

Dear Candidate,

We invite you to complete the following questionnaire of the Washington Teachers' Union's Committee on Political Education (COPE). This will be used as the first step of our endorsement process, which includes an internal candidate forum with our members, a vote by our Executive Board, and another vote by our Representative Assembly. This is a **prerequisite** for receiving a link to attend our candidate forums on **Saturday, March 23, from 10-11:45 am** (for at-large and Wards 2, 4, & 8) and **Wednesday, March 27, from 7-8 pm** (for Ward 7 only).

Please send the completed questionnaire by **close of business (5 pm) March 18** to **MichaelLDonaldsonJr@gmail.com**

Respectfully,

Michael Donaldson, Jr., Committee Chair of the WTU Committee on Political Education (COPE)

cc: Jacqueline Pogue Lyons, President and Executive Board, Washington Teachers' Union

Candidate Information:

Name: _____ Position Sought: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Are you using the public financing option? (**bold and underline** one) Yes No

Have you ever and would you ever accept an endorsement from Democrats for Education Reform or any of its affiliated organizations? (**bold and underline** one) Yes No

Important Note: The best way to complete this questionnaire is to type your responses into the boxes below the question (the space will expand as you proceed) and then save it as a new PDF labeled: "LastName_First Name - Ward#/Position - WTU DC Council Candidate Questionnaire 2024".

Please **text** COPE Chair Michael Donaldson, Jr. at **804-908-0852** if you have any questions or concerns.

Your questionnaire, in its entirety, will be published on the WTU website, and we reserve the right to use responses to any answer in its entirety in campaign materials.

Any statement made in this questionnaire that is later contradicted through action or association with "education reform" groups or groups that seek to privatize education, such as Democrats for Education Reform, EdReform Now, DC Charter School Alliance, and DC Students Succeed, will cause the WTU to revisit any endorsement offered and may result in the rescinding of our endorsement.

In your own words...

How have you interacted with public schools? Please include any experiences you have advocating for DC public schools, parents, or students. *(limit to 1000 characters)*

What is the top priority facing public education in the District of Columbia, and how will you address it if you are elected? *(limit to 1000 characters)*

If you receive the WTU endorsement and support, how will you work with WTU in the future? *(limit to 1000 characters)*

Fund Our Schools Compliance

How will you make sure that DCPS complies with financial laws and regulations, including the Schools First in Budgeting Act?

LSAT

Do you support, within DC Public Schools, giving the Local School Advisory Team increased autonomy and authority?

Yes / No

Briefly explain your answer *(limit to 1000 characters)*

Supplement vs. Supplant

Specialized funding (such as Special Education, English Language Learners, At-Risk, and others) is being used to supplant the general education funds in our schools.

How will you ensure that this does not continue to happen? *(limit to 1000 characters)*

Do you support the recommendations of the DC Auditor report on at-risk funds published on June 25, 2019 ([DC Schools Shortchange At-Risk Students](#))?

All / None / Some

What will you do to enforce the recommendations? Are there any specific recommendations that you disagree with? Please support your answer *(limit to 1000 characters)*

Funding Equity

How will you support the expansion and improvement of specialty programming across the district, such as dual language programs (including giving heritage language speakers priority), to ensure that all students have equitable access?

Many DC Public Schools receive an inflow of students throughout the school year. Do you support providing additional resources for these schools?

Yes / No

What is your role and what will you do to ensure that any budget system changes will increase equity across our city's public schools and avoid school closures? *(limit to 1000 characters)*

Unfunded mandates often disrupt the local school environment and place increased burdens on school-based staff. If elected, what would you do to ensure that local school budgets are adequately staffed and resourced to meet any new mandates adopted by the Council or implemented by the Mayor and/or DCPS? *(limit to 1000 characters)*

How will you ensure that all DCPS schools successfully implement a 1-1 student-to-device ratio?
limit to 1000 characters

What is your role in ensuring that DCPS supports our local schools by using the security contract to improve trauma-informed and restorative practices in our buildings?

(limit to 1000 characters)

District Educators

Educator Turnover

Educator turnover is a problem that the District needs to address proactively. If elected, how will you make the data available and address this problem? *(limit to 1000 characters)*

If elected, what incentives would you support to encourage experienced educators to stay teaching in the District (i.e., support with student loans and childcare)? *(limit to 1000 characters)*

Educator Pipeline

Do you believe all educators should be certified and licensed in their current position?

Yes / No

Would you support funding and programming for paraprofessionals to become certified as educators?

Yes / No

Do you support improving the process for international professionals to enter the US on work visas in DCPS?

Yes / No

Educator Rights & Supports

Should teachers in the public charter sector have the right to organize and form a Union?

Yes / No

Should a union be able to negotiate the terms of the evaluation system?

Yes / No

Would you support funding for a mentoring program for new educators?

Yes / No

Would you support additional funding for educators to advance their practice in professional development, tuition, and conferences?

Yes / No

Do you support all of the employees in DC Public Schools and Public Charter Schools (educators, paraprofessionals, substitutes, clerks, secretaries, cafeteria, and janitors) receiving a fair and livable wage?

Yes / No

Will you support increasing tax credits for teachers who spend funds on school supplies?

Yes / No

Will you support increasing workforce housing and/or tax incentives for educators to purchase housing in the District?

Yes / No

If you would like to expand and explain your reasoning on any of the questions above, please do so here.

(limit to 1000 characters)

Learning Conditions

School Buildings

Do you support an increase in funding for school modernization?

Yes / No

Should there be a priority given to the modernization of schools that serve a high percentage of at-risk populations?

Yes / No

How will you oversee contracting with DCPS and DGS to ensure quality and longevity?

(limit to 1000 characters)

What is your role in ensuring that work orders are completed in a satisfactory and timely manner so that our students and educators are healthy and safe? *(limit to 1000 characters)*

Will you support the expansion of specially designed metro bus routes for neighborhood schools (like the one already provided for Deal MS)?

Yes / No

Supporting Student Success:

What is your role and how will you ensure that students with special needs receive the services they need to succeed academically and socially? *(limit to 1000 characters)*

What is your role and how will you ensure that ELL students receive more robust, flexible resources and support? *(limit to 1000 characters)*

Will you support funding for a full-time dedicated school nurse in every school throughout the school day?

Yes / No

What are you doing to increase the pipeline and salary to get more nurses for our schools?
(limit to 1000 characters)

Will you support funding for dyslexia screenings and supports for students?

Yes / No

Will you support increased mental health screening and support for every student in the District?

Yes / No

Governance

Mayoral Control of Schools

Do you agree with DC's current system of Mayoral Control of DCPS?

Yes / No

What changes would you make, if any?

Please Explain: *(limit to 1000 characters)*

Do you believe that the Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) should be independent of the Mayor and under the State Board of Education?

Yes / No

If elected, what would your role be in overseeing the Chancellor of DC Public Schools? *(limit to 1000 characters)*

If elected, what would your role be in overseeing the public Charter School Board, including changes to who appoints members? *(limit to 1000 characters)*

If DCPS is found not to be following the letter of the law, misrepresents the school environment, policy, etc., or is derelict in its lawful responsibilities, how will you hold them accountable? *limit to 1000 characters)*

WTU Contract

As the WTU once again heads into negotiations on an expired Collective Bargaining Agreement, if elected, what will your legislative and oversight role be as a DC Council Member in ensuring that DCPS comes to the table and negotiates in good faith? *(limit to 1000 characters)*

Will you physically stand in solidarity with WTU members fighting for a fair contract?

Yes / No

School Closures

Should DC Public Schools close schools deemed “underperforming” by the State Agency or another body?

Yes / No

Do you support a moratorium on Charter School openings and expansions?

Yes / No

Transparency

Do you believe that all Local Education Agencies (LEAs) should be subject to the same transparency and reporting requirements regarding their academic, student data, and school-level budgets?

Yes / No

Should all LEAs be Subject to FOIA? Yes / No

To ensure accountability for our schools, will you support higher protections to include additional oversight and protections for whistleblowers who are then subjected to retaliation?

Yes / No

Will you support an update to the 2007 PERRA and 2010 Local Hatch Act that allows DC Public Schools employees to run for public office (including DC Council, Mayor, and Attorney General)?

Yes / No