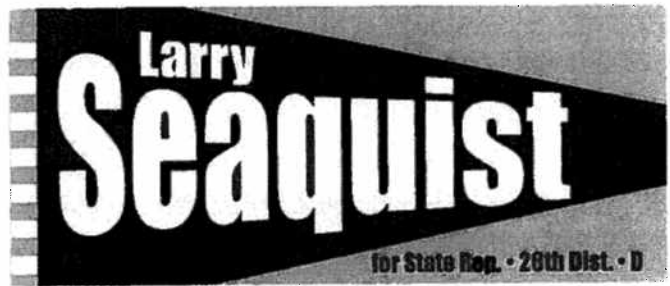


Washington Education Association Political Action Committee
2010 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire



Candidate:	LARRY SEAQUIST
Office Sought:	STATE REP, POS. 2, 26 TH LEGISLATIVE DISTRICT
These are my ^{primary} official positions in seeking state office.	
Candidate Signature:	
Date:	5/31/10

Candidates: Please return your completed and signed questionnaire to your local WEA council office.

WEA-PAC 2010 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

Washington Education Association members advocate for our students and the education profession. We have three legislative priorities:

- Education funding, including educator compensation
- Commonsense education reform and accountability
- Protecting workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively

Please indicate whether you support or oppose the following WEA positions, and explain why.

Education Funding, including educator compensation

Washington Education Association members believe the State of Washington must fulfill its paramount duty to amply fund our public schools.

The 2009 Legislature passed SHB 2363, which suspended the annual cost-of-living adjustments (COLAs) for education employees for two years. The COLAs were mandated by voter-approved Initiative 732. SHB 2363 requires the Legislature to reinstate educators' annual COLA in the 2011-12 school year AND incrementally restore the COLA percentage educators lost during the two-year suspension. After four years, educator salaries will be what they would have been without the suspension.

WEA supports current law (SHB 2363), which reinstates the annual COLA for educators in the 2011-12 school year and incrementally restores the lost COLA percentage over four years.

Do you support or oppose WEA's position?

Support (paramount duty/amply fund) Oppose (COLAs this cycle)

Please explain your position:

I'm quite disappointed. This question implies that WEA's Nr. 1 priority for the 2011-13 budget cycle is COLAs. I had hoped for a more strategic agenda:

- We're at the bottom of a recession and only at the start of a six- to ten-year stage of "decrement dominant" state budgets. Job One right now is jobs, not COLAs. And,
- Despite the long-term climate of fiscal restraint ahead, we have to proceed rapidly to fully funding. I assume that means hiring new teachers to lower classroom size is Priority One, not COLAs.

My top priority is proceeding rapidly and decisively to Full Funding. I have a way to get there without raising new taxes.

Let me expand on each of those three points, please, as a preface to my further responses to your questions – and to our relationship in the legislative year ahead if I'm reelected.

ONE – OUR ECONOMY & POLICY-BUDGET PRIORITIES

(Please refer to the attached page of employment/unemployment charts.)

Inflation is near-zero! We're at the bottom of an extraordinarily deep hole, as you can see on the top chart. What you also see is one of the many signals that it will take a decade or more before we 'recover' vigorous economic activity and revenues. Along the way we will see our WA economy substantially reshaped. The bold red line on the right side of the bottom chart is the most important data on the page: That shows that the numbers of long-term

unemployed is skyrocketing – more than half of all unemployed have been out of work a long time. There are huge implications: History shows that this cohort will never regain their full income levels. Worse, studies show that their children’s economic prospects are also permanently reduced and that their social and justice costs are high. Meaning: We have a long-term unemployment crisis at the heart of this recession. What do we need to do? We need to be running our CTC school system to the max to help these folks upskill themselves before they are lost forever. And we need to be running an EL+K-12 system to help those kids avoid a permanent, low-income fate. COLAs for teachers do not stack up in that priority list.

TWO – PROCEEDING TO FULL FUNDING.

I am one of those who believe we made a real commitment when we voted to head for full funding by 2018. I would have expected that WEA’s 2011 policy & budget priorities would center on how to do that: Where does the money come from? What do we fund first? How do we build progressively a fully funded K-12 (P-14) education system in eight years? And a key question: How do we deliver the much-improved outcomes that are inherently part of the full-funding contract with our voters-taxpayers? Doubtless, teacher pay will be part of that prioritized, sequenced build up. But no matter how you construct the ramp up to full funding, COLAs are not the first plank.

THREE – A FULL FUNDING PROPOSAL

Here is how we march smartly up the ramp to full funding by 2018: We charter a special, non-partisan, independent panel to identify, biennium by biennium, the funds needed for Full Funding. Like the BRAC process used by the Defense Department to identify base closings, the list of exemptions to be cancelled would be provided to the legislature on an up or down, yes-no basis. To illustrate, suppose for discussion purposes that Full Funding is about \$8B/biennium above where we are now. That would translate into an increment of about \$2B per biennium for each of the next four biennia – or only about a 3.5% haircut to tax exemptions per budget cycle. That is doable politically. It also suggests the prioritization challenge: as we build toward full funding – with the confident knowledge that the money will be there by my proposal – what things do we fund in which order as we march up the ramp? I would hope that WEA can offer very helpful advice – advice not only about what to fund in what order but how to assure that the taxpayers and students are getting full value for Full Funding. I will be asking for WEA advice as we write the bill and for WEA’s full support to push it through in the 2011 session.

WEA supports a minimum starting salary of \$45,000 for teachers and other certificated education employees. We also believe education support professionals deserve at least a living wage as starting pay, and we support salary increases that exceed the cost of living for higher education faculty and staff.

Do you support or oppose WEA's position?

Support (minimum starting salaries) ✓ Oppose (enhanced COLAs for higher ed) ✓

Please explain your position:

Of course I support a solid starting pay floor. But I cannot support the blanket provision for super-COLAs for “higher ed.” My concerns for higher ed salaries focus first on CTC faculty salaries and, especially, adjunct pay and teaching conditions. See the discussion above about the dire state of our economy and how many people are unemployed.

Washington educators currently are required to work until they reach age 65 to qualify for their normal retirement pension, regardless of the number of years they serve. Some educators must work more than 40 years before earning their normal pension. WEA supports legislation that allows educators to retire with their full normal pension based on the number of years they work rather than requiring them to reach an arbitrary age of eligibility.

Do you support or oppose WEA's position? Will consider specific proposal

Please explain your position:

In my own case, I've now been working full time for 55 years. Frankly, I have very little regard for people in knowledge worker professions (as opposed to firefighters, police, and plumbers who may, indeed, physically wear out) who wish to shut down and moulder in their 50s. As general health profiles change and as our society's demographics evolve, it is clear that we'll all be working somewhat longer. It is time to embrace this as life opportunity.

As a member of the Select Committee on Pension Policy, I'm open to specific proposals, so long as they are actuarially sound and fiscally prudent for a state facing a decade of hard times from the bottom of a severe recession.

To be clear, I do have great sympathy for the burnout problem. Retirement is only one option – a WEA-sponsored 'freshen up' program would be another. For my part, I keep looking for practical ways we can enable these retirements in a way where we continue to enjoy the fruits of these senior professionals in other, part-time or temporary roles – perhaps associated with the continuation of health care benefits to age 65 and Medicare.

The 2009 Legislature passed ESHB 2261, which changes the definition of basic education and makes other changes to the K-12 school system. WEA members called ESHB 2261 a "false promise" because it ignored the current underfunding of basic education and did not include new funding. WEA members believe the state Legislature should keep its promise and fully fund the programs called for by this bill, which is estimated to cost an additional \$3 billion annually.

Do you support or oppose WEA's position?

Support (the call for full funding)

Oppose (the rhetoric of the question)

Please explain your position:

Please see my full funding proposal on p.3 above. I'm totally committed to full funding; I believe I'm the only legislator with a specific, practical way to get there starting next session.

Note: I don't understand the \$3B number. My rough estimate is +\$8 B – which clearly we would need to reach in increments. My proposal is that we climb up a ramp of about \$2 B per biennium until we reach Full Funding in 2018 – by which time we should have refined just what parameters we will use to continue to set the full funding bar at the right height.

The 2010 Legislature passed SHB 2776, which promises to reduce the average K-3 class size to no more than 17 students per teacher by the 2017-18 school year. Washington currently has some of the nation's largest average class sizes, and the Legislature recently eliminated Initiative 728 class-size-reduction funding. WEA believes the Legislature must restore funding for Initiative 728 and provide the additional state funding to reduce class sizes as promised by SHB 2776.

Do you support or oppose WEA's position? Support

Please explain your position:

Of course I support rapidly lowering class size to the prototype standards. My full funding proposal would, I assume, lead to the funding of class-size reductions as the highest priority investment in the first of the four biennial increments.

I'm disappointed that the question is not framed in "P-4" terms: we must tackle the broader class size deficiencies. We in the House were trying to get there in the last supplemental.

Commonsense Education Reform and Accountability

In the 2010 legislative session, WEA helped draft and pass SB 6696, a research-based approach to improving student achievement. This legislation was forged between the Governor, the Legislature and education stakeholders, and it represents a major step forward in reforming teacher evaluation, assistance to struggling schools and teacher certification. SB 6696 establishes statewide criteria for teacher evaluations and allows local school districts and education associations to develop their own local evaluation systems. The legislation was tailored to the needs and conditions of Washington State and will allow our state to compete for federal Race to the Top funding.

WEA supports SB 6696 as passed by the Legislature in 2010 and opposes further changes to the law.

Do you support or oppose WEA's position? Support (6696) Oppose (policy above)

Please explain your position:

As mentioned above, I've just been appointed to the new Joint Select Committee on Accountability. I certainly do not consider 6696 the last word. The Vitamin E(ducation) group of education professionals I convened in District last year developed a number of interesting, pro-teacher accountability and teaching team support ideas. I expect to continue to explore creative approaches to this and I certainly expect that the WEA professionals in my district will be creative contributors to that process.

WEA opposes linking teacher evaluations to student test scores.

**Do you support or oppose WEA's position? Support Oppose
Neither – I'm agnostic**

Please explain your position:

To repeat my earlier responses: I've just been appointed to the new Joint Select Committee on Accountability. I want to see some fresh thinking here, not just repetitions of old talking points. I look forward to WEA's contributions. I know I have many creative teachers in my own school districts with some very interesting, pro-teacher innovations in mind.

ESHB 2261 established the Quality Education Council (QEC) and individual workgroups on issues such as educator compensation. WEA believes the QEC and related workgroups should solicit the professional input and judgment of public education employees. Any final recommendations should be based on sound research and the expertise of Washington educators.


Do you support or oppose WEA's position? Support

Please explain your position: Of course!

**WEA opposes linking the High School Proficiency Exam (HSPE) to student graduation.
(Passing the HSPE is currently a graduation requirement.)**

Do you support or oppose WEA's position? Support ? Oppose ?

Please explain your position:

A handwritten asterisk is positioned to the left of a large, hand-drawn curly bracket that encompasses the entire paragraph of text below.

Sorry, this is not something I've thought about or consulted my local educators. I will say that I'm totally committed to whatever it takes to rapidly and decisively move HS graduation rates from 70% or worse to 95% or better. More, I will keep insisting that diploma-bearing HS grads do not require remedial education to begin 13th grade work at our CTC schools. Right now more than half of our local school district grads need that kind of remediation. This is unsat – it must change.

Protecting Workers' Rights

WEA strongly supports the right of public education employees to organize, bargain collectively and engage in the political and legislative processes. WEA believes commonsense education reform can be developed effectively and collaboratively at the local level through the collective bargaining process. WEA supports legal protections against discrimination or intimidation for workers who exercise their right to organize.

WEA supports workers' rights to due process.

Do you support or oppose WEA's position? Support ✓

Please explain your position:

I support the law and the principle of organized labor.

WEA supports the right of public school employees to engage in the political process, both individually and collectively.

Do you support or oppose WEA's position? Support ✓

Please explain your position:

I support the Constitutional right of everyone to participate in the political process.

WEA supports giving community and technical college faculty the right to bargain salaries at the local level, a right enjoyed by all other education union members in the state.

Do you support or oppose WEA's position? Support ✓

Please explain your position:

We need to solve this problem starting with the embedded issue of CTC budget levels and control – it is time to really solve the problem, not keep running bills which keep the two sides from reaching agreement. I'd like to see WEA put something concrete and practical forward which is consistent with our economic situation and plays off the compelling need to run the CTC at absolute maximum capacity in order to move our huge cohorts of long-term unemployed back into the workforce. Note: this needs to be fixed this Interim with negotiations and compromise – not put off until the session.

Education Experience

Who was the most influential teacher you had in school and why?

There was no single teacher 'most' influential. I had a whole series throughout school from first grade to university -- each made a difference in my life at a particular point – Educators each. Our farm family respected teachers very highly. I was the first person in my family from either side to graduate from college – something both of my parents valued very highly

but had been unable to do because of the Depression. In our family of five kids each of our teachers was an important figure for the whole family every year.

Campaign Plans

Please describe your campaign plan for fundraising and doorbelling.

Please list endorsements by noteworthy elected officials.

Tell us about your plan for getting your message out to voters.

CAMPAIGN

We are running, again, a full-scale professional campaign with a major budget. We began April 1st. We do everything and a lot of it under the expert direction of Campaign Manager Meagan Sharp and consultant Blair Butterworth. Our budget is \$235,000; I'm slightly ahead of our timeline to raise that.

ENDORSEMENTS

See website: www.electlarrysequist.com

Note that I have the endorsement of the Kitsap and Pierce County Central Labor Councils and the support of a number of unions including the Masters, Mates & Pilots and the International Boatmen's Union of our ferry system. I'm also supported by the Bremerton and Gig Harbor firefighters plus the state association.

MESSAGE

In a word: accountability. In my very swing district it is clear that most voters, including most Democrats, continue to oppose tax increases and insist on more progress on government efficiency and reform. Voters are also tired of (or just plain disgusted with) traditional partisan politics. I'm campaigning for what I believe in: fundamental reform.

I am prominently featuring my full funding proposal in my talks and in my doorbelling. This is being received very well.

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A CLOSING NOTE:

I'm disappointed in this questionnaire. It does not reflect the agenda or priorities the many teachers and education professionals I talk with in my district and it certainly does not comport with the priorities of the parents whose kids are in our schools.

We are at the bottom of a severe recession. Recovery is still very fragile; full recovery is many biennial budgets yet in the future. Despite those problems, we cannot allow P-14 education to be cut any further. That's why I am proposing a plan to mine our tax exemptions to begin a steady climb to full funding starting now. I look forward to WEA's full support in that project.

CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

NAME Larry Seaquist
HOME STREET ADDRESS
CITY & ZIP Gig Harbor WA 98335
CELL PHONE **HOME PHONE**

<i>Family Members</i>	<i>Relationship</i>	<i>If school age, what school do they attend?</i>
Carla Seaquist	Spouse	

CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

CAMPAIGN MANAGER Meagan Sharp
CAMPAIGN ADDRESS 5800 Soundview Dr. #B-100, PO Box 821, Gig Harbor WA 98335
CAMPAIGN E-MAIL larry@electlarryseaquist.com
OFFICE PHONE 253.858-9951 **CAMPAIGN MGR CELL PHONE** 953.225-0616

ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

(Church, community, service, social, union, professional, etc.)

Gig Harbor & Port Orchard Chambers of Commerce, NAACP (Bremerton), numerous environmental organizations, Tacoma Mountaineers, US Naval Institute, etc.

Former board member, Americans for UNESCO, former member Int'l. Inst. Strategic Studies

EDUCATION

BA (General Science), Oregon State University ('63)

BRIEF EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

US Polar Operations Project '59-61, NASA '63-64, US Navy 64-94, self '94-present