

Washington State Progressive Caucus Questionnaire

Explanatory Note: Our endorsements (and sometimes donations) are generally made to people running for the state legislature, municipal and county offices, public utility commissioners, etc. If you are running for such an office, you may wonder why we are asking questions about state-wide or national issues. The reason is that local officeholders are tomorrow's senators, representatives and governors. Even if you have nothing of the sort in mind now, you may easily feel differently in a few years. We want to put people into the pipeline from, as Howard Dean once put it, "the Democratic wing of the party." We are old fashioned enough to think that the New Deal and the Great Society were good ideas and modern enough to be up to speed on all the latest organizing methods and apps. If you have reservations about answering any of these questions, please explain why.

Candidate Name: David Spring

Position Sought: Superintendent of Public Instruction

Campaign Manager: Myself

Consultant: Senator Maralyn Chase

Campaign Email: david@springforbetterschools.org

Campaign Phone: 425-876-9149

Website: springforbetterschools.org

Campaign Address: 49006 SE 115th Street North Bend, WA 98045

Do you request the endorsement of the Progressive Caucus? Yes

Labor

Do you support raising state and federal minimum wages? To what level?

Yes. I have been a long time supporter of the 15 Now campaign and I support raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour.

What legislation would you support to make organizing unions easier?

I think the most important step to making organizing unions easier is to dramatically expand living wage jobs in Washington state. My proposal, posted on our website, would repeal \$16 billion per year in tax breaks for billionaires and wealthy multinational corporations - creating more than 500,000 living wage public and private sector jobs. It is time to end Trickle Down Corporate Welfare for the Rich and replace Austerity with Prosperity.

Education

What is your opinion of high stakes testing? How would you change the way students and teachers are evaluated?

I am opposed to high stakes testing and will end the unfair and draconian SBAC test during my first day in office. Students and teachers should be evaluated the way they are in Finland with multiple measures from real people - not unreliable bubble tests. It is important to know that one of my opponents, Chris Reykdal, voted to bring the SBAC test to Washington state and make it a graduation requirement in 2013 - before it was even written! In addition, Chris is the prime sponsor of House Bill 2214 - which accelerates the SBAC test as a graduation requirement and imposes the most difficult graduation requirements in the nation on students who opt out of the SBAC test or fail the SBAC test. Please read House Bill 2214 and see for

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yourself. It does not at all delink the SBAC test from graduation. It is absurd that Chris requires our kids to pass a graduation test that he himself could not pass. But it is even more absurd that he claims to be against high stakes tests when he is the head cheerleader for the SBAC Graduation Test requirement in Olympia.

What is your opinion of charter schools?

I am opposed to charter schools and am the only candidate for Superintendent who spoke against the charter school bills in the House and the Senate in 2016. Charter schools are contrary to the Washington State Constitution because they are not under the control of a locally elected school board, because they are not part of a uniform system of public schools and because they divert funding away from public schools into the pockets of private corporations.

It is important to know that while Chris Reykdal claims to be opposed to charter schools and voted against the charter school policy bill, he voted FOR the Appropriations bill that funneled millions of dollars to charter schools. If he was really opposed to charter schools, then he should have voted NO on the Appropriations bill.

Environment

How would you promote development of alternative energy and prevent privatization of natural resources?

As Superintendent, I will replace hundreds of crumbling and energy inefficient schools with the most energy efficient schools in the nation. I will put solar panels on the roofs of every school in our state so that students can be proud of their school in showing the way to reduce climate change. I am the only candidate with a REAL plan to replace hundreds of old, unsafe and unhealthy schools with safe, healthy schools.

What are your plans for increasing investments in renewable forms of energy production? What types of renewable energy do you favor most?

Solar power is by far the best solution to the climate change crisis. My plan will invest \$3 billion per year in school construction and solar power production - all financed by our own Public Bank.

Finance/Taxation

What would you do to facilitate implementation of public banking and monetary reform?

I am the leader of the Washington Public Bank Coalition. Currently our state schools give away more than one billion dollars per year in interest payments to Wall Street Banks. By contrast, the State of North Dakota has no school construction debt and does not give one penny to Wall Street Banks. I wrote the Public Bank Resolution passed by the Washington State Democratic Party and one of the bills to create a public bank in Washington state. I will make a public bank one of the highest priorities.

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What solutions do you propose to fix WA State's highly regressive tax system?

I wrote the original version of Initiative 1098 and have long favored a Millionaires Income tax. However, Republicans and the voters have rejected both a Capital Gains tax and an income tax. Thus, there is only one way to immediately create a less regressive tax structure - that is to repeal tax breaks for wealthy corporations and billionaires. My plan would repeal \$16 billion in tax breaks for the rich. One person, Bill Gates, the richest man in the world would see his state taxes go up by one billion dollars per year if I am elected. Which is more important - giving Bill Gates another billion dollars? Or giving our kids the education they need and deserve?

Health Care/Retirement

Explain your position (for or against) Medicare for All (aka single payer health care) in terms of the effect on local citizens, service providers, and government.

Health care is a basic human right. We should have **Universal Free Health Care** like every other civilized country in the world. It would save our citizens and our government more than one trillion dollars per year - allowing us to better compete with the rest of the world.

What policies do you oppose and what policies would you promote with respect to Social Security and Medicare?

We should eliminate the cap and lower the age for Social Security and Medicare eligibility to age 60. This would encourage folks to retire earlier opening up more jobs for young adults.

Security/Public Safety

How would you act to stop the militarization of local police forces and establish civilian oversight of law enforcement?

The key to reducing the crime rate is doubling school funding and lowering class sizes. This will cut the drop out rate in half and cut the crime rate in half. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of prison. We also need to increase jobs for a full employment economy. We do not have a school to prison pipeline - we have a poverty to prison pipeline. I will do both - lower class sizes and create a half million urgently needed jobs. I will also end child homelessness.

How would you preserve national security while protecting American's right to privacy?

Our education system is the foundation of our economy and our democracy. The key to national security is not to increase military spending but to increase public education spending. I am greatly concerned about preserving student privacy. The OSPI servers do not protect student privacy. The computer systems at OSPI are straight out of the stone ages and I will upgrade them.

General

Do you consider yourself a Democrat? Do you consider yourself a progressive? Why?

I am a lifelong progressive democrat as were my parents and grandparents. Progressives

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believe in helping the poor and middle class have a better life. But most important to me, progressive believe in a progressive tax structure where billionaires and wealthy corporations are required to pay their fair share of state taxes. If I am elected, I will not merely talk like a progressive, I will take immediate action to achieve a fairer more progressive tax structure.

What parts, if any, of the [Washington State Democratic Party Platform](#) (click link to view) do you disagree with? Why?

I helped to write a lot of the Washington State Democratic Party Platform. I wrote more resolutions passed by the State Party than any other Democrat in the past 20 years. And I have read all of it and I agree with all of it.

If this is not your first election, what other offices have you run for? If it is your first campaign, what other campaigns (candidate or issue) have you participated in? What did you learn from those campaigns?

I have ran for the state legislature from the 5th LD in East King County in 2008, 2010, 2012 and 2014. I have also ran for the school board in 2013. In all 5 elections, I made it past the primary - including defeating a candidate in 2010 who outspent me 40 to 1 and defeating the incumbent school board President in 2013. During each of these races, I knocked on more than 5,000 doors - for a total of 25,000 doors since 2008. What I learned from talking to the voters is that voters are parents first and Republicans and Democrats second. They care far more about their kids than about either political party. If the Democratic Party wants to win elections, they should fund schools rather than voting for tax breaks for the rich.

Have you ever been a precinct committee officer or held other Democratic organization offices?

I have been a PCO for the Democratic Party for more than 20 years. I have also held many other positions in the Democratic Party including being elected to the King County Democratic Party Central Committee, being the King County Democrats Training Advisor, and being elected as the 5th LD Rep to the King County Democrats Legislative Action Committee. I have also been elected to the Board of the Washington State Democrats Progressive Caucus.

What single issue is the most important motivator for your run for office? What proposals do you have for dealing with it?

In the past 4 years since the McCleary decision, I am the only person to submit a bill in the legislature to honor the McCleary Court Order. My bill, Senate Bill 6093, would have raised more than \$4 billion per year in additional revenue for schools by repealing a single tax break for the rich. This year, after the legislature refused to pay even the \$30 million fine imposed by our Supreme Court, I realized that the legislature is so corrupt that they will NEVER fund our

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public schools. I am therefore running for Superintendent in order to go around the legislature and directly to the Supreme Court asking them to declare the past 20 years of tax breaks to be unconstitutional. This would raise \$16 billion per year to pay for school construction, increasing teacher salaries, hiring tens of thousands of new teachers, ending child homelessness and providing every student with four years of free higher ed or vocational training.

Are there also important secondary issues? Describe your approach to implementing solutions?

I want to end the corporate control of our public schools and colleges by exposing corruption in Olympia. Ironically, at the very center of the corruption in Olympia is one of my opponents, Chris Reykdal. In addition to being the head cheerleader for Common Core and the SBAC test in Olympia, Chris was the person who blocked my GED Fairness bill in the House Higher Education Committee - after it passed the Senate Higher Education Committee by a unanimous vote. More than 10,000 low income students per year are having their lives destroyed by the unfair Pearson GED Common Core test - thanks to Chris Reykdal and his corrupt pals at the State Board of Community and Technical Colleges - who receive millions in bribes from Bill Gates and the Gates Foundation. If I am elected Superintendent, I will also immediately end the unfair Pearson GED test and replace it with the fairer Iowa HiSET test.

My approach for implementing solutions is to insist that the legislature read and start following the Washington State Constitution - including ending hundreds of unfunded mandates they have inflicted on our public schools.

If you are running in a heavily Republican area, do you have a reasonable chance at winning? If not, how do you plan to use your candidacy to build ongoing connections among local people who share progressive values?

I intend to build a Coalition of the Caring by going around the state talking with parents and teachers about how billions in corporate tax breaks have severely harmed our kids. I also believe in the need for an informed electorate. Currently OSPI lists the scores of every school and school district on their website. We need more than just a school report card, we need a legislative report card - where legislators can state exactly what their plan is to fully fund our schools. Their opponents would be given equal space to state how they would fund the public schools. This would allow voters to make a better choice about who will really fund our schools and lead to a much more progressive state legislature.