

Washington Education Association Political Action Committee  
2010 Legislative Candidate Questionnaire

NICK HARPER  
500 p.m.  
38<sup>th</sup> Legislative District

**WEA**  **PAC**  
Your Voice – Your Vote

Candidate: NICK HARPER

Office Sought: STATE SENATE, 38<sup>th</sup> L.D.

These are my official positions in seeking state office.

Candidate Signature: 

Date: 06.15.10

*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 X Oppose     

Please explain your position:

THE STATE'S FIRST OBLIGATION IS TO FUND BASIC EDUCATION. CRITICAL TO MEETING THIS OBLIGATION IS PROVIDING OUR EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONALS WITH THE COLAS THAT ALLOW THEIR SALARIES TO KEEP PACE WITH INFLATION. 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: IT IS IMPORTANT THAT EDUCATIONAL PROFESSIONALS HAVE THE CHOICE TO LIVE IN COMMUNITIES IN WHICH THEY WORK. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THIS RECESSION, RISES IN THE COST OF LIVING HAVE MADE THIS DIFFICULT, WE MUST DO WHAT WE CAN TO ENSURE THAT EDUCATORS ARE FAIRLY COMPENSATED. 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 X Oppose     

Please explain your position: WHILE METRICS MUST BE IDENTIFIED, THERE ARE TOO MANY UNCONTROLLABLE FACTORS THAT IMPACT A STUDENT'S ACHIEVEMENT OR TEST SCORE TO PLACE THAT ALL ON THE EDUCATORS SHOULDERS.

- 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 X Oppose     

Please explain your position: All employees deserve the right to organize, & collectively bargain.

- WEA opposes differentiated pay based on the subject taught.

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

Please explain your position: In general I think local districts should determine curriculums, & all employees implementing those curriculum deserve consistent pay.

- 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 X Oppose     

Please explain your position: YES - we should incentivize teachers who continue to develop themselves professionally.

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 believe that teachers must be fairly compensated, & are entitled to the pensions they pay into. I need to understand a little more about this particular issue before making a choice. 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 X Oppose     

Please explain your position: It is clear WA state must identify new, progressive, & reliable revenue streams to provide the services its residents deserve.

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 X Oppose     

Please explain your position:

AGAIN - THIS SPEAKS TO THE TEACHER REVENUE PROBLEM  
IN OUR STATE, BUT I DO SUPPORT FINDING A SOLUTION TO  
THIS PROBLEM.

## 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 X Oppose     

Please explain your position: I ABSOLUTELY AGREE THAT LOCAL DISTRICTS, EDUCATION ASSOCIATIONS, & THEIR TEACHERS SHOULD HAVE AUTHORITY TO DEVELOP THESE CRITERIA. THESE ARE LOCAL DECISIONS THAT MUST BE ADDRESSED LOCALLY.

**WEA opposes linking teacher evaluations to student test scores.**

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

Please explain your position: TO REVISIT A PREVIOUS ANSWER, I FEEL THERE ARE FAR TOO MANY IMPACTS OUTSIDE THE TEACHERS CONTROL TO SUPPORT SUCH A BRIGHT LINE APPROACH - METRICS ARE NECESSARY, BUT THIS IS THE WRONG APPROACH. 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 X Oppose     

Please explain your position: I HAVE RUN INTO THIS PROBLEM WITH OTHER PROFESSORS. IT IS UTTERLY IRRATIONAL TO ME FOR A PANEL TO MAKE DECISIONS WITHOUT THE INPUT OF THE PROFESSIONALS WHO WILL BE IMPACTED. I SUPPORT THIS POSITION.

**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 X Oppose     

Please explain your position: I WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE HSPE, BUT AM OPPOSED TO LINKING GRADUATION TO STANDARDIZED TESTING. THEY ARE NOT ADEQUATELY REPRESENTATIVE OF A STUDENT'S COMPETENCY.

## 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 X Oppose    

Please explain your position: WORKERS RIGHTS TO ORGANIZE (IN PARTICULAR WITH REGARD TO A PROFESSION AS SCANTINIZED AS COLLEGIATE) IS NECESSARY TO ADDRESS THE POWER IMBALANCE THAT WILL EXIST, AND ALSO WILL YIELD STRONGER RESULTS ALL AROUND.

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 X Oppose    

Please explain your position: I BELIEVE THIS IS PROTECTED SPEECH & MUST BE MAINTAINED.

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 X Oppose    

Please explain your position: AS WAS STATED EARLIER, WE MUST TREAT ALL THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF EDUCATION w/ DIGNITY & RESPECT. CC's & TECHNICAL COLLEGE'S FILL AN IMPORTANT ROLE IN THE SYSTEM OF EDUCATION & SHOULD HAVE ALL THE BENEFIT COMPARED TO THE REST OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

## Education Experience

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

MR. MEAD - 11<sup>th</sup> GRADE ADVANCED ENGLISH

MR. MEAD WAS THE FIRST TEACHER THAT REALLY IMPRESSED ON ME HOW HARD I WOULD HAVE TO WORK TO BE SUCCESSFUL IN LIFE, BUT SHE ALSO REASSURED ME THAT SUPPORT WAS AVAILABLE.

## 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.

Fundraising: Working with Christian & Beth at NW Passage Consulting we have kicked off an aggressive primary budget of \$75K.

To make that goal I am making approximately 3 hrs of fundraising calls daily. Eight days into the campaign I have individual pledges for a \$12,500.

In addition, a very eager group of progressive organizations who have been encouraging me in my candidacy are willing to fill whatever gap exists. I am confident we will mount a successful fundraising effort at the primary.

Doorbelling: Since starting on Saturday (6/12) the campaign has completed 7 precincts totalling ~650 doors. We will hit that pace by knocking on 17,000 thresholds door between now & August 17.

## Endorsements:

- State Representative John McLay (D-38), Hans Dinshee (D-44), Marco Liway (D-21).
- County Council Member Brian Sullivan
- City of Snohomish Mayor Karen Guzak.
- My message is resonating well with voters. Residents feel uninspired, & agree that their senate seat has functionally been forfeited the past six years. They are hungry for fresh perspective & a new energy.

**CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION**

**NAME** Nick Harper

**HOME STREET ADDRESS**

**CITY & ZIP** Everett 98201

**CELL PHONE**

**HOME PHONE**

<i>Family Members</i>	<i>Relationship</i>	<i>If school age, what school do they attend?</i>
Lacey Harper	WIFE	

**CAMPAIGN INFORMATION**

**CAMPAIGN MANAGER** Jason Hansen

**CAMPAIGN ADDRESS** PO Box 5341  
Everett, WA 98206

**CAMPAIGN E-MAIL** nick@nickharper.org

**OFFICE PHONE** 206.859.3665

**CAMPAIGN MGR CELL PHONE** 206.793.6670

**ORGANIZATIONAL MEMBERSHIPS**

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

- WA State Bar Association
- Snohomish County Young Professionals Network
- Everett Area Chamber of Commerce
- Cascade Land Conservancy

**EDUCATION**

Seattle University School of Law -- J.D., '04, Cum Laude  
 University of Washington -- B.A., Political Science, '01  
 Reed Township High School -- '97

**BRIEF EMPLOYMENT HISTORY**

Cascade Land Conservancy -- 4/2008 - Present  
 Snohomish County - Camano Ass. of Realtors -- 12/06 - 4/08  
 Citizenry to Build Back Lacey -- 05/06 - 11/06  
 Private Law Practice -- 06/04 - 08/06