

NCAE-PAC

The Political Action Committee of the North Carolina Association of Educators
**2020 General Assembly
Candidate Questionnaire**

***Questionnaires are for internal NCAE purposes only and will not be distributed to the public.*

Please mail or E-mail completed questionnaires to:

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**** NCAE WILL NOT CONSIDER A RECOMMENDATION OF ANY CANDIDATE WHO DOES NOT COMPLETE THIS SIGNED QUESTIONNAIRE IN ITS ENTIRETY.**

Candidate: Abbie Lane

Senate

District#:

House

District#: 23

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Party Affiliation: Green

Campaign Manager and Contact: Abbie Lane (252)801-1509

Candidate Signature

Date 3/18/20

1. As a legislator, what would be your top priorities for public education and why?

See Attached

2. How have you shown your support for public schools in previous elected positions or personal activities (if you are an incumbent assess your voting record on public education)?

See Attached

3. Please explain how, as a legislator, you would specifically build respect for the education profession in order to help attract and retain the highest quality educators?

See Attached

4. What will you do as a legislator to ensure that public education is a budget priority and that state government provides adequate funding for high-quality public schools for all children?

See Attached

Candidate Signature



Date

3/14/20

5. Will you support or oppose additional sustainable funding for teacher assistants in grades K-3 and why?

SUPPORT

OPPOSE

See Attached

6. If elected, would you support or oppose the reinstatement of due process for all teachers in North Carolina and how would you work with the General Assembly to reinstate that right?

SUPPORT

OPPOSE

See Attached

7. Do you believe the state's current tax structure provides adequate resources to ensure equal access to a high-quality public education for all students and what, if any, changes would you propose?

See Attached

Candidate Signature



Date

3/18/20

8. With all these proposed changes and recommendations, what will you do as a legislator to ensure that there is no further erosion of health care benefits and premiums, as well as retirement benefits for all educators, and what enhancements would you propose?

see Attached

9. Do you support or oppose a Cost-of-Living Adjustment for retired educators?

SUPPORT

OPPOSE

10. As a legislator, what would you do to make sure our schools are safe for students and school personnel?

See Attached

11. Do you support or oppose the use of tax credits, vouchers, and/or any use of public money for private K-12 schools?

SUPPORT

OPPOSE

Explain your position on privatization of public education, including accountability and reporting requirements. If you answered "opposed" to this question, would you support repealing the current voucher law?

see Attached

Candidate Signature



Date

3/18/20

12. As a state legislator, how would you strengthen accountability and transparency for all charter school programs and funding?

see Attached

13. Our May 1st mobilization was an important public statement by NCAE. What are your feelings around public employees generally, and public-school educators specifically, exercising their right to organize and raise their collective voices?

see Attached

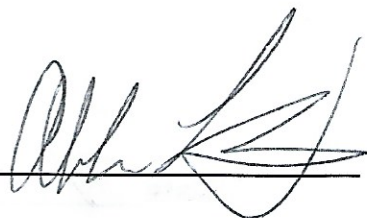
14. As a state legislator, do you support or oppose the lowest performing public schools being taken over by for-profit charter operators (aka Achievement School District) and why?

SUPPORT _____

OPPOSE _____

see Attached

Candidate Signature



Date

3/18/20

15. As a legislator, would you support or oppose legislation designed to take away an educator's ability to advocate for students and public schools even if it's required as part of a teacher evaluation and why?

SUPPORT _____

OPPOSE _____

See Attached


16. As a legislator, how would you engage with NCAE, its leadership and members about education policy issues?

See Attached

17. Are there any additional comments you would like to make?

See Attached

Candidate Signature



Date

3/14/20

1. As a legislator, my top priorities for public education would be first and foremost finding a long term solution to adequately paying educators a wage that not only sees that we are able to retain our top educators long term, instead of having educators be used every election cycle as political pawns distracting from being able to teach and build our future generations. This includes not only returning due process, advanced degree pay, longevity bonuses, but also guaranteeing teachers have duty free lunch time and the like. Furthermore we have to make sure that pay increases don't come at the cost of losing or lowering health care plan protections, or more out of pocket for needed materials.

2. I have long been a champion for supporting public schools and educators. The first example of this goes back to when I was in middle school. I attended schools that were underfunded and underperforming but had a principal that was willing to try innovative concepts using the new "magnet school" model to attempt to give us the same advantages of cross county schools. When scores still weren't to the level the school board wanted in ONE year even though there was an increase they attempted to fire the principal. I organized a student led protest at the county board of elections on the night of their next meeting and also scheduled speaking time which I led. In the end she was able to not only keep her job but continue the program. Seeing first hand the power of protest is what set me on the path I'm on today running for office. Just this past week I toured the high school where I graduated which is now running a micro school pilot. Even though both my opponents have run previous I am the first to have personally visited to see and learn first hand. That is part of a commitment I made with the voters of my district is that as part of my transparency policy I would not only personally tour each school but work directly with educators and personnel to find policies that best fit their needs.

3. As a legislator what I would do to specifically build respect for the education profession in order to help attract and retain the highest quality educators is first and foremost make sure they are properly compensated. Part of showing respect is showing you understand the value of those you are dealing. I have seen and talked with far to many educators who left NC for surrounding states simply because they said they didn't feel heard and appreciated. My transparency promise previously mentioned was founded from that. I believe not only do educators need a seat at the table but we need to talk less and listen more to what it is they need to thrive. Once we correct these issues the next step is returning and enhancing grants and programs we previously had in NC that encourage individuals to enter teaching fields. Lastly we have to end the political attacks that we have seen used against educators in an attempt to silence their concerns which only works to discredit the profession overall. Educators again need to be seen as the builders of our future in the most precious resource we have (our children).

4. As a legislator to ensure that public education is a budget priority and that state government provides adequate funding for high-quality public schools for all children is to make the fight public and transparent. The reason we have seen it diminish over the last decade is it has been allowed to be silenced hiding behind large omnibus bills that public officials are able to divert attention to other aspects of and away from education. As part of my policy platform I have a Clean Bill Act that eliminates omnibus bills and makes sure that EVERY bill is free standing so that the public and voters know exactly what it is that their elected officials are voting for or against with being able to spin it. This combined with the proposal that would require a set amount of time for any bill that is to be voted on to be given public time for discussion based on the number of pages means no longer can bills and cuts be rushed through and hidden. Furthermore, changes to other policies and taxes in my platform are specifically set aside for raising the education budget. This combined with my Independent status and ability to cross the aisle without repercussion from party officials puts me in the best position to broker deals that truly benefit the people they were meant to serve.

5. Teacher assistants for K-3 I believe are essential. I'm 36 and I still remember my Kindergarten teaching assistant which speaks to the true volume and impact they have. At that age of development even with reduced class sizes 2 points of views and authority figures are needed. This doesn't even take into effect the extra amount of work that teachers at these grade levels have that without an assistant would have to be done after hours further cutting into the work/life balance divide. This is a key issue that I address in my need for universal Pre-K.

6. The Constitution gives every American citizen the right to due process and there shouldn't be a "BUT" when it comes to educators. No one especially those who are often responsible for teaching moral and ethical responsibility be forced to put aside their own ethical compass to retain their job. Educators often times are the front line voice for many who are otherwise voiceless and not having due process puts that in jeopardy. As a legislator I would work with the other members of the General Assembly to reinstate the right by working it into the proposal to change how we grade schools and go to multi tiered and merit based system. To guarantee support we again go back to a plan I previously mentioned of the Transparency Act. There is no better consideration than public approval. To often however the public simply aren't aware of the injustices legally allowed and it has to be brought to their attention to get action and resolve.

7. No I don't believe the state's current tax structure provides adequate resources to ensure equal access to a high-quality public education for all students. First we have to start using the state lottery for what it was intended meaning additional funding for education not a replacement funding. Next we have to change the grading system used to determine school funding which often hurts funding to the schools and systems that most need additional funding to be at the same level of their counterparts. When it comes to taxes under my tax plan the entire structure would be changed with new taxes such as a tax on legalized marijuana being used to additionally fund education.

8. As a legislator I am always open to listening to new proposals on ways to improve and enhance current models. That is also true when it comes to how we handle and address state run health care benefits and premiums, as well as retirement benefits. I can pledge publicly and fully that I will never vote for a bill that in any way makes educators pay more for health care or puts at risk their retirement. I have seen first hand to many teachers and former teachers have to work part time jobs or continue teaching while also receiving social security because of government officials playing with their retirement. That should never be the case. I can also pledge that under my Transparency Act that any such attempt by other members of the General Assembly not only would be made public but also would have ample time for the public to sound off on virtually eliminating as much. In the spirit of full transparency you asked what I would propose to enhance and the truth is at this time I don't have any such proposal but as mentioned earlier I am always looking and willing to listen to any ideas that may do as much.

10. I believe that part of making schools safer means making sure students are healthier but physically and mentally. We have allowed for too long schools to decrease and eliminate full time nurses, counselors, social workers, and the like. We now more than ever need to invest in these areas. As a supporter of expanding Medicaid this would also help to assist those students most vulnerable and at risk. We have to invest more in the arts which are critical to physical and mental well being. We have to invest in after school programs that give students who don't have a safe place outside of school additional time and resources. We need to implement a nutrition program that sees that ALL students receive free breakfast and lunch. No child should have to go without and no one can learn when hungry. From a safety perspective we have to stay current on the latest security and safety protocols that allow us to physically make schools safer without making them feel like prisons or creating

environments that aren't conducive to learning. Lastly, We have to make sure that every school has access to full time security officers or dedicated law enforcement.

11. I fully oppose the current voucher law and would proactively work to repeal it as such. Coming from a district that was under funded and predominately rural, African-American, and a high number below the poverty line I have seen to often first hand these such laws and rules used to further put these schools and students behind while those who can afford alternatives using resources better and more needed elsewhere to do so. My goal is to put EVERY public school on the same level playing field and make it a top performing school. By being allowed to bus out students that you see as at risk or low performing to enhance test scores, or to use vouchers to allow more affluent families to by pass district lines and place their child in a school that they could otherwise already afford is counter productive to the very reason we are told these vouchers are needed. The number of cases of those who could truly benefit from the vouchers being accepted compared to the reverse is clear and concise on the real agenda and impact this law has.

12. As a legislator I would strengthen accountability and transparency for all charter school programs and funding by one using the Transparency Act laid out before as well as treat charter schools the same as public schools. This means every statute and policy that is required by public schools would have to be agreed to by charter schools to receive the charter permission. Furthermore funding would have to be fully available and public including a list of all donors and donations. Think of it much the same as how PACs and the like are required to disclose campaign finance reports.

13. My feelings as it pertains to public employees and specifically public-school educators exercising their right right to organize and raise their collective voices is the same as I feel about any individual or organization doing the same. By that I mean I full support unions and individuals to use the collective power of their voices to promote change. If we look back through history without unions and the like doing the same we wouldn't have many of the cornerstones of safety and employment protections we currently have. You can't simply speak up if you stay invisible as its to easy to overlook. When you cause a legal disruption you remind those who otherwise wouldn't of your true importance by disrupting their normal. As a legislator I would join right on the front lines.

14. I oppose the lowest performing public schools being taken over by for-profit charter operators because when allowing so you set a precedent not only that those schools and those students somehow have less value while at the same time creating the environment for corruption in order to profit from someone elses misfortune. I believe the way forward is to improve the quality for ALL. We can only do that if we can improve every school and in turn help enhance, and encourage EVERY child.

15. As a legislator I would always oppose any legislation designed to take away an educator's ability to advocate for students and public schools. As stated in a prior answer I fully believe that educators are the front line and sometimes the only voice for those who have no voice otherwise. We can't and shouldn't allow evaluations or any other metric be used to silence that.

16. As a legislator, how I would engage with NCAE, its leadership and members concerning education policy issues would be again going back to my Transparency Act and Clean Bill Act. A cornerstone of my campaign as previously stated is bringing all voices to the table and making sure that those who policies most effect are heard. Because of this anything that is education relevant I would encourage and welcome NCAE and/or its members to join me in virtual town halls or physical sit downs so that we can discuss. I never want to cast a vote without feeling that I had adequate feedback from those who will be most affected by it. That isn't an answer it is a pledge.

17. I look forward to working with NCAE regardless if endorsed officially or not moving forward by the NCAE PAC. I'm a firm believer that the voices of those most affected need to not only be heard but be given a seat at the table for any decision that affects them and make it my word that if elected I will always make sure those voices are heard.