, smaller class sizes competes against other priorities for students. I am very concerned about the stability of families with school-age children. The state must urgently address the impacts that increasing housing costs and homelessness are having on our lowest income families. I will fight for expanded, progressive revenue and balance all of these needs as budget proposals are debated.

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'm very interested in learning more about this policy concept. Evidence shows that reducing income and racial segregation reduces disparate outcomes for students. Eliminating segregation in schools is a priority for me.

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)

To be clear, I do not support giving public funds to charter schools. We need to adequately fund our public schools, not divert funding from them. However, I'm not familiar with "programs housed within charter schools" and the public policy implications of these programs. I would support giving public money to programs that do not discriminate in their eligibility or access, similar to how public funds are used for homeless shelters housed within churches.

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?

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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