

# Education Minnesota Voter Information – Senate District 28

Dear educator,

Those elected this November will make decisions that directly impact your students, pocketbook, profession and union. Because of this, we wanted to provide some information on where the candidates for Minnesota Senate in your district stand on the issues educators have said they care about the most.

A candidate's position is sometimes more complicated than a "yes" or "no" answer. We have done our best to represent each candidate in a fair and reasonable way. The candidate's statements were taken from Education Minnesota's Candidate Questionnaire, unless noted otherwise.

<p><b>Do you believe in fully and equitably funding public education, from preschool to postsecondary institutions, with several billion dollars in new education investments?</b></p>	
<p><b>Sarah Kruger</b> Supports fully funding the special education and English learner cross subsidies; tying per-pupil funding formula to inflation; smaller class sizes; universal pre-kindergarten; and expanding access to full-service community schools.</p>	<p><b>Jeremy Miller</b> Touted record levels of funding for schools despite there being no investment in increased spending power in the last two decades.<sup>1</sup> Has expressed support for "adequate" levels of funding.<sup>2</sup></p>
<p><b>Do you believe in raising revenue from the largest corporations and wealthiest 1 percent of residents to ensure Minnesota students have the resources they need to live successful lives?</b></p>	
<p><b>Sarah Kruger</b> Believes state funding formula for education needs a dramatic overhaul as it relies too heavily on local property taxes instead of state funding. Would potentially consider increasing estate taxes as an additional and equitable education revenue stream.</p>	<p><b>Jeremy Miller</b> Wants to work to make the state more business friendly by cutting taxes and regulations.<sup>3</sup> Said raising taxes was not the solution to economic problems caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>4</sup></p>
<p><b>Will you support legislation so all education support professionals earn a living wage?</b></p>	
<p><b>Sarah Kruger</b> Yes.</p>	<p><b>Jeremy Miller</b> Worked in 2017 to override paid sick leave ordinances in Minneapolis and St. Paul and short-circuit some communities' efforts to increase the minimum wage above the statewide level.<sup>5</sup> Voted for the 2019 Senate Omnibus Jobs bill, which included wage theft language that would have put more burden on hourly workers, including ESPs, before a claim to the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry could be made.<sup>12</sup></p>
<p><b>How would you support Minnesota's higher education system?</b></p>	
<p><b>Sarah Kruger</b> Supports fully funding public higher education in Minnesota. Will work to freeze tuition and find creative ways for teachers to repay student loan debt. Believes student loan debt crisis is a result of the state's failure to fund two-thirds of the cost of higher education, and proposes upholding the state's funding of two-thirds of the cost of higher education as a solution.</p>	<p><b>Jeremy Miller</b> Introduced legislation in 2011 to cut Minnesota State's administrative spending by 10 percent even though the administrative budget had already been cut by at least 22 percent since 2009.<sup>6</sup> Participated in Republican-led Senate's proposed higher education budget that would cause Minnesota State schools to lose \$65 million in revenue.<sup>7</sup></p>
<p><b>How do we make our schools safer for both students and educators?</b></p>	
<p><b>Sarah Kruger</b> Supports smaller class sizes, more support staff, anti-bullying programs in schools and professional development to make schools safer.</p>	<p><b>Jeremy Miller</b> Following the Stoneman Douglas High School shooting in 2018, Sen. Miller refused to support multiple bills relating to common-sense gun control and universal background checks for gun sales.<sup>8</sup></p>

<b>Will you support providing additional resources for school districts to hire more support staff, including counselors, social workers, psychologists, nurses and other job classifications?</b>	
<p><b>Sarah Kruger</b> Supports providing additional student support staff, including counselors, social workers, psychologists and nurses to give students the guidance they need.</p>	<p><b>Jeremy Miller</b> Stated support for funding for mental health programs and school counselors.<sup>7</sup> Voted for the 2019 Senate E-12 Omnibus bill, which provided a .5 percent increase to the education funding formula, well below the cost of inflation. It included zero funding for additional support staff, paraprofessional training and the special education cross-subsidy.<sup>12</sup></p>
<b>How would you support unions and the issues addressed in a collectively bargained contract?</b>	
<p><b>Sarah Kruger</b> Will oppose any legislative efforts to erode current union rights. Will support workers on strike after good-faith contract negotiation efforts have been exhausted.</p>	<p><b>Jeremy Miller</b> Sponsored the Uniform State Labor Standards Act, which was seen as an attack on local control and local democracy by labor groups because the bill would have prevented Minnesota cities and counties from imposing minimum wage, benefit or scheduling mandates on employers.<sup>9</sup> Sen. Miller was the only Republican in the Minnesota Senate who voted against a right-to-work amendment in 2012.<sup>10</sup></p>
<b>How will you address racial and social justice issues in your work as a state legislator?</b>	
<p><b>Sarah Kruger</b> Considers herself responsible for standing alongside people of color to advocate for change. Will use role as legislator to amplify voices of color at the state Capitol. Recognizes the value of immigrants to our communities. Promises to dismantle barriers of access to education in hopes of improving outcomes for all students, regardless of their race or ZIP code.</p>	<p><b>Jeremy Miller</b> Worked with Senate Republicans to block police accountability and reform following the murder of George Floyd by voting against a proposal that would have narrowed the legal justifications for police use of lethal force.<sup>11</sup></p>

Comments were also taken from Jeremy Miller's candidate website (1), Winona Post opinion article 2/13/17 (2), News from Senator Jeremy Miller, 5/25/11 (3), KWNO article 5/7/20 (4), Duluth News Tribune article 4/20/17 (5), MinnPost article 3/8/11 (6), Winona Post article 5/1/19 (7), Winona Daily News article 2/23/18 (8), Rochester Post-Bulletin article 2/6/17 (9), MPR News article 3/8/12 (10), Winona Post article 6/24/20 (11) and AFL-CIO legislative report cards (12)

Educators from your area took part in the endorsement process which helped shape the decision to endorse Sarah Kruger for Minnesota Senate. Candidates who chose to screen with Education Minnesota took part in a public meeting, roundtable Q&A and/or school visit. Educators in your area recommended the candidate to the Education Minnesota Political Action Committee for endorsement. The PAC is made up of 23 educators from districts all over the state. Jeremy Miller participated in the screening, but chose to answer the questionnaire in the form of a letter which bypassed answering some questions.

*This independent expenditure was prepared and paid for by Education Minnesota PAC, 41 Sherburne Ave., St. Paul, MN 55103 in support of Sarah Kruger. The material is not approved by Sarah Kruger nor is Sarah Kruger responsible for it.  2013*