

Washington Education Association Political Action Committee
2010 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire



Candidate: Tim Probst

Office Sought: State House of Representatives, 17th LD, Position 1

These are my official positions in seeking state office.

Candidate Signature: Tim Probst

Date: 5/22/2010

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 X Oppose _____

Please explain your position:

Teachers have one of the most important jobs in our society, and they deserve fair compensation. Additionally, this one way to recruit the best and brightest into the teaching field. I believe loan forgiveness should be used, as well, as a recruiting tool.

I will work closely with you during budget negotiations to understand your top priorities for funding. I'd like to be planning with you now, not only for the upcoming budget negotiations, but for the better years that will eventually follow.

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 X Oppose _____

Please explain your position:

See above. Recruiting and rewarding excellent teachers is critically important for our children and our economy. Additionally, I want to be completely honest about our state's budget situation. The national economic collapse has created the biggest financial crisis that this state has seen in the last seventy years. Seeking funding is always going to be a huge challenge in the short term. So we need to plan long-term strategies as well as short-term strategies.

The 2009 Legislature passed ESHB 2261, which sets out to “enhance the current salary allocation model” through deliberation and input from “teachers, administrators and classified employees. WEA members oppose tying teacher pay, in whole or in part, to student achievement or test scores.

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

Please explain your position:

I have supported WEA's position on this in the past, and have taken action to oppose amendments that would have taken this direction, because I do not believe we have measures in place that are accurate, and teaching is a team-based endeavor.

WEA believes any alternative compensation system must be subject to local collective bargaining, fully funded, available to all and based on objective criteria.

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

Please explain your position:

I am a strong supporter of collective bargaining. All funding discussions come with the usual caveat (which nobody likes, including me) that we remain in a financial crisis, and I will work closely with you to understand which funding priorities are most important to you.

WEA opposes differentiated pay based on the subject taught.

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

Please explain your position:

Teaching is the activity that is happening and being paid for. If there are recruiting shortages in some areas, then I would turn to loan forgiveness strategies or seek other recruiting ideas from you.

WEA supports the current practice of providing salary bonuses and other support for teachers who achieve certification by the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

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

Please explain your position:

Offering bonuses for becoming nationally certified helps our schools recruit great teachers and support their professional development, so that our students can have the best teachers.

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? Support Oppose

Please explain your position:

I need to learn more about this particular issue. Pension issues include many inter-related issues, including age of retirement as well as whether a COLA is built in, whether it is defined benefit or not, and gain-sharing provisions, among others. Educators provide a major service to our society, and they deserve a strong and fair retirement system. I will work with you to help ensure that the many aspects of the retirement package serve educators and our entire community very well.

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 Oppose

Please explain your position:

Education is the paramount duty of the state, and the state's proportionate share of education funding should reflect this. I believe the state needs to assume a larger portion of school costs, and we need to rely less on local property tax increases. If we emphasize that we are not only fully funding education at the state level, but also relieving some of the pressure for additional local tax levies, we might build a broader coalition of supporters and increase our odds of success.

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 Oppose

Please explain your position:

I gave a floor speech on 2776 indicating that this is one more step toward making sure we keep the funding promise that we made with 2261. We cannot let 2261 repeat the history of school reform, which is to make reforms, promise funding, and then never deliver funding to fully implement the reforms. This will be some of the central work of the various education committees in the coming year.

Smaller class sizes will increase the quality of education and our students' ability to learn and thrive. Naturally, the issue comes back to funding, and whether funds are available to pay for this goal. Additionally, being able to clearly demonstrate that smaller class sizes tangibly and measurably improve students' educational experience is important, so we can better make the

case that this strategy works, and funding for it should be expanded. I would like to use existing data showing the impact of smaller class sizes, in order to help push for greater focus on this strategy.

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 Oppose

Please explain your position:

I voted for 6696 and think it was a good reform.

WEA opposes linking teacher evaluations to student test scores.

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

Please explain your position:

I do not believe we have measures in place that are accurate, and teaching is a team-based endeavor.

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 Oppose

Please explain your position:

All policy decisions need full input from all stakeholders. This should go without saying.

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:

I am against "social promotion" and for standards that ensure the diploma is meaningful. I recognize the business community's interest in making sure we are always increasing the

skills and competencies available in our society and in our workforce. But I do not think relying solely on one exam by itself is the most effective way to meet these goals.

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 Oppose

Please explain your position:

Due process is a fundamental principle that protects fairness, and I support it.

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 Oppose

Please explain your position:

Democracy is stronger when people take part and take action. I support educators taking an active and strong part in the political process and the lawmaking process. I believe this will advance not only educators' interests, but also the interests of the students they serve.

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 Oppose

Please explain your position:

I am a major supporter of collective bargaining as a basic principle of democracy and market economics, and have voted for every collective bargaining bill that has come before the legislature.

Education Experience

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

I was fortunate to have many great teachers, but the very best was a high school teacher named Paul Flament, who simply had a great sense of humor and clearly cared about each and every student in his class. It was not so much his teaching skills, but his humanity and care for others, that made him the best teacher in my experience.

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.

I doorbelled 18,000 doors in 2008 and plan to repeat or exceed that approach this year. I plan to run a positive campaign with a message focused on education, the economy, and the very strong link between these two issues. I spent my last campaign talking to people about how fundamentally important education is if we want to have a strong economy, and I believe I won a fair number of people over to that idea, thereby increasing the coalition that strongly supports education. Endorsements include Deb Wallace and the Vancouver Firefighters, among others.

Thank you for considering my responses, and for all you have done over many years to make our state a better place to live. On each policy decision, I will seek information from many perspectives and make a decision based on the best interests of all the people. I hope to earn a reputation as a legislator who works with integrity, sound information, and a commitment to public service. I look forward to learning more from you and working with you for many years!

CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

NAME Tim Probst

HOME STREET ADDRESS

CITY & ZIP Vancouver 98642

CELL PHONE (campaign manager – Zach Neuhaus)

HOME PHONE

<i>Family Members</i>	<i>Relationship</i>	<i>If school age, what school do they attend?</i>
Tahira	Wife	Professor, WSU Vancouver
Alli, Chardy, Aaron, Ginny	Kids	

CAMPAIGN INFORMATION

CAMPAIGN MANAGER Zach Neuhaus

CAMPAIGN ADDRESS 14300 NE 20th Ave. STE D-102-285 Vancouver, WA 98686

CAMPAIGN E-MAIL zach@electtimprobst.com

OFFICE PHONE (360) 989-7817

CAMPAIGN MGR CELL PHONE same

ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIPS

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

Clark County Skills Center, Labor Round Table, Greater Vancouver Chamber of Commerce

EDUCATION

University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana
1988-1992, B.A. *cum laude*
Government and International Studies
European Union

Universität Innsbruck, Austria
1993-1994, Independent Study
Politics and Economics of the

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BRIEF EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

Washington Workforce Association, Vancouver, Washington
2000-Present

SENIOR POLICY ANALYST

Workforce Development Executives of Washington, Vancouver, Washington
1998-2000

ASSISTANT TO THE GOVERNOR FOR WELFARE REFORM AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Office of Governor Jim Edgar, Springfield, Illinois
1997-1998

WELFARE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STATE BUDGET ANALYST

Office of Governor Jim Edgar, Bureau of the Budget, Springfield, Illinois
1996-1997

MEDICAID MANAGED CARE STATE BUDGET ANALYST

Office of Governor Jim Edgar, Bureau of the Budget, Springfield, Illinois
1995-1996

GOVERNOR'S OFFICE FELLOWSHIP

Office of Governor Jim Edgar, Springfield, Illinois
1994-1995